



Growing in Christ Together

FALL CHURCHWIDE SERIES

WEEK 6 – CHURCH HURT AND CHURCH ABUSE

OCTOBER 19, 2025 - PASTOR BRIAN FLEWELLING

WORSHIP

Start your time together with praise and worship. If someone can lead the worship, invite them to lead two or three songs. Feel free to use one or more of the songs from our Sunday morning worship time:

- **Here For You** (*Matt Maher*)
- **Again And Again** (*Benji Cowart*)
- **None Like You** (*Jesus Culture*)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Ezekiel 34:1-5
- 1 Peter 5:1-3
- Matthew 20:25-28

OPENING PRAYER

Begin your small group session with a prayer, asking for God's guidance and wisdom as you discuss this sensitive topic.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. There's a difference between church hurt and church abuse.
2. Healthy church leadership is characterized by servanthood, not self-interest.
3. Recognizing and addressing unhealthy church cultures is crucial for the congregation's well-being.
4. Healing from church hurt or abuse is a process that requires time, support, and often professional help.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you most from the sermon? Why?
2. How would you differentiate between church hurt and church abuse based on the sermon?
3. Have you ever experienced or witnessed church hurt? Without sharing names, how did that situation impact your faith or view of the church?
4. Pastor Brian mentioned three characteristics of an abusive church culture. Which one surprised you the most and why?
 - a. Using others to one's advantage
 - b. Engaging in sin
 - c. Willfully ignoring or permitting sin to continue
5. How can we contribute to creating a healthy church culture as individuals and as a small group?
6. What role does forgiveness play in healing from church hurt? How can we balance forgiveness with the need for accountability and change?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

1. Self-reflection: Take some time this week to reflect on your own actions within the church community. Are there ways you can grow in servanthood and consideration of others?
2. Nurture empathy: Practice putting yourself in others' shoes, especially when conflicts arise in church settings.
3. Support system: If you or someone you know has experienced church hurt or abuse, consider reaching out to the church's counseling department for support.

CLOSING PRAYER

End your session by praying for healing for those who have experienced church hurt or abuse, wisdom and integrity for church leaders, and God's guidance in creating a healthy church community.