

## C.H.U.R.C.H. It's Who We Are... Relationally Driven

### Ephesians 2:10-22

Graduates... What have you learned throughout the course of your education? What's the takeaway? Can you sum it up in 1-2 sentences?

Jesus was asked the question, *"What is the greatest commandment?"* He had the opportunity to sum up all that God had taught His people... all their education... throughout their history... and He did it... in 2 sentences!

**Matthew 22:37-39 – "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart & with all your soul & with all your mind... You shall love your neighbor as yourself..." On these 2 commandments depend all the Law & the Prophets.**

If I can share anything with you graduates today, that you can take from here & apply to your lives, post-graduation, it is this... Love God... & Love others... Prioritize relationships... both the vertical & the horizontal and you will do well!

Give your whole heart, soul, mind, & strength to the Lord... Honor Him in all that you choose to do! And love/serve other people as you would yourself... These 2 pursuits will lead you to a life filled with purpose & significance!

The temptation for all of us is to put ourselves 1<sup>st</sup>... To pursue our own glory! And it's also a temptation to see people as merely assets or stumbling blocks!

But God is not a means to an end... He is the destination... and the journey! And relationships aren't intended to be disposable... They should define us!

We as a C.H.U.R.C.H. say that we are relationally driven... But is that who we truly are? Is that what we are known for? Do people join our church because they see us prioritize these 2 relationships... with God & each other?

- There is a difference between a church that talks & sings about God, & a church that truly worships Him & elevates this relationship above all else!
- There is also a difference between a church that is welcoming & friendly, and a church filled with life-transforming friendships!

Who are we... & who do we aspire to be? How do we live into this identity... And graduates, what can you do to help us be more relationally driven? Your schoolwork may be done, but God's got work for all of us to do!

**Ephesians 2:10 – "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."**

**Therefore...**

- Remember what God has done for you in Christ to bring you into a relationship with Him - **Vs. 11-12!** We were the uncircumcised... Separated from God... Aliens... Strangers... No hope... Godless...
- Receive Christ & all His benefits – **Vs. 13-15!** We have been brought near to God... Peace in Jesus Christ... We have been made one... The dividing wall between God & man, and between man & man, removed!
- Be Reconciled to God & to one another – **Vs. 16-17!**

**Vs. 19 – "So then you are no longer strangers & aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints & members of the household of God..."**

Do you know who you really are, in Christ & because of Christ? You are a child of God... a part of God's eternal family! You are a brother/sister in the Church of Jesus Christ... family... a friend... a fellow citizen!

What does this realization do for you? What should it do? *Field of Dreams...* It should make you want to be a part of something much bigger than you are!

**Vs. 21-22 – "In Him you are being built together into a dwelling place for God... a structure joined together growing into a holy temple in the Lord!"**

We may have a longing to focus our lives on building our own structures... fulfilling our own dreams... but maybe there is more to life than this! Maybe the key to life is found in being a part of God's structure/the Church!

Earthly kingdoms rise & fall... earthly structures eventually get bulldozed to the ground... but what God is building lasts forever & we can be a part of this eternal work... as foundational stones!

What are we going to give our lives to? Temporary or Eternal things? The Church is **"a dwelling place for God"...** And that's not a place, it's a people!

Don't just focus on building a life, a house, a career, a name for yourself... Be a part of what God is building... a people to dwell with... a structure built on eternal relationships... between us & God... & between one another!

All that God's Word has taught us, all that God wants us to know, & live in response to, can be summed up in 2 commands... Love God & Love others! The Church is the soil where these relationships bloom... So be a part of it!

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