



What To Do When The Church Hurts You | Doug Wekenman | 5.28.2023

Weekly Study

SHARE

In the final week of our *We The Church* series, Doug delivered a powerful word on *What To Do When The Church Hurts Us*. Church hurt is real, raw, and all too common these days - but church hurt is not a new phenomenon. This week Doug took a moment to validate how damaging church hurt can be for far too many people today, but he reminded us that even the Apostle Paul experienced church hurt in Acts 9. This message helps us break down our church hurt, sit with it, process it, and then Doug invites us to be like Paul - release our pain, keep our eyes on Jesus, and step up to be the church we want to see. Are you ready to release any pain you may be holding onto and start being the church?

GROW

Read Act 9:26-27

When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the believers, but they were all afraid of him. They did not believe he had truly become a believer! Then Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the way to Damascus and how the Lord had spoken to Saul. He also told them that Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus in Damascus.

What kind of feelings or emotions did this week's message bring up?

Reflect on your own faith journey for a moment. Is there any lingering church hurt in your life that you might be having a difficult time moving past?

What kind of church hurt have you experienced, witnessed or heard about during this time in history? Talk about it with your group and trace it back to the source. Does it go back to a person or group of people, a church, or God?

MOVE

Look at Doug's three points.

1. Remember reality. The church isn't God; It's imperfect people

What are your thoughts about point 1? Do you agree/disagree? Why?

Think about how you live your life day-to-day. How do you regularly treat others? How do you regularly communicate with others? Do you make decisions based on your mind and your flesh, or are you led by the Holy Spirit? We're all broken and imperfect people pursuing a perfect God, but is it possible that you may be playing a role in someone else keeping their distance from God and/or the church? What can you change?

2. Don't stay bitter, make the church better

Doug said, "It took ten plagues to get Pharaoh to let go of His people, but it took 40 years for God's people to let go of Pharaoh." Is there something in your life where your season of bitterness towards something has exponentially exceeded the season of hurt you experienced? What is/was the most difficult part of letting go of that bitterness?

What's at least one way bitterness has kept you from living in the fullness of your calling?

3. Don't rehearse it, don't revenge it, release it.

After listening to this message, is there something in your life God might be asking you to release to Him so you can heal and move on? How can you take steps towards releasing something today?

Read 1 Corinthians 4:15

"For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel."

We live in a world full of amazing preachers, podcasts, and spiritual content, but do you have any spiritual fathers or mothers in your life? Someone who is committed to spiritually feeding you, protecting you, helping you grow, and is not afraid to hold you accountable?

Read Matthew 9:37-38

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Doug gave us an incredible charge to get off the bench and get involved in being the church. "What if I'm calling you to become that man [or woman]?...Because as our church grows, so does our need for those with the spirit of a father and the spirit of a mother, who willingly lay down their freedom just like Jesus and allow themselves to be held to a higher standard of accountability because they understand that the watching world needs some inspiration from Christians right now!...Where are those who want integrity more than influence? Where are those who want purpose more than a platform? Where are those who are unreasonably serious about getting rid of the secret sin out of their lives? Where are those committed to shrinking the gap between their public world and their private world? Who will rise to the occasion and live a life that you can model your life after me as I run after Jesus. Where are the ones that want to take 'being the church' personally?"

What people in your life might be watching how you live? Are living a life full of purpose, integrity, and faithfulness?

How big is the gap between who you are in public and who you are in private? How big is the gap between how you live your faith in public and private? What can you do to shrink the gap?

Are you one of the ones taking "being the church" personally? What's one small way you can be the church this week?

P R A Y

Pray together in smaller groups and ask the Holy Spirit to help you release any bitterness or pain that is holding you back from living in the fullness of his love and freedom. Pray for the people in your life

navigating church hurt. Pray for God to reveal a specific way you can start to take “being the church” personally.