



OFF-BRAND

JESUS

November 3, 2024 Sermon Study Guide **Brian Bales – Off Brand Jesus: *Tribalism***

For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human? What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building. (1 Corinthians 3:4-9) ESV

“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. ⁸ For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. John 17:6-10 ESV

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. John 17:20-21 ESV

A Life Application Study Guide

James 1:22-25 tells us to put into practice what we are discovering in God's word.

2. **Tribes in Corinth** - Paul's desire was to teach the church in Corinth greater and deeper truths about God, moving them from spiritual milk to solid food, but their own immaturity kept them from being ready for anything more. (vv. 1-4)
- How is today's culture influencing you more than Jesus' heart for you? What will draw you back to Him?
 - Think about the irony of the term "celebrity pastor." How do you think this happens?
 - When have you found it easier to follow a person rather than Jesus? What was the result?
3. **Truth in Corinth** – Paul reminds the Corinthians that pastors and apostles are the tools, not the real power.
- What are some ways we rank success in our culture? Where do you see this in the church? What about in your own heart toward certain pastors or churches?

- How does this view conflict with Jesus’s desire for us as His Followers today?
(John 17:20-23) **Read in the Message paraphrase:** *I’m praying not only for them
But also for those who will believe in me. Because of them and their witness about
me. The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind—
Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, So they might be one heart and mind
with us. Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me.
The same glory you gave me, I gave them, So they’ll be as unified and together as
we are—I in them and you in me. Then they’ll be mature in this oneness,
And give the godless world evidence That you’ve sent me and loved them
In the same way you’ve loved me.*

- How have you experienced authentic transformation from the **One** true power source? How are you now allowing the Holy Spirit to work in you and through you?

4. **We are on the Same Team** – For we are God’s fellow workers. (v.9)

- What sort of questions can help us discern truth today, no matter who is speaking?
- When is it easy to “tribe up”? What are some of the dangers of living in a “Team CFC” or “Team Bales” world?

- What negative feelings toward other Christ Followers do you need to repent of this week? How might this move your heart and focus back toward Jesus who is worthy of your devotion?

5. How Should We Live?

- Recognize our own growth is stunted if we focus on the wrong person. When have you let yourself become more focused on a person or ministry than God? What were the results?

- Give honor to the **One** who is doing the transformation. Do you talk about, honor, or think about Jesus more or less than the people who serve him? What does your answer reveal about you?

- Repent when your preference has wrongly turned toward Tribalism. Paul's consistent offer to the Corinthian church is the gift of repentance. Repentance is still the offer for us today. Where do you need to repent and turn back to the one true God?

