

Don't Let One Bad Church Experience Kill Your Desire for Jesus

The church could be compared to a restaurant where we can have a bad experience or meal, but does that mean we don't ever eat out or go to church again?

We can all have excuses for not attending church, but meanwhile there are people who aren't being impacted by what we offer.

Churches, like people, aren't perfect, because they are made up of imperfect people; but do we quit and give up on the church altogether?

Issues and people in the church do hurt us. They may treat you unfairly at times, and you may suffer injustices. The church is run by imperfect people, just like you and me. It is run much like the businesses, restaurants, stores and workplaces you frequent. Why should the church hurt any less when run by the same people? Because people expect us to be different and do it better.

Yes, some of us do it better, but only after being refined and defined by the hand of the living God for years. Some people aren't willing to go through the brokenness and purging it requires to truly have us act like the church. Therefore, we are going to be hurt.

But do you stay out of a store, restaurant, workplace, business, etc. because you get hurt and upset? Sure you may say you are never going to that restaurant or store again, but it doesn't mean you won't go to one of a similar kind. If you have one bad Italian meal, you may not frequent that restaurant again, but you don't stop eating Italian all

together.

It is the same with church. Perhaps you've had a bad experience with one, two, or three, but it doesn't mean you shouldn't try four, five, or six. If I stopped going to all the churches and pastors and people that hurt me, betrayed me, offended me, upset me, then I wouldn't be doing what I am now. I wouldn't be traveling the U.S. hosting love tours, prophesying, preaching and hosting conferences. Many lives wouldn't be getting changed.

You are a world changer! You can make a difference in the sphere of influence God is calling you to impact. If you give up on the church, you are not impacting and changing people.

As I minister across the U.S., I have heard all the excuses in the world why not to go to church.

- There aren't any good churches in my town.
- The nearest church I like is 1 ½ hours away.
- Sunday is my only day to sleep in.
- I have been hurt in the church.
- All the pastors are jealous of my anointing.
- They talk about me.
- My spouse doesn't go.
- I haven't had time to find a church since I moved.
- Churches only want your money.
- They never allow me to operate in my gifts.
- My children are a handful and I don't want them in the nursery.
- I don't like the music.
- I watch church on TV.

The list goes on. Your list may go on and on, but it does not give you a right to stay out of church permanently. Being in a body of believers is biblical. Not going to church doesn't give you the support of a friend to talk to when you need counsel, a church to support you with meals and prayer during

health issues or the loss of a loved one.

We need to be in a church to give us a foundation of a walk in which we can build from. The church will give us a foundation and hopefully a good church will plant a desire in us to want to do more at home. It ultimately is our responsibility to grow in our walk with Christ. If we are not growing in our walk, we are spiritually dying. Won't you lay aside your excuses, your hurts and the mentality of I don't feel like it and give church and people a chance?

Complacency has struck the body of believers. The thoughts of someday I will do it. I really need to. Next week I will go to church or open my Bible and then next week comes and it doesn't happen. Everything is a choice and when we make that choice, we will impact our lives and the lives of others.

Being in a relationship with God is about loving and serving Him and people. We need to remove complacency and laziness from our lives so we can be effective and useful for the kingdom. When we get to heaven, we will give an account of our relationship and time for God. Will you be satisfied with the accountability you will be required to give?

I don't know anyone who hasn't been hurt by the church. I do know if we never try again, all of our churches would be empty. I also know there is an alarming rate of Christians who aren't reading their Bibles at home.

We need the church to ignite us. When we hear a sermon, sometimes we go home and study what the pastor preached and it causes us to open our Bibles. We need the accountability of the church and yes even some don't hold us as accountable as we would like.

But we need to take a step. We need to give church a chance. We need to be taught and instructed. If we gave up every time someone in life hurt us, we would be very lonely people. Jesus taught us forgiveness and a good place to start is in the

church and for the church. So can you, get up and forgive, allow the past hurts and excuses to be put aside and give church a chance?

Our 19-year-old daughter recently left for college. She has been through church hurts with us that have impacted her greatly. However, after adjusting to her new surroundings, she chose to try a couple of churches, by herself, alone, in a new town, not knowing anyone. This was out of character for her, but she did it and I know if she gave church a chance again with no excuses at 19, so can you!

Churches aren't perfect. People aren't perfect and churches are filled with imperfect people, but Christ came to heal, set free and deliver those very imperfect people.

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