



## **From a Mess to a Masterpiece: Craig Rees** **Main Auditorium & Chapel | 7 January 2024**

**Big Idea:** The church is complicated because we are imperfect people, owning our imperfections in a way that enables a deeper connection with others.

**Key Scriptures:** Ephesians 2:10-22; 5:25-27

### **1. Memory and Belonging:**

- How does remembering a time when you felt like an outsider help you better appreciate the significance of what is involved in becoming a part of the church family?
- In what ways can sharing personal experiences of exclusion or discomfort contribute to a deeper sense of community within the church?

### **2. Entry Requirements and Acceptance:**

- In the message, Pastor Craig emphasized accepting the work of Christ as the primary requirement for citizenship in the community of believers. How does this perspective challenge traditional cultural, religious, or ideological entry requirements?
- In what areas of our church or personal lives can we better emphasize the inclusive nature of Christ's work as the foundation for acceptance?

### **3. Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion:**

- How can we, as a church community, remain sensitive to the experiences of those who may feel like outsiders due to cultural, ethnic, or social differences?
- Discuss practical ways to ensure that our church remains a welcoming place for people from diverse backgrounds.

### **4. Us Over Me:**

- Why is it so important for the emphasis to be on the corporate sanctification of the church community rather than individual holiness?
- How can we foster a sense of communal responsibility and accountability in our small groups and the larger church body? How do we do this gracefully?

**5. Navigating Differences and Conflicts:**

- Reflect on the contrasting statements and conflicts mentioned in Ephesians 2. How can we effectively navigate and overcome conflicts arising from differences within the church?
- Share personal experiences of conflicts within the church and discuss strategies for resolving them while keeping Christ's vision in focus.

**6. Discipleship and Formation:**

- How can we actively strengthen discipleship within our small group?
- Discuss specific ways in which we can encourage and support each other's spiritual growth and formation in Christ.

**7. Dealing with Disappointment:**

- If someone has experienced disappointment or hurt within the church, how can they approach forgiveness and reconciliation?
- What role can the church play in helping individuals heal from past hurts and reconnect with God's grand vision for the church?

**8. Commitment to Personal Growth:**

- In what ways can we commit to being "put right" individually so that we can collectively contribute to putting the world to right?
- What practical steps for personal growth and commitment to living out God's vision for the church in our everyday lives are you thinking of making in 2024?