

CANCELLED

CANCEL CULTURE: Uncovering GRIEVOUS BEHAVIOUR in someone's past & feeling the need to: BRING it to the world's attention, JUDGE IT in the public domain & then CANCEL them ruthlessly.

→ *How significant an issue do you think cancel culture is? What are its dangers?*

THE UNDERLYING ISSUES

The world just does not know what to DO with SIN: Knows it's a PROBLEM ... knows there should be CONSEQUENCES ... can't DEFINE it ... DOESN'T WANT to define it ... and has no idea where GRACE & FORGIVENESS fit in.

→ *Do you agree with this statement? How do you think people in the world define sin? How do you define sin? Do you think it's possible to forgive & forget without a gospel framework?*

* This should be no surprise: The Enemy is trying to DISTRACT people from the Gospel, DISCREDIT the Gospel, and, ultimately, DISCOUNT the Gospel.

→ *How does cancel culture attempt to do that? Does it succeed?*

* We live in a CONFUSED & CONTRADICTORY world, where everyone wants GRACE but isn't prepared to GIVE it.

* As a result, society has become very JUDGMENTAL, GRACELESS and hugely HYPOCRITICAL.

→ *Where have you observed this worldly judgmentalism? How is society graceless? Is it graceless? Why is all this so hypocritical?*

→ *"If you remove holy God as the definer & judge of sin and if you remove Jesus as the example, demonstration & execution of grace, you really are stuck. And this is paradigm in which we find ourselves in the 2020s." Discuss!*

TRUTH & MORALITY: Truth is RELATIVE & SUBJECTIVE, apart from MY truth, which is, by definition, the EXCEPTION. And if you OPPOSE my truth, you become the ENEMY.

→ *Why does the modern worldview struggle with the idea of absolute truth? What does it mean to say that truth is relative and that truth is subjective? Why do people take a different view when it comes to their own truth?*

* If anyone perceives themselves to be the VICTIM of anything, they want to have a free card to complete CONDEMNATION & REVENGE, with no room for EXPLANATION, no APOLOGY that's good enough & no opportunity for REDEMPTION of any sort.

→ *What does it mean to be 'a victim?' Does being a victim give you the right to 'cancel?' If someone has genuinely victimised someone, should they be given the right to explain, apologise or seek redemption?*

→ *What do we do with historical figures who've done a great deal of good, but were also fallible? Should they be 'cancelled?' How do we deal with people whose past actions were shaped by a different culture / set of standards – ideas or principles that have evolved or been rightly challenged? (e.g. slavery)*

Part of the challenge to us as Christians is that the judgment of WHO gets CANCELLED is being driven by people who, on the whole, stand for a very different set of VALUES to us.

→ *How is this creating difficulties for Christians in the modern era?*

KEY PRINCIPLE (Roman 12:2)

* There is a WORLDLY PATTERN which is loud, imposing & growing in popularity.
* The danger, as Christians, is that we start to CONFORM to that PATTERN & lose sight of the GOSPEL.

→ *What happens if Christians buy into cancel culture? Is it possible to do so in your own personal life and relationships?*

→ *How should we engage in the social media debate around these issues?*

THE WORLD'S WAY (John 8:1-6)

a) EXPOSE people's faults.

b) JUDGE them in the court of social media opinion.

c) CANCEL them: Write them off, blacklist & ban them for life.

→ *How do we see this pattern playing out in the case of the Woman caught in Adultery in John 8? What about in Jesus' trial & crucifixion?*

JESUS CANCELLED (Colossians 2:13-14)

* The wonderful thing about the Gospel is that Jesus was well & truly CANCELLED in OUR PLACE & the only thing FOR US that got CANCELLED was OUR SIN.

* The good news is that cancelling is therefore no longer a THING for us.

THE GOSPEL WAY (John 8:7-11)

a) LOVE to CONCEAL (1 Peter 4:8, Proverbs 4:12).

b) GRACE when JUDGMENT might reasonably have been expected.

c) FORGIVENESS: The PERSON doesn't get cancelled; their SIN does.

→ *To what extent should we 'conceal' sin? Is it always love to do so?*

→ *How does grace work & what does it do? Why does the world have such a hard time understanding it? Where do we tend to be graceless & how is grace different?*

→ *Should forgiveness indeed be unquestioning, unconditional & habitual? Are there ever occasions where it shouldn't be? How do you make forgiveness a habit? What do you do when you desperately want to make it conditional? Why is forgiveness such a struggle in a cancel culture world?*

So as Christians, we're called to be vessels of LOVE, agents of GRACE & unquestioning, unconditional, habitual FORGIVERS

* The Enemy loves CANCELLING people & piling on the GUILT & SHAME.

* As the CHURCH we must not BUY INTO THAT.

→ *Has the church bought into it? How do we fight to reverse the tide, when the likelihood is, that to do so will result either in abuse, or quite possibly, being cancelled? What are the dangers to Christianity if the cancel culture digs even deeper roots?*

→ *Do you think cancel culture is here to stay or will the world's struggles with the concept of sin find any resolution?*