

Winds of Change

Pastor Anthony J. Shetley, Sunday, February 15, 2026

Christianity is not a movement started by a man named Jesus. Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God who came to fulfill God's eternal plan. Christianity was a label given to Christ's followers by those around them who observed their lives.

Movements come and go. Nations and Kingdoms of the world rise and fall. God's kingdom is eternal!

Therefore, truth is not tethered to the culture of any age. Truth is not trend-sensitive, and it does not adjust itself to generational preferences. Truth it is eternally grounded in God's nature.

Surely, the gospel must be communicated in language people understand, but it can't be reshaped by what people prefer.

A clear and present danger to the church: Conformity

We are in trouble when:

- Culture shapes theology – our understanding of God
- People's feelings / comforts shapes preaching
- Individual preferences shapes the way we govern the church.
- And Individualism replaces community.

The Winds of Change have blown throughout history. No generation has existed that hasn't felt their currents or been influenced by their force.

(Illustration)

The Ancient World

- Empire ruled everything.
- Caesar was lord.
- Philosophy shaped identity.
- Early Christians were called strange and dangerous.

That culture passed.

Medieval Period

- The Church dominated society.
- Religion shaped daily life.
- Fear and superstition mixed with faith.

That culture passed.

Enlightenment & Modern Age

- Reason became supreme.
- Science became ultimate authority.
- Progress replaced providence.

That culture shifted.

Digital / Identity Age

- Identity defines truth.
- Self-expression is sacred.
- Algorithms shape perception.
- Loyalty is fluid.

We are here. And one day — this too will pass.

2 Corinthians 4:4 Satan is “The god of this age.”

“This Age” is all inclusive of history. It has a beginning and end. This age will pass and give way to God’s eternal kingdom.

Every age has:

- Cultural assumptions (beliefs)
- Moral currents / ebbs and flows
- Spiritual blindness
- Dominant narratives

Generational labels are proof that culture evolves.

Now we label generation.

- Baby Boomers (1946-1964) *18yrs
- Generation X (1965-1980) *15yrs
- Millennials (1981-1996) *15yrs
- Generation Z (1997-2012) *15yrs
- Generation Alpha (2013- present)

Why do we do that? We do it because:

- Cultural values shift.
- Technology reshapes thinking.
- Authority is viewed differently.
- Relationships are handled differently.
- Identity is formed differently.

The crucial question for us: “Are we being shaped more by our generation or by the kingdom of God?”

Cultural Air / Atmosphere

Ephesians 2:2 (walking) according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

We are in the “Foothills” positioned between the coast and mountains. Traveling north along interstate I-26 you will soon be climbing the Saluda grade. You’re driving. Talking. Listening to music.

- You’re not thinking about elevation at all. But something is changing.
- The atmospheric pressure is shifting. The air is thinning.
- And you don’t even realize it until your ears pop.

That’s how cultural influence works. The most powerful shifts in our cultural environment happen gradually.

The power of the air speaks to Satan’s influence which rides upon these WINDS OF CHANGE.

Windmills and Turbines.

Today, these winds seemingly blow harder and more forceful than ever before. It’s like up to the twentieth century, these winds were generated by a windmill and somewhere around the turn of the century, Industrial turbines were installed.

This is due to –

- Warp speed technological advancements
- 24hr news cycles
- Social media
- Electronic devices
- Global internet

All of us are “culture consumers”

Not all is wrong. Not all is evil. Some cultural developments are good.
Medical advances. Technological tools. Increased awareness. Opportunities for connection.

Not all influence is corrupt, but no influence is neutral.

Ultimate Authority

Every age / generation carries assumptions about one central question: Who has ultimate authority? In the beginning, The serpent asked, “Did God really say?” That wasn’t about fruit. It was about authority. Who gets to define good and evil?

And every generation is still answering that question.

- In the ancient world, empire shaped identity.
- In the medieval world, institutional religion shaped daily life.
- In the Enlightenment, human reason rose as the final authority.

Today, we live in a time where one idea / one spirit dominates the atmosphere of our culture: Self.

Hyper-individualism

Defined > Hyper-individualism is the idea that the individual—their rights, preferences, identity, and freedom—matters above almost everything else.

In simple terms “What I want, I feel, and I choose is the highest good—and no one else gets a say.”

Common traits of hyper-individualism

- Personal autonomy above all – “No one can tell me what to do.”
- Self-defined truth – “What’s true for me is true.”
- Suspicion of authority – institutions, churches, families, and traditions are often seen as oppressive.
- Identity as self-constructed – identity is something you create, not something received.
- Weak sense of obligation – commitments are optional if they stop serving the individual.

How it shows up culturally

- “Follow your heart” as a moral rule – WHATEVER MAKES YOU HAPPY
- Cutting off relationships that require sacrifice (felt in and by the church)
- Viewing community primarily in terms of personal benefit
- Treating disagreement as harm / offense
- “I don’t owe anyone anything”

That mindset doesn’t just shape society. It seeps into the church.

Romans 12:2 “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

We have been called – chosen – saved from this world and its culture. We have been born again into the Kingdom of God where JESUS IS LORD! JESUS IS TRUTH!

The Winds Are Not Going to Stop

The winds of change are not going to stop. They never have. They never will. So, the real question is, “What are you anchored to?”

Jesus told a story about two builders. Both heard His words. Both built houses. Both experienced storm and wind.

“The rain descended... the floods came... the winds blew...” The difference was not the storm. The difference was the foundation. One built on sand. One built on rock.

The storm did not reveal the strength of the wind. It revealed the strength of the foundation.

(Personal Confrontation) Here is the sober reality:

- You can sit in church and still be shaped by the influence of the culture.
- You can hear truth and not build on it.
- You can profess Christ and still be building on sand.

A Call to Action.

The winds of change are not the threat. Drifting is. When the winds blow — and they will — what you are anchored to will be revealed.

Romans 12:2 – The Call is to, “Not be conformed to this world...”

Do not let this age press you into its mold. “But be transformed...” How? “By the renewing of your mind.”

Transformation begins in the mind, but it doesn’t stop there. The Bible word for that kind of change is **repentance**. Repentance is a decisive turning.

Repentance occurs when truth confronts your thinking and you realize that your assumptions, your loyalties, and your priorities, have been shaped more by the age we’re living in than by Christ, and you turn.

Individualism says, “I rule myself.” But the gospel says, “Jesus is Lord.”

These can’t exist simultaneously. One is rock – the other is sand. What are you building your life upon? WHAT ARE YOU ANCHORED TO?

Who has the final say in your life?

When everything else disagrees with God, who decides?