

Small Group Discussion Guide

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

Part 7: When Pastors Become Celebrities

BIG Idea: When the Church measures spiritual leadership by popularity instead of faithfulness, both pastors and people lose sight of Christ.

Application: Evaluate spiritual leadership according to Scripture rather than popularity or personal preference. Encourage faithful shepherding, resist personality-centered Christianity, and keep your faith anchored in Christ.

Discussion Questions

Icebreaker: Who is a teacher, coach, or mentor you've appreciated over the years? What made that person memorable or helpful?

1. In **1 Corinthians 3:4–9**, what was happening among the Corinthian believers? Why did Paul consider their behavior spiritually immature?
2. Paul says he planted, Apollos watered, but God produced the growth. How should that shape the way we view pastors and spiritual leaders?
3. What's the difference between genuinely appreciating a gifted pastor and placing that pastor on a pedestal?
4. How might our culture of influencers, followers, and personal brands affect what people expect from a church or its leaders?
5. In **1 Corinthians 4:1–5**, Paul emphasizes faithfulness rather than human approval. Why is that distinction important for spiritual leaders?
6. In **2 Timothy 4:3–4**, Paul describes people seeking teachers who tell them what they want to hear. How can congregations unintentionally encourage this?
7. How can we respond constructively when a pastor's teaching challenges our preferences or makes us uncomfortable?
8. According to **Ephesians 4:11–12**, what has Christ called pastors and other ministry leaders to accomplish? How is that different from simply attracting an audience?
9. John the Baptist welcomed Jesus' increasing prominence (**John 3:26–30**). What does his example teach us about humility and spiritual influence?
10. **Personal Application:** What is one practical way you can encourage faithful spiritual leadership while keeping your own confidence centered on Christ?

Prayer Prompt: Pray for pastors, elders, and ministry leaders to remain humble, accountable, and faithful to God's Word. Ask the Lord to help our congregation recognize and encourage biblical leadership without

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elevating personalities above Christ. Pray that Lifehouse would continue growing into a mature, equipped, Christ-centered body in which every believer contributes to the work of ministry.