



To Be or Not to Be - Week 1 Be Receptive, Not Stubborn - Discussion & Reflection Guide

Questions and Prompts

- **In just a few words, how do you want to be remembered by people?**
- **What stood out to you from Sunday's service?** How did you sense God at work in you through the songs and the message? (The message's main points and scripture are listed below if it helps you think back.)
- Eddie shared, "stubbornness causes some painful self-inflicted wounds and a lower quality of life." **Have you ever seen this in others? Have you seen it in yourself? What does it look like?**
- Do a quick heart checkup on yourself. **How would you describe your heart right now? Are you more open and receptive to God or more resistant, guarded, and hard-hearted? Why?**
- **Read Ephesians 4:17-24 and Ephesians 2:1-6.** Have someone read the passages out loud if you're in a group.
 - Is there a word or phrase that stands out as you hear these passages?
 - Have you ever experienced any part of the process described here? What was it like?
 - Eddie shared, "the fix for a hard heart is a person, not a program." How do these passages describe what Jesus does?
- Eddie shared two possible obstacles to the work God wants to do in us:
 - Pride ("if I try hard enough, I can save myself")
 - Caution (being indecisive and overly cautious)**Do you ever get caught by one of these obstacles? What would it look like to reject them and be open to the work of Jesus in your life?**
- **Is there anything else from the message you want to explore more deeply this week?**

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take your next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Message Main Points & Scripture

- **be receptive, not stubborn**
- Exodus 5:1-2 - Moses and Aaron went and spoke to Pharaoh. They told him, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Let my people go so they may hold a festival in my honor in the wilderness."
"Is that so?" retorted Pharaoh. "And who is the LORD? Why should I listen to him and let Israel go? I don't know the LORD, and I will not let Israel go."
- Exodus 7:14 - Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is stubborn, and he still refuses to let the people go."
- Ephesians 4:17 - So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.
- Romans 12:2 - Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.
- Ephesians 4:18 - They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.
- Ephesians 4 (Message paraphrase) - I insist that there be no going along with the crowd – the empty-headed, mindless crowd. They've refused for so long to deal with God that they've lost touch, not only with God, but with reality itself. They can't think straight anymore.
- **Many of us have a faulty understanding of how to live well.**
- **When our hearts are hard, we need God more, but want him less.**
- Ephesians 4:19 - Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.
- **How do you fix a hard heart?**
- Ephesians 4:20 - You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.
- **The fix for a hard heart is a person, not a program.**
- **Jesus is not a strategy – he's a Savior.**
- Philippians 3:13-14 - I focus on this one thing: forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.
- Ephesians 4:22 - You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires. To be made new in the attitude of your minds, and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.
- Ephesians 2:8-10 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
- **The first obstacle is pride.**
- Ephesians 2:1 - As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world.
- **Dead people need to be resurrected.**
- **The second obstacle is caution.**
- **don't settle for a little faith**
- Ephesians 2:6 - God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace.