AB10

[00:00:00] **E.A. Maynard:** Welcome to the author blur podcast. I'm your host, Eric Maynard. So this episode I speak with Dr. Downer, Rosemarie downer. She's written five books on Christianity and. We discuss her books about forgiveness, about the impact that COVID or other events have had recently on the church. And I will say it was an interesting and very powerful conversation.

I enjoyed it. Like I have so many other conversations. She's an author well worth reading and listening to in this episode. So with that being said, I'm not going to beat around the Bush. I'm going to get you to this show right now. In the meantime, if you're listening to this audio, you can go to author, blurb.com and look at her profile to find out more information about her as well, or.

Just [00:01:00] listened to the show and go there afterwards. I hope you enjoy. And I look forward to talking with you soon.

So I'm here today with Dr. Downer who were discussing her five books that revolves around Christianity in the church. She has an amazing background and I could probably go on in gush about her for quite some time. But instead of me doing that. Let me, let her explain a bit about her books about herself, and then we'll go into discussing different questions so you can get to know her Dr.

Donner. Thank you for being here. If you can tell us a bit about yourself and your books, I would really appreciate it. Absolutely.

[00:01:43] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** Absolutely. So as mentioned, I am Dr. Downer. First name is rose Marie. I live in the United States, but we married. I am a former employee of USDA, where, where I did social science research.

Um, I worked for [00:02:00] food and nutrition service and, uh, let's see, I retired in 2019. And since then I have done some consulting for non-profit organizations where I do, um, program evaluation and grant writing. I'm mostly, uh, I actually entirely writing non-fiction Christian books. Now I started writing in 2009.

That was my first published non-Christian book. Then I did another one in 2015. Those two books are rewrites that are included in these in five books that we'll be discussing. Okay, enjoy writing. I believe it's important to write what the Lord gives me for the church. It's a permanent record. I'm thoroughly enjoying it.

The worst part of it is the marketing part, but I enjoyed writing and talking about it.

[00:02:51] **E.A. Maynard:** I understand. Yeah. Marketing can definitely be a pain in the neck. So what started you writing? I grew up in [00:03:00] churches. I've had good and bad experiences with churches to say the least, and even started just finding my way back to.

The religious side of the, of life with that being said, what got you to write about churches? What drove you to actually make the point? Because if I'm looking at it, right, you're one book, the higher call of forgiveness, it's a mandate. Then you did a higher call of forgiveness leader guide, and then. The COVID 19 tests, church, or God religion or relationship.

I mean, these are sounds like they're trying to focus on certain topics of getting attention in certain areas. Yeah. What got you to actually feel that these are needed?

[00:03:52] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** So the high color forgiveness was first published in 2015 and, [00:04:00] um, I got quite a few. Comments feedback that it was worth putting that book in a study guide study series.

So, um, I redid it in 2021 and at that time I expanded it and updated it as well as the leader guide and student workbook that goes with it. So the. Study sessions line up with the chapters in the book. It allows for small group discussions and questions and answers and looking at scenarios that people can relate to a deeper examination of the scriptures and concepts that are in and good for small groups and Bible studies and women's group and things.

Okay. I've wrote the book on forgiveness because I went through a situation and it was a church situation that I went. And I went, when I was [00:05:00] going through my situation, I started to journal about my, my pain and hurt. I write a lot. So I've been writing, I love to write. And so I realized that what I was journaling was pretty long.

It was turning into like a book. And I started writing the book way, way back when this happened, but that was not a book of edification. It was really a record of my pain. It was really a rewrite of what happened and that would not bless him when the Lord stopped me from writing the book and it later on, he led me back to pick it up.

And from an entirely different perspective, I came in this book is written to heal. It's written to show people what forgiveness God's way look like it's written to show people what the blessing. Oh, forgiving look like and what the consequences of unforgiveness look like and let people know more than anything else that his grace is sufficient and no matter what their hurt is by his grace, we can forgive.

[00:05:56] **E.A. Maynard:** All right. Let me ask this about the forgiveness book then [00:06:00] just because I kind of want to dig into it is the forgiveness in the sense of forgiving people, forgiving the church, forgiving. Who is focused on forgiveness is of just forgiveness in general. And I do agree that there is problems. If you don't forgive and you hold on to stuff.

It's, I think there's an old saying, at least I've heard it quite a few times. Growing up is having anger towards somebody else's like drinking poison and expecting them to get sick.

[00:06:30] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** Yes. Jess Myers is known for saying that. Um, so it's about forgiving. Anyone who offends. It's hard to say you forgive the church because this church is made up of multiple individuals.

That's the church. It's a massive, so is whoever hurt you is whomever offend you is whomever caused damage to you that you need to forgive. And it doesn't matter who it is. And it doesn't matter the nature of the assault. Yeah.

[00:06:59] **E.A. Maynard:** All [00:07:00] right. So in your book, the forgiveness, do you discuss on the different routes that the Bible talks about to actually forgive?

Because sometimes forgiveness is easier said than done without guidance?

[00:07:12] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** Absolutely. Yes. And the Bible, the Bible, if you, if you, if you stick to the word of God, you can't get lost, you just simply cannot get lost. Um, and S yeah, the Bible is very straightforward and I'm not sure there are different routes to forgive.

I'm not sure there's one route to forgive and is through love. Right.

[00:07:33] **E.A. Maynard:** And that I agree, but there's different ways. Getting your mindset to that point? I believe.

[00:07:38] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** Absolutely. Yes. And it's through praying, trusting the Lord, believing the word of God, trusting that he, he will fight your battles. He will take care of Asia.

So I draw reference to a lot of scriptures or drivers to a lot of scenarios in the Bible. Parables that Jesus taught. And that's why this study series is so very important because it gives people a full [00:08:00] understanding of what God is saying about forgiveness. Many times we think we are forgiven, but we really have not his way, his way.

And that's why it's important to go back word.

[00:08:09] **E.A. Maynard:** Yeah, I understand. And then you go on to. The COVID test church. God, what drove you to do that? Because obviously that is definitely remarking to the current time.

[00:08:24] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** Yes. Um, that title I was in prayer one morning. I had no intentions of writing. My next book was going to be something different.

And that, that is still on hold. I still need to get back to that. Oh, by the way, if you allow me, before I go on to church or God, um, I just submitted the manuscript for a 40 day devotional on forgiveness to the book layout guy, my editor and book layout. So I, so it's going to be a full packet. Now we have, um, what do we have?

We have the. [00:09:00] Yeah, the leader died. We had the student book and we have a 40 day devotional coming. Yes. I very passionate about forgiveness because it's our way out for healing and deliverance.

[00:09:12] **E.A. Maynard:** So when it comes to forgiveness, I will say I personally, it. If you don't forgive, it does hurt you more than other people.

And it does hang on and make you a lot more miserable than the other person. So, absolutely to me, that was one thing that caught my eye and caught my attention about you. When you first contacted me is forgiveness is a big thing, and it's a powerful thing to be able to have in your life so that you don't hold onto the past in

[00:09:42] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** that sense.

And that's why I redid it because it's, it's current. It's very calm. Uh, another, just a couple of seconds. I shared three, the three books, the three main books, not the leader guide into word work word book. I was out at the store yesterday and I saw this lady effort to get the three books [00:10:00] from my car run and just share them with her.

I put them in front of her and immediately she looked past the other toolbox, oh, forgiveness. I need that immediately. She just went straight to forgiveness because it's so relevant. It's so very.

[00:10:13] **E.A. Maynard:** It isn't, especially in today's world. A lot of people are holding onto a lot of anger. There's a lot of judgment and a lot of stuff going on there.

I think today it's very relevant.

[00:10:26] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** Yes. Yes. So the other book which we can agree is also relevant. Current is church or God. The concept behind that book is, and the reason I have the COVID-19 tests, charts, or God religion, our relationship. It's a question. That book is entirely revolved around round. The question, are we wedded to church?

Are we wedded to the institution be called church? Are we wedded to the building? The lights, the music, the people, this trucks, or the culture? The [00:11:00] feel, or are we wedded to God? So during the COVID shutdown, when folks could not go in the building to worship, did believers decline spiritually or did they grow?

And the question is if you declined, is it because you couldn't be in the building? Is it because you couldn't be with other people? So do you have. Personal intimate relationship with him that you've been cultivating that although you couldn't be in the building and hear the music and the lights and hear the preaching you declined, are you dependent on only what you'd get in the four walls of the church?

Or do you have a relationship with him? And if that's the case, Why is that what I, those are in your life that have you going to church, but don't have a deep, intimate relationship with them. So it's a very, um, introspective examination type book. What's my relationship with the Lord in light. And is it threatened [00:12:00] if I can't go to church, do I have idols in my life?

And what are those idols? Have I made church in idle? Have I made ministry in. Pastors that couldn't function because they couldn't go in the pulpit or because they couldn't go besides someone's bedside that couldn't pivot and minister to their congregation from a different platform. Is it because they are wedded to church, the structure, the culture that we have created, what are we devoted to?

That's that's the thrust.

[00:12:29] **E.A. Maynard:** Okay, well, and to me that makes sense. And I guess the big thing is, is with a lot of people not being there in church. And I was always told that with a being a church is just a gathering of people. It's not really, or it should not really be revolving around the building, the lights and all the glitter, which is kind of, I guess my problem.

Here. I lived down in Northern Virginia, myself, [00:13:00] where it seems like a lot of churches are very much focused on all that glitter, all that flash. And even some of the churches we've looked at my family and I've looked at going to, they. Really I've watched some of their videos. They put online and they don't really stick to what the Bible says.

There does seem to be a larger thing, a large growing separation between what I was always told the, the words in red versus what somebody is currently believing. So it sounds like with that book of yours, it's pushing people. Look back and consider, do we need to focus on while we're trying to draw people in our we're trying to be more entertaining.

Are we trying to save souls? What are we trying to do here? I know my pastor back in Ohio, him, and I've had a discussion about the [00:14:00] same topic. And the fact is, is he says that a lot of churches seem to be having that same dilemma where it's more. They're pushing more political agendas, more on both sides of the aisle, not just one or the other, but people are not focused on the whole word of God.

They're not focused on the Bible and teaching and letting people experience that relationship. So,

[00:14:30] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** which is church membership and church attendance have declined since the shutdown. And the question is why. Why did this distract you from your walk with the Lord? Why did this distract you from going back into building?

Um, it's, it's really an examination of the heart and the book really calls us back into intimacy with him. It calls us back into relationship with him who are really, truly [00:15:00] worshiping. Is it church or is it God.

[00:15:04] **E.A. Maynard:** All right. So let me ask you. Then do you believe that with the whole shutdowns, the COVID, everything that's been happening for the last couple of years, do you believe that's had a negative effect on the church?

In the sense of people don't have that connection? I mean, you can watch a video. Feel connected to somebody by churches, also a sense of community in the sense of you can share your beliefs, you can feel connected with people, you can build a community. Do you believe that a lot of people are trying to find that community, other places since churches have been shut down?

[00:15:46] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** I think there are some, the Barna group studies show that, um, about 30%. 30 to 33% of those that, that were diligent church churchgoers before the shutdown [00:16:00] have fallen off. And that's the, that's the percentage I'm talking about. Why, what were you alleged to, what were you waited to defeat? Why this caused you now to go the other direction.

So I wouldn't say the majority of the church, but there are, I even know that there are small churches that they're gone. They're off the map because people have fallen off, right. That they're the people that I'm talking to as do it. And even the pastors, why is this happening? Why. What did you not do? Not putting the onus on them, but what did you not do in ministry during the shutdown to not connect with these people and these people?

What w w what, what about your walk is missing is this week why this has happened? Yeah.

[00:16:52] **E.A. Maynard:** Alright. So with that, do you think that it's something that, do you think it's the sense of? [00:17:00] They're not really putting out the. Word of God is part of the reason. So people are looking at other resources, other information for that connection.

Do you have a theory behind it that

[00:17:15] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** so, you know, an answer to why it happened is it cannot be one reason. Right? So I, I mean, looking at the person first, I'm looking at the person first. So if before the shutdown, you had a diligent prayer, You had a diligent word life where you read the word on your own on a regular basis, you have your personal worship time.

You have your personal devotion time, your personal prayer life. Yes. The church plays a role. The church is essential. As you mentioned, it's a place of community, but place to serve to be served a place for connection. It does play a role, but it should not be the glue that keep you together in your walk with the Lord.

It should be your personal [00:18:00] private. Time in your secret place with the Lord. So my, my theory is the people who lost interest in church during this shutdown where. Interested in church because of church outside church in the building, the, the, all the glamor that maybe not even glamour, but just the, the, the community they're dependent on the community versus an intimate relationship with the Lord, which is what.

Right. He wants a one-on-one relationship with us over the relationship we have with him on Sunday morning.

[00:18:38] **E.A. Maynard:** So basically the Sunday morning Christians, where they go off Friday night drink and then do all sorts of stuff and then come to church on Sunday, acting like they're saints. And what's. So have you,

[00:18:51] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** even if they don't drink, I mean, , it's replaces your relationship with the Lord, right?

[00:18:59] **E.A. Maynard:** What I mean [00:19:00] by that? The people that go out and do raise hell and havoc and you know, not everybody that drinks is raising hell and havoc. Not everybody that goes out and does things just like I was always told just because somebody is not in church doesn't mean that they are not Christians. Like my family, like I said, we can't find a church that we like in this area.

The church that we like is actually back in Ohio. So it makes it hard for us to get back there every Sunday, obviously.

Well, we're far from that point yet, but with that being said, what we try to do is we try to find our way, the best we can. And I think what, and again, I don't have the background you obviously have on this, but it does sound like people need to find if they're actually [00:20:00] there for the community or for God.

And. If you're there for the community, they need to look more in themselves. Define that connection for God. All right. So let's, let's talk about your other book. You have a book called the. Scared church scarred. I'm sorry. My, I have to go to the eye doctors coming this week. So forgive me, my pet tablets, not the best at this point, but can you tell me a bit about that in a bit about what that's reflecting?

Okay.

[00:20:38] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** So the sales scarred church is titled South's card because we are the church. It's not the building is not the bricks and mortars. It's the people that make up the church. And in the church, you have infighting, you have jealousy, you have competition. You have what I call. I talk about [00:21:00] seven, seven scars.

I should know them by heart. I'm going to try to remember them. Lack of vision. Uh, I talk about lack of vision. I talk about crab syndrome. Anti-virus eco tendency is king leadership, poverty mentality. I can remember five. Um, so, so lack of vision, you have leaders in the church that lack vision, you have leaders in the church that all they are concerned about is having church on a weekly basis.

If they have a program. And all the slots are failed on the program and people come and have charts they're good, or whatever their ministries are about it's routine. It's th they don't go farther than though they don't push the envelope. They're not innovative. They're not risk-takers they, they maintain the church that's church mentality versus kingdom and crab syndrome.

I talk about. [00:22:00] Everyone will want to have a big ministry. And some people will pile on top of their brothers and sisters just to get to the top so they can have what they consider a big ministry. That's the crab syndrome work versus working together. Anti-piracy go tendency. Now, churches are, um, not really teaching the pure unadulterated word that.

Feeding people's tickling ears. That's anti-fascist sequel. And that Pharisees were sticklers for the word we've gone to the other extreme now of mitigating, watering down the words, pastors are no longer holding people accountable, um, in the body of Christ, he leadership we've glamorized church leadership, we've glamorized pastoring.

So those kinds of wounds, I call them. It's sales scarred because we are the church. So when we operate that kind of way, where scarring the church, we are where we are. We are not upholding the integrity of the body of [00:23:00] Christ and who the bride of Christ. Um, and so I talk about those things that bring us to the place where it doesn't end on the flaws or the scars.

I bring us to the place where, what we can do the common alignment with where Jesus wants us to be for the body of Christ to be who she should be. That's what the south scar church is about.

[00:23:20] **E.A. Maynard:** Alright. So do you think there's a underlining theme? With your books, like the self-esteem issues, the any mental illness problems that going on in the communities, do you think that plays an issue with while you're writing about, in the sense of these people have these issues one way or another that's affecting that they need to look at that is addressed in your book.

[00:23:49] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** Yes. So I don't, I don't think anything I talk about in the south scar church personally, is due to mental illness. Um, I do a deep, uh, [00:24:00] the book starts out with a good discussion of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. I'm not sure if you're familiar with it, but so it starts from your order needs to higher order needs.

And I explained that when we come to G. The saves our soul. He redeems us from sin. He forgives our sin, but our emotional, an inner broken mess, then I healed. It's a process, right? So you have people in the church who never got affirmed by their father who never got told. You can do this. You're good enough.

You're your key. You can do this and get applauded by their father, the house, people who come in the body of Christ that are leaders that are pastors, that are bench warmers that are cute, whatever suitors, whatever they are with this hunger in this. And this is why, for example, I'm just giving one of many examples.

You see competition in the church because this is still [00:25:00] striving for that affirmation. They're still striving for that recognition. These are the people that came function. If they're not in the pulpit, if, if they're not in a visible ministry. So it's these on addressing. Wounds, these, these mental, emotional conditions from childhood, from history, from broken marriages, from history that that are brought into the body of Christ that are not addressed.

And many ministries are not equipped to deal with these things. Many ministries are solely for. On spiritual issues. They, they don't realize that the underlying reason for this woman to be so argumentative for her, this woman to be so rebellious is it's beyond scene. It's beyond break breaking the law of God.

It's a broken ness in her that the body of Christ is not equipped often not equipped to address.

[00:25:54] **E.A. Maynard:** I understand. And I mean, so yeah, so. I remember one thing you [00:26:00] said is that. You in, uh, contact that we did that goal setting, things like that is also part of your writing in the sense of people need to figure out the goals they want in life and web books focus on that.

Is it the forgiveness or is it the church and God which books or all of them focusing on setting goals to get back to God them.

[00:26:27] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** So none of the books really specifically, these, these, these is that's a skill that I have in coaching people too. But if you should look to a book. Allude to that or discuss that to some degree, what it would be the south scarred church, because, um, as leaders and the sales car church speak to, um, leaders a lot, there's a, there's a whole chapter on leadership that king leadership, um, as leaders and.

We, we must have [00:27:00] goals that we are pursuing. I feel sorry for anyone who don't have anything that they're aspiring to, that they want to accomplish and goals with dates on it, goals with a plan, because a goal without a plan is just an idea. You have to have a plan. You have to have a roadmap out to get there.

Stay on the PA pace you want to stay on, but it's important to have a plan. And with that goal, you have tasks. That's the ban, your short-term goal, midterm goal long-term goal. And so yes, goals are important because if you, we don't have goals, we are going around in a circle and where we're spending energy, you're on a treadmill, but you're not moving.

You're still in the same spot, but you're moving and spending energy. We must have.

[00:27:42] **E.A. Maynard:** I understand. So let me ask this, then let's say that there's somebody out there that's trying to find out. If they want to get back into the church, they say they've had the issues of the infighting and the issues of people giving them issues and they just left the [00:28:00] church.

What book do you have that you think would help them? Would it be the forgiveness to help them get back into it? Yes. Which forgiveness book do you think would be the best for them to pick up it? Start with

[00:28:13] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** the forgiveness books are together. These are bundled. They relate to each other. So the book itself that says expanded and updated reading, that book would be held.

It would be further helpful to do this study guide along with the book, any materials there would be helpful. The devotional that's coming out, that's all flow also helpful, but I would probably suggest that emotional after reading the book, um, but the book, the high call of forgiveness is a good place to go because actually.

I spent some time talking about church hurt and that this strategy behind the church hurt is bigger than you as an individual. When we get hurt in church, it's really not about us. It's about the, the seed that's [00:29:00] in you, the potential that's in you. It's about the enemy trying to distract you from, from your divine destiny.

It's about the enemy, trying to lay the church. It's not about the individual. So if we have the right perspective on what's going on, when we are hurt, especially in the context of the church, it is easier. You know what? I also tell individuals like that because I talk to those individuals a lot. I could be one.

I could've walked away from the church and hate the church and wanted to have nothing to do with the church. I've been very, very deeply hurt by the church. I'm not only once I am still in the church. You know why? Because my relationship is not with the church. My relationship is with Jesus Christ. When he returns, I cannot stand before him.

And. I didn't serve you because of what XYZ did to me.

[00:29:57] **E.A. Maynard:** Right. I understand that. Like I [00:30:00] said, from what I remember, especially it's even said in the Bible that the churches, not the walls, but the gathering of people. So you find the people that you can worship with and grow with and be able to build that relationship with correct.

Yeah. I mean, just because one church is not the right fit for you does not mean you need to avoid all church.

[00:30:23] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** Exactly. And some people make the mistake of doing that

[00:30:26] **E.A. Maynard:** well, like it I'll be honest with you. I've been kicked out of, I think, five churches in my lifetime. Yeah. Well, one of them was because I dated a preacher's daughter, which is never a good thing, but.

It was what happened that her and I got caught doing that got me kicked out

[00:30:51] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** mercy, mercy, you know, I

[00:30:53] **E.A. Maynard:** agree. But my younger days I was a little Wilder and. It was also, I've [00:31:00] gone to churches where, because I've read the Bible and I question pastors and things like that. I've been to churches where the pastors don't want to be questioned.

They want you to listen to what they say. If you don't like what they say, get out. Wow. I've had people, I've had pastors in the, I forget what they're called now. The con the congregation members come to me and tell me that I'm just really not welcome in the church. So out of my life, I've had that quite a few times.

And wow. So, yeah, and again, I found that it is difficult to deal with it after so many times, you're like I'm done. And for awhile, I did walk away. I said, I'm just now finding my way back. And the sad thing is, is the church that we find connected to is back in Northern Ohio, where the pastor is a fantastic guy.

He [00:32:00] does an amazing job in, I still once in a while, mind you, I don't bother him as much as I probably should, but I do reach out to him with questions. If I have them. Forgiveness is a big thing. And that's also where I can say, I know from personal experience too, that forgiveness is not the easiest thing to come by, but it is valuable to have yes,

[00:32:25] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** actually it's a mandate

by God is one of his commands. Yeah, that

[00:32:33] **E.A. Maynard:** it is. Yeah. So I do appreciate you being on. Absolutely. I have a feeling that we could probably dig into this for quite some time. And the problem is. I don't want to overwhelm people too much with it. So I'll tell you why the next books you got, you have coming out.

I want you to reach out to me because I want to have you on again, because I want to talk with you again with that being [00:33:00] said, can you tell people where they can find you? Can you tell people. If they want to reach out to you to get more information where the best place to do it is.

[00:33:09] **Dr. Rosemarie Downer:** Absolutely.

Absolutely. I would love to talk to anyone who wants to talk to me. My email address is info books by Rosemarie that's R O S E M a R I e.com info@booksbyrosemary.com. My website is. Books by rose marie.com. I'll be Debbie that books, virals murray.com. Facebook books, spirals Marie weather books, Rosemarie, Instagram books by Rosemarie.

So pretty much books by Rosemarie everywhere except Twitter's books, Rosemarie. Um, the books can be found on Amazon. If you put my name in all of the books. And, um, that's where you can get him or my website.

[00:33:49] **E.A. Maynard:** Well, it would be best to go to the website that way they can learn more about you as well, and find the books there.

Hello. So have all your information, these links in the show notes, [00:34:00] as well as a profile on author blurb.com, where people can go and find you find these episodes. I do appreciate it. I'm going to stop the recording. So this is the end of the conversation for everybody. And if you can, hold on, we'll talk a little more after.

Okay. Hi, Dr. Donner. Thank you for being here.

So that was the shell. That was our conversation. It was a good conversation. Like I said, I hope you enjoyed it as well. With that being said, go to author, blurb.com, where you can find the information on Dr. Downer. You can also find information on our past guests, our upcoming guests find all of our shows.

Where we're streamed, even find articles written by some of our guests. Now, I hope you enjoyed it. LV enjoy all of our shows and you come back, tell your friends, [00:35:00] rate the show. And if you really do like it and you want to help out, you can go to show support@authorblurb.com and there's three options where you.

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