SERMON NOTES

Perilous Waters

2026 | Navigating the Dangerous Currents Shaping the Church

Part 8: Carried by the Crowd | *When Culture Disciples the Church*

BIG Idea: Jesus does not belong to our tribe. Every political, ideological, and cultural allegiance must bow to Him. The Church must recognize the currents that threaten its faithfulness and refuse to surrender its discernment, convictions, and witness to the crowd.

Application: Examine the voices, movements, and loyalties influencing your thinking and behavior. Measure them against Scripture, reject the double standards and hostility that tribalism produces, and demonstrate your ultimate allegiance to Jesus through biblical truth, discernment, unity, and Christlike conduct.

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Sometimes the most dangerous currents are the ones everyone around us has already <u>surrendered</u> to.

Mark 15:6-15 (ESV) *Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified*

6 Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. 7 And among the
rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. 8 And
the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. 9 And he answered them,
saying, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” 10 For he perceived that it was out of
envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. 11 But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him
release for them Barabbas instead. 12 And Pilate again said to them, “Then what shall I do with the man
you call the King of the Jews?” 13 And they cried out again, “Crucify him.” 14 And Pilate said to them,
“Why? What evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Crucify him.” 15 So Pilate, wishing to
satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be
crucified.

A crowd can be passionate, unified, confident, and completely <u>wrong</u>.

What happens when the voices around us become more influential than the truth before us?

1. The crowd is always <u>forming</u> us.

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)

1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform 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.

The voices we repeatedly <u>listen</u> to do more than inform us. They're <u>influencing</u> who we're becoming.

Colossians 2:8 (NLT)

[8] Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.

The crowd does not have to change our doctrine to change our <u>discipleship</u>.

2. Jesus will not become our tribal <u>mascot</u>.

Joshua 5:13-15 (NIV)

[13] Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?"

[14] "Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord have for his servant?"

[15] The commander of the Lord's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

Jesus does not belong to one tribe. Our tribe must <u>answer</u> to Jesus.

Our politics should be discipled by <u>Jesus</u>. Jesus should never be discipled by our <u>politics</u>.

Matthew 7:15-20 (NIV)

[15] "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. [16] By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? [17] Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. [18] A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. [19] Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. [20] Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

1 John 4:1 (NIV)

[1] Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

A Christian <u>label</u> does not make an idea Christian.

Philippians 3:20 (NIV)

[20] <u>But our citizenship is in heaven</u>. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

3. The Church must become a people the crowd cannot <u>own</u>.

1 Corinthians 1:10-13 (NLT) *Divisions in the Church*

[10] I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose. [11] For some members of Chloe's household have told me about your quarrels, my dear brothers and sisters. [12] Some of you are saying, "I am a follower of Paul." Others are saying, "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Peter," or "I follow only Christ." [13] Has Christ been divided into factions? Was I, Paul, crucified for you? Were any of you baptized in the name of Paul? Of course not!

The Church's unity is not secured by voting <u>alike</u>. It is secured by bowing to the <u>same</u> Lord.

When our political loyalties begin determining how we <u>treat</u> people instead of the <u>teachings</u> of Jesus, we've surrendered an authority that belongs to Him alone.

The safest place in perilous waters is not finding the right crowd to drift with. It's anchoring your life to Christ.