



FROM THE BLOG

You Can Come to Church and Never Be the Church

On consumers, connections, and the difference Sunday actually made



THIS IS US · PART 1 · 7 MIN READ

THE GOODLAND CHURCH · SUGAR LAND, TEXAS

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We rate things. It is how we were raised. We rate restaurants, phones, flights, and other drivers. So on Sunday morning, without deciding to, we rate church. How was the worship? How was the sermon? How was the kids ministry? Pastor Rhema Ehiemere stood up in week one of The GoodLand's first ever sermon series and admitted what everyone was thinking: those are the wrong questions. Not because they are bad questions, but because they are customer questions. And you were never meant to be a customer here.

The text was Acts 2, the famous portrait of the first church. Four devotions, daily meetings, food with gladness, favor with outsiders, and God adding to their number every single day. It is a beautiful picture. It is also completely unimpressive on paper. No building mentioned. No sound system. No program. Just people, devoted to God and to each other. That is the whole machine.

Then came the sentence that the entire series is built on, and if you only take one line from this article, take this one: the church is not a location. The church is a connection.

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Jesus said it first, in his own way: where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them. Two or three. Not two hundred. The smallest possible church still carries the complete presence of Jesus. Which means you can sit in a packed auditorium every Sunday and be completely alone — or you can have church over leftovers on a Tuesday.

The message did not pretend the difficulty away. Pastor Rhema talked about church hurt the way a doctor talks about a symptom every patient recognizes: directly. He said it is real. He said he has experienced rejection, manipulation,



and betrayal himself. And then he said something that deserves to be written down: don't let who hurt you disconnect you from who God sent to help you. He told the old story of Mephibosheth — dropped by the person carrying him as a child, invited by the king as an adult. The blessing came through the same kind of arms that once dropped him. Some of us are one act of trust away from finding out that God still heals in the same place he was wounded.

From there the message gave the church four pictures, and each one asks its own question. The church is a family we belong to — so, are you known? Not seen, known. Paul ended Romans with twenty-six greetings by name, and the pastor asked us to scroll it on our phones just to feel how unusual that kind of attention is. The church is a team we contribute in — so, where are you serving? A tree never eats its own fruit, and a gift hoarded starts to rot. The church is a hospital we heal in — so, are you safe here? Just because you cannot see their bandages doesn't mean their wounds are not real. And the church is an army we fight in — so, who is fighting beside you? When Peter was in prison, the church prayed, and the chains fell off. When James was taken, the church grieved. We are not promised outcomes. We are promised backup.

The service ended the way the series will probably run: with an assignment disguised as a culture. Five weeks, one invitation a week. Found people find people. The best story of the morning was a man who walked into a barber shop, got invited to church, and gave his life to Christ the next day. He didn't know the guy in the chair was the pastor until he saw the photo on the wall. Nobody preached at him. Somebody just asked.

So here is the question the whole message leaves you with, and it is better than “how was church?” Not: are you in church? But: are you part of the church? One you can rate. The other you can only join.

This article is a sermon-derived summary of “We Are The Church (This Is Us — Part 1)” by Pastor Rhema Ehiemere at The GoodLand Church, Sugar Land, Texas. Watch the full message on The GoodLand Church YouTube channel. Written as an independent concept by Vessel Media Agency.

