



Stage Phone Clingers | Doug Wekenman | 5.31-6.1

Weekly Study

SHARE

Welcome back to our Relationship series! We're diving into how our faith informs and transforms every kind of relationship, from dating to friendships to digital dynamics. This week, Pastor Doug brings a fresh perspective on something we all engage with daily: our phones. These pocket-sized devices impact not just our schedules but also our souls, shaping how we connect with God and others.

In this message, "Stage Phone Clingers," Doug challenges us to examine our digital habits through a spiritual lens. Are our phones enhancing our relationships or crushing them? From distraction to compulsion, he lays out a compelling case for intentionality in the digital age. We'll talk about lack of depth, connection, authenticity and social skills, and how these influence our ability to live a full life in Christ.

- ☐ **How would you honestly describe your current relationship with your phone?**
- ☐ **What are some ways technology has helped and hurt your relationships?**

GROW

Read Luke 15:11-24

- ☐ **What does the younger son's journey reveal about the dangers of access without wisdom?**

Jesus' parable of the prodigal son paints a vivid picture of what happens when we receive

something powerful without the maturity to steward it well. The younger son squanders his inheritance in wild living, only to find himself alone, hungry, and broken. His journey away from and back to the father illustrates the human condition: our tendency to misuse good gifts, and the grace of God that welcomes us home.

Doug compared the smartphone to the prodigal's inheritance, a tool with incredible potential, but also the capacity to lead us far from home if used without wisdom. Like the son, we often chase connection, meaning, and escape through our screens, only to discover emptiness.

- ☐ **Are we stewarding our digital inheritance wisely, or are we allowing it to control us only to drift away from our attention being on God?**

MOVE

Read Ephesians 5:15-17

Paul's challenge to live wisely is especially relevant in a culture dominated by constant connectivity. Doug emphasized that we often live reactively instead of intentionally, allowing our phones to dictate our pace, priorities, and presence. Paul calls us to rise above cultural ways and live full in each day within God's purposes. When we tether our identity to Jesus instead of our devices, we regain control over our focus and our time.

Living with digital wisdom means making tangible, sometimes uncomfortable changes. Doug encourages practices like phone-free mornings and evenings, removing tempting apps, and reengaging with habits like handwritten notes or real-time conversations. These shifts help us rediscover the joys of depth, presence, and real relationships.

- ☐ **How is your phone shaping your personal relationships?**

Beyond that, how can we recognize, with everything we just mention, how our phones have distracted us in our faith and our relationship to God. So ask yourself: What might God restore or maybe shift in your life if you gave Him more space than your screen?

- ☐ **How is your phone shaping your faith life, your prayer, Scripture, or worship habits?**

- ☐ What specific digital habit is competing with your time or intimacy with God?
- ☐ What spiritual disciplines could help you anchor your day in God rather than in a glowing screen?

P R A Y

This week, try pairing up in your group and swapping prayer requests in writing. Commit to praying for your partner daily. This practice mirrors Doug's call to intentionality and connection.

CHALLENGE

Try the 8pm-to-8am phone fast. Put your phone to bed before you go to bed, and wake up before it. Let your mornings and evenings be guided by intention, not notifications. This week, practice living as someone who has a phone, not as someone who is owned by one.