

Uncomfortable: The Awkward and Essential Challenge of Christian Community

Week 1: Embrace the Discomfort

TALK IT OVER

BIG IDEA OF THE MESSAGE:

The Christian life—especially when it comes to being part of a church community—is full of discomfort and awkwardness, but God uses these challenges to help us know Him better.

KEY POINTS & SCRIPTURES

- 1. Church is not about your preferences; it's about knowing Jesus.** (1 Peter 2:4-5, 9)

Consumerism is chronic dissatisfaction.

The reality is the “dream church” we long for is a myth.

- 2. The Christian life is supposed to be uncomfortable, so embrace it.** (John 12:25)

Following Jesus is an invitation to die, to pick up a cross.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Day 1: 1 Peter 2:4-9

Day 2: John 12:23-26

Day 3: Psalm 118:22-23; Acts 4:11-12

Day 4: Ephesians 2:20-21

Day 5: Luke 9:23-27

Day 6: 2 Timothy 3:12

Day 7: Galatians 2:20

Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- If you could dream up a perfect church, what would it be like?

Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Read 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9. What process is God undertaking (v. 5)? Do you usually feel this comfort and unity within the church or with other Christians? Why or why not?
- How is Christ a cornerstone? Why do some people stumble over the stone rather than build their lives on it?
- Read John 12:25-26. What is Jesus calling His disciples to do? What promise do they receive?

Start sharing. Choose some questions to create openness.

- Why is searching for a “dream church” a fool’ errand?
- In what ways is Christianity comforting? In what ways is it uncomfortable? How can we embrace the uncomfortable nature of Christianity?
- Jesus calls His followers to “deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24) What does that look like for us today? In what ways is He calling you to deny yourself? What does “taking up a cross” look like in your life?

Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

Jesus, You call us to follow You—not because it’s easy or comfortable, but because You want a relationship with us. Help us to not be content with being comfortable but push us to be uncomfortable. Move us out of our comfort zones where we’re all about ourselves and into places of discomfort where we put loving You and our neighbors above our own wants and desires. And help us to love the church we’re at because regardless of its flaws and shortcomings, it is Your beloved bride that You laid Your life down for. Amen.

Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Get uncomfortable. If it’s been a while since you’ve experienced some “discomfort” as a follower of Jesus, it might be time to step outside your comfort zone. Pray that God would open your eyes to opportunities to step out and grow.
- Commit. Fear of discomfort or a search for the “dream church” can keep us from committing to a church. If you haven’t taken the step to commit, consider what’s holding you back and take that step.