



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Community Group Material:

Bible Reading: Ephesians 2:13, 19-22

The Trophy of God's Triumph

Ask one person to pray at the beginning of your meeting.

Check-in

Check in with each other about how everyone is doing.

Open the Bible. Read Eph. 2:13, 19-22

Sermon Summary:

Audacious claims merit justification; the title: 'Greatest of all Time' applied to an athlete is substantiated by trophies won. Military victories are celebrated with monuments. Ephesians claims God in Christ won a cosmic victory at the cross. That assertion is substantiated by his achievements (Eph. 2) culminating in the Church as God's masterpiece, his temple. The Church—composed of Christ's believers—is the lasting monument, the trophy celebrating God's triumph. What does it mean that the Church is God's living Temple among humanity? Today's message examines these issues.

Discussion:

- Eph. 2:10, 19-22 uses multiple images of Christian believers—masterpiece/workmanship, citizens, family-members, a building, temple, God's dwelling. Each image offers a slightly different 'angle' on the church.

1. What is the distinguishing feature of each of these images? What terms describe this 'angle'?

2. Based on each image (metaphor):

- a. How should we view ourselves?
- b. How should we view and relate to other Christian believers (at CIT & elsewhere)? ?
- c. How have you experienced this at CIT: Church in Toronto?

- Focusing on the metaphor of God's temple; Paul in his writings applies this image on 3 levels:
- [Individual—'micro'] the body of each believer as a Temple (1 Cor. 6:19)...
- [Congregation—'mini'] each congregation is a Temple (1 Cor. 3:16-17; Eph. 2:22) &...
- [Universal/global—'macro'] the whole church as a Temple (Eph. 2:21)...
- How should the realization that we are God's Temple affect us on each of these 'levels'?

1. How can we fulfill our 'mandate or role' as God's Temple?

2. What does being God's temple imply about our attitudes and actions? How can we apply being God's Temple in our daily life? ...in our interactions with others at CIT?
3. Based on this one scholar says: "The building...belongs to God...[it is] ? *God's Temple* ." What does this imply about how we 'do' church at CIT?
4. Another says: " *The church is not ... people-centered, but God-centered* ." Do you agree with this? (Why or why not?)

End with Prayer.

- Pray for a deeper understanding of the church that leads to deeper and richer experiences in the church .
- Pray for any needs of people in your group.