



WEEK 2 | NICK CARNES

All Scripture is in the Christian Standard Bible (CSB), unless noted differently.

Hebrews 11:35-39people were tortured, not accepting release, so that they might gain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Others experienced mockings and scourgings, as well as bonds and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawed in two, they died by the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins, in goatskins, destitute, afflicted, and mistreated. ³⁸ The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and on mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground.

Jesus is to always be the _____ of the church

Colossians 1:15-20 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and by him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is also the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile everything to himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Isaiah 42:8 I am the Lord. That is my name, and I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.

Jesus is the _____ in the Church

John 3:26-30 ...they came to John and told him, “Rabbi, the one you testified about, and who was with you across the Jordan, is baptizing—and everyone is going to him.” ²⁷ John responded, “No one can receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah, but I’ve been sent ahead of him.’ ²⁹ He who has the bride is the groom. But the groom’s friend, who stands by and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the groom’s voice. So this joy of mine is complete. ³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease.”

Jesus is always the foremost _____ of our _____

Revelation 2:4-5 “I have this against you: You have abandoned the love you had at first.” ⁵ Remember then how far you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. Otherwise, I will come to you and remove your lamp stand from its place, unless you repent.

The pastor’s identity should never overshadow _____, the _____, or the _____ the _____

2 Corinthians 4:5 For we are not proclaiming ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’s sake.

GO DEEPER

This week, read the Scriptures from Sunday and answer these questions:

1. What did you learn from Sunday’s sermon? Did you gain any new insights?
2. The sermon shared stories of “celebrity psychosis” (*fans fainting over Elvis, trapping Justin Bieber in his hotel*). Where have you seen that same kind of worshipful infatuation show up in church culture (whether toward a pastor, a worship leader, or a ministry personality)? Why do you think it can creep in without people noticing?
3. In John 3:26–30, John the Baptist’s own disciples saw Jesus as competition and wanted John to defend his turf. Instead, John says, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” Where in your own life or ministry involvement might you be tempted to protect your own platform, reputation, or recognition instead of pointing people to Jesus?
4. The sermon points to Revelation 2:4; the Ephesian church was rebuked for abandoning “the love you had at first,” not for bad doctrine or inactivity. Be honest: has your affection for Jesus cooled and been replaced by affection for something or someone else (a leader, an experience, a routine)? What would “doing the works you did at first” look like for you this week?
5. 2 Corinthians 4:5 says Paul proclaimed “not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord.” The sermon warns that some leaders point you to Jesus in Word but elevate self in certain ways. How can a church, and each of us individually, tell the difference between healthy appreciation for a leader and unhealthy elevation of them?