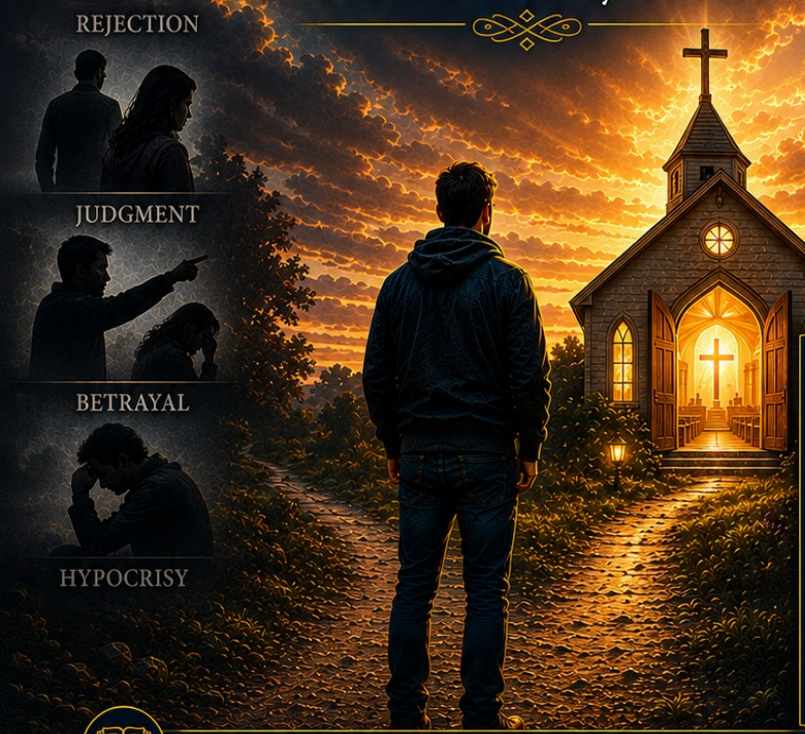
DISCOVERING HOPE SERIES

BOOKLET 16

WHAT ABOUT CHURCH HURT AND HYPOCRISY?

When People Fail, Does That Mean Christianity Is False?



PEOPLE FAIL.
CHURCHES DISAPPOINT.

BUT CHRIST NEVER FAILS.

Hebrews 13:8
"Jesus Christ
the same yesterday,
and to day,
and for ever."

THE TRUTH REMAINS. GRACE RESTORES. JESUS SAVES.

THE NORTH JERSEY
UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

Pastor Gary Evensen
pastor@njupc.org

51 Centre Ave
Secaucus, NJ 07094

pastor@njupc.org

www.njupc.org

WELCOME TO THE

DISCOVERING HOPE SERIES

Real Questions. Biblical Answers. Lasting Hope.

Life raises questions that are not always easy to answer.

Why am I here?, Does God really exist? , Can I trust the Bible?, Why does God allow suffering?, Can my life really change? Is there hope when I feel trapped, broken, or uncertain about the future?

The **Discovering Hope Series** was created to help people explore questions like these through the truth of God's Word.

You need not be a Bible scholar or have all the answers.

And you do not need to have everything in your life figured out before you begin.

Each booklet focuses on a different question, struggle, or biblical truth and is designed to help you discover what the Bible actually says.

As you read, take your time.

Consider the Scriptures for yourself.

Ask questions, Pray.

And most importantly, allow God to speak to your heart through His Word.

The Bible is more than a book of religious teachings. It reveals a God who loves us, seeks us, and desires to transform our lives.

Whatever brought you to this booklet, we hope it becomes one more step in your journey toward discovering the hope that can only be found in Jesus Christ.

There is hope. There are answers.

And God may be closer than you think.

Pastor Gary Evensen Author

Pastor @ njupc.org

https://www.njupc.org

https://www.youtube.com/@NJUPCINC

51 Centre Ave, Secaucus NJ 07094

WHAT ABOUT CHURCH HURT AND HYPOCRISY?

Introduction

One of the most common objections to Christianity today is not about science.

It is not about the Bible.

It is not even about God.

It is about people.

Many have been hurt by someone who claimed to be a Christian.

Some have experienced:

- Broken trust
- Harsh treatment
- Abuse of authority
- Judgmental attitudes
- Disappointment

Hypocrisy
As a result, some conclude:

"If that's Christianity, I want no part of it."

But is that a fair conclusion?

Should Jesus be judged by those who fail to follow Him?

1. CHURCH HURT IS REAL

The Bible never pretends that believers are perfect.

People sometimes fail.

Sometimes badly.

Even churches can make mistakes.

Romans 3:23

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

The Bible acknowledges human weakness.

Church hurt is real.

God does not ignore it.

Neither should we.

2. JESUS CONDEMNED HYPOCRISY

Many assume Jesus ignored hypocrisy.

Actually, He confronted it directly.

Matthew 23:27

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites..."

Jesus repeatedly rebuked religious leaders who appeared righteous outwardly while living differently inwardly.

One of the strongest opponents of hypocrisy in Scripture was Jesus Himself.

3. THE FAILURE OF PEOPLE DOES NOT DISPROVE CHRIST

Imagine a doctor who ignores his own medical advice.

His failure would not make medicine false.

Likewise, a person who fails to live according to Christ does not make Christ false.

Christianity is ultimately based on Jesus Christ—not on the behavior of every person who claims His name.

The question is not:

"Have Christians ever failed?"

The answer is obviously yes.

The question is:

"Who is Jesus?"

4. EVEN THE BIBLE'S HEROES FAILED

Scripture does not hide the failures of its heroes.

Noah became drunk.

Abraham lied.

Moses lost his temper.

David committed adultery.

Peter denied Jesus.

Yet God continued to work in their lives.

He worked on helping them overcome their weaknesses and sins.

The Bible is remarkably honest about human weakness.

Its message is not that people are perfect.

Its message is that people need God's grace.

This is why Jesus when confronted with the women taken in adultery stated:

“He who is without sin, let him cast the first stone”

5. JESUS NEVER PROMISED A PERFECT CHURCH

Churches are filled with imperfect people.

Every congregation is made up of people who are still growing.

Some are mature.

Some are immature.

Some are struggling.

Some are healing.

The church is not a museum for perfect people.

It is a hospital for sinners.

Philippians 1:6

"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

God is still working on people.

6. FORGIVENESS DOES NOT EXCUSE WRONGDOING

When people are hurt, forgiveness can be difficult.

Forgiveness does not mean pretending evil never happened.

Forgiveness does not mean abuse should continue.

Forgiveness does not mean there should be no accountability.

It means refusing to allow bitterness to control your future.

Ephesians 4:31-32

"Let all bitterness... be put away from you..."

God cares about justice.

God also desires healing.

7. DON'T LET SOMEONE ELSE'S FAILURE STEAL YOUR FUTURE

One of Satan's greatest victories is convincing wounded people to abandon God because of the actions of another person.

The failure of a Christian should never cause us to reject Christ.

If someone misrepresents Jesus, the answer is not to walk away from Jesus.

The answer is to get closer to Him.

John 6:68

"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

8. JESUS STILL CHANGES LIVES

Despite failures, scandals, and disappointments, millions of lives continue to be transformed by Jesus Christ.

Marriages are restored.

Addictions are broken.

Hope is renewed.

Lives are changed.

Not because Christians are perfect.

But because Christ is perfect.

Hebrews 13:8

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Church hurt is real.

Hypocrisy is real.

But neither changes who Jesus is.

People may fail.

Churches may disappoint.

Christ never fails.

If you have been hurt, do not let that hurt keep you from the One who can heal you.

Psalm 147:3

"He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."

The question is not:

"Have people failed?"

The question is:

"What will I do with Jesus Christ?"

5 Things to Look for in a Church

1. A Church That Teaches the Bible

The foundation of a healthy church is not tradition, popularity, entertainment, or personal opinions.

It is God's Word.

Acts 17:11

"They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Ask:

- Is the Bible being taught?
- Are sermons rooted in Scripture?

Are people encouraged to know God's Word for themselves?
A church should point people to the Bible, not away from it.

2. A Church That Exalts Jesus Christ

A healthy church keeps Jesus at the center.

Not a celebrity preacher.

Not politics.

Not programs.

Not personalities.

Colossians 1:18

"That in all things he might have the preeminence."

Ask:

- Is Jesus the focus?
- Is worship centered on Him?

Is His gospel clearly proclaimed?

3. A Church That Demonstrates Genuine Love

Jesus said love would identify His followers.

John 13:35

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

No church is perfect.

But there should be evidence of:

- Kindness
- Compassion
- Forgiveness

Care for people
A healthy church is not merely friendly—it is loving.

4. A Church That Produces Spiritual Growth

A church should help people grow closer to God.

Ephesians 4:11-13 teaches that ministry exists to equip believers and help them mature.

Ask:

- Are lives being changed?
- Are people growing spiritually?

Are people learning to follow Christ?
A healthy church should move people forward, not leave them stagnant.

5. A Church That Practices What It Preaches

No church is perfect.

No pastor is perfect.

No believer is perfect.

But there should be a sincere effort to live according to God's Word.

James 1:22

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..."

Ask:

- Is there integrity?
- Is there humility?
- Is there accountability?

Is there a desire to obey God?
Perfection is impossible.

Authenticity is not.

Conclusion

When looking for a church, don't ask:

- Is this church perfect?

Are these people flawless?
No church can pass that test.

Instead ask:

1. Do they teach the Bible?
2. Do they exalt Jesus Christ?
3. Do they genuinely love people?
4. Are lives being changed?

Do they strive to practice what they preach?
A healthy church is not a place where perfect people gather.

It is a place where imperfect people pursue a perfect Savior together.