

Title: Peoples and Steeples: Church Hurt

Text: *“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”* (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Target: “Church health” begins when the church recognizes that “church hurt” impacts us all.

Word to the Wounded: Your abuse is our abuse, your justice is our justice, the prayer of our house is for healing to happen, hope to be found in the person of Jesus. Thus, we/I express my sentiment of solidarity and express our deepest gratitude that you are here with us.

I. The Clarification of Church Hurt: What is it?

- A. The Church:** A collective community of called out people who identify their oneness in Jesus and His teaching in Scripture. (Matthew 16:18)
 - 1. **Upper Room:** Mission/Vision/Value (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:42-47)
 - 2. **Lower Room:** Personalities/Programs/People/Place (1 Cor. 3:4)
- B. The Hurt:** A real painful experience that caused disappointment, disdain, eventual disconnection from the community of faith.
 - 1. **What it is:** Trauma/trauma done to you directly or indirectly.
 - 2. **What it is Not:** Church discipline, disagreement over a decision, different opinion, direction of a program/not a program.

II. The Characterization of Church Hurt: Who is it?

- A. From Leadership to Membership (1 Peter 5:2-3):** Manipulation of Spiritual Authority, False Teaching, Mismanagement of Financial Resource, Moral Failure
***Expectations of an Overseer:** 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1: 5-9, Hebrews 13:5
- B. From Membership to Membership (1 Peter 2:1):** Slander/Gossip, Judgmentalism, Neglect
- C. From Membership to Leadership (Proverbs 6:16-19):** Unrealistic Expectations, Division, Sowing Discord

III. The Confirmation of Church Hurt: When did this start happening?

- A. Galatians:** to solve legalism (Galatians 1:6-7, 3:1-3, 4:9, 5:1)
- B. Colossians:** to solve heresy (Colossians 2:4,8)
- C. 2 Timothy:** to solve tension in succession (2 Timothy 4:9-16)
- D. Philippians:** to solve conflict and selfish ambition (Phil. 2:3-22)
- E. 1 and 2 Corinthians:** the issues of human pride in giftings,
- F. Revelation:** multiple issues with the different churches listed (Revelation 2,3)

IV. The Consideration in Church Hurt: How do we prevent it?

- A. No Church is Perfect:** People are messy (Proverbs 14:4)
- B. Reconciliation is to be Pursued:** The goal but not always the guarantee. (Matthew 18:15-19)
- C. Accountability is a Prerequisite:** Checks and balances reap godly dividends (Proverbs 15:22)
- D. Transparency is Paramount:** Trust is cultivated in the light not the shadows (Hebrews 4:13)

V. The Christ in Church Hurt: Where do we go to heal from it?

- A. Jesus Addresses Church Hurt (Matthew 18:16/23:1-37):** No one hurt by the church goes unnoticed by Jesus.
- B. Jesus Experienced Church Hurt (Matthew 6:14-15):** No one has been hurt more by the church than Jesus,
- C. Jesus Forgave His Church Hurt (Luke 23:34):** No one who loves the church more than Jesus.

Takeaway: Forgiveness is not Forgetting, but choosing Freedom to move Forward again.