

SERMON NOTES:

Perilous Waters | *Navigating the Dangerous Currents Shaping the Church*

Part 6: Community as a Commodity

BIG Idea: The community Christ calls us into is not something to consume and discard, but a people to love, serve, and remain faithful to—even when relationships become difficult.

Application: Stop evaluating your church merely by what you receive from it. Learn to love, forgive, serve, and remain faithful to the people Christ has called you to share life with.

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There is a troubling contradiction developing in the contemporary Church.

We want the blessings of community, but we're becoming increasingly unwilling to accept the responsibilities that make genuine community possible.

You can change your community without changing your character.

The community Christ calls us into is not something to consume and discard, but a people to love, serve, and remain faithful to – even when relationships become difficult.

1. Community is not a product to consume.

Romans 12:4-5 (NLT)

⁴ Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, ⁵ so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

Church membership is not a subscription to religious services. It is a commitment to share life with God's people.

2. Community requires the courage to love through difficulty.

Colossians 3:12-14 (NLT)

¹² Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

You cannot practice forgiveness without dealing with offenses. You cannot make allowances for people's faults without encountering their imperfections. You cannot bear another's burdens if you refuse to get involved in their struggles.

A fresh start doesn't necessarily mean a transformed heart.

Relational Fortitude – the spiritual maturity to remain faithful through the ordinary difficulties and changing seasons of relationships.

Ephesians 4:2-3 (NLT)

² Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. ³ Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.

We cannot demand grace while refusing accountability.

Christian maturity isn't measured by how little conflict we encounter, but by how faithfully we respond when conflict comes.

3. Community flourishes where commitment takes root.

Acts 2:42-47 (NLT) *The Believers Form a Community*

⁴² All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

⁴³ A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. ⁴⁴ And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. ⁴⁵ They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. ⁴⁶ They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— ⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

You cannot build deep roots if you're always looking for somewhere else to plant yourself.

John 13:34-35 (NLT)

³⁴ "So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. ³⁵ Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

Remember: The community Christ calls us into is not something to consume and discard, but a people to love, serve, and remain faithful to – even when relationships become difficult.