

When we hear the word “church” all sorts of different things might pop into our heads. We may think about buildings we visit, or things we do on a Sunday? But I wonder if we ever think of reconciliation? Do we ever think of the church as being a wonderful picture of God’s reconciliatory work in the world? The Apostle Paul does, and in Ephesians chapter 2vv11-22, he gives us two reasons to help us remember why...

### **#1 - Remember you have been reconciled to God through Jesus**

If the 1<sup>st</sup> half of chapter 2, tells us how we are saved (by grace), and what we are saved for (good works), the 2<sup>nd</sup> half tells us what we are saved to be... church,

Vv11-13 are a great reminder of what these Gentile Christian believers once were (far from God), and what they now are (reconciled to God), and how this was only made possible through Jesus’ death on the cross. It is only through Jesus, that enemies of God, can now have peace with Him.

But Paul goes to great lengths to explain how all those who put their trust in Jesus, whether Jew or Gentile, have not only been reconciled to God, but also to each other.

### **#2 - Remember you have been reconciled to each other through Jesus**

Paul uses several different metaphors to express the unity that all Christian believers share, regardless of their geographical background (body, family, building, temple). In Pauls’ day, for Jews and Gentiles to be reconciled to one another was almost unthinkable, and yet the apostle is clear that when someone becomes a Christian, they are not only reconciled to their Father in heaven, but also to all other believers, their brothers and sisters in Christ.

So whilst we are saved by Jesus on an individual basis, we are also saved by Jesus, to be part of God’s church family here on earth. Being church is not an optional extra for someone once they have become a Christian. Not at all. Rather, when someone becomes a christian, they become Church. The church is the gathering of people who have been reconciled to God and each other through the death of Jesus Christ.

This means that the church is to be like a display in a shop window. People should look at the church on earth and say, *“Wow, God is amazing, God is glorious!”*. For when the church is made up of people who are different from one another in various and dramatic ways, living together in harmony, loving one another, caring for one another, serving one another, witnessing together, building up the same kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ together...

Then the church will be displaying the glory of ‘God who reconciles’ to the world.