

“Cancel Culture”

Sunday PM 03/28/21

Introduction:

Over the last year a new phrase has been coined “cancel culture.” But what is it, why is it happening, and is it good or bad? From a Christian perspective what does it mean?

I) Cancel Culture

A) Defining

1. Cancel culture (or call-out culture) is a modern form of ostracism in which someone is thrust out of social or professional circles – whether it be online, on social media, or in person. Those who are subject to this ostracism are said to have been "cancelled".[1][a] The expression "cancel culture" has mostly negative connotations and is commonly used in debates on free speech and censorship.[4]
2. The notion of cancel culture is a variant on the term call-out culture and constitutes a form of boycotting involving an individual (usually a celebrity) who is deemed to have acted or spoken in a questionable or controversial manner.[For those on the receiving end of cancel culture, the consequences can lead to loss of reputation and income, from which it can be hard to recover.

B) Examples

1. Teen Vogue Magazine editor, Alexi McCammond, had written some “tweets” in 2011 which were viewed by some as being racist *although she is black” and homophobic. She apologized and took down the tweets in 2017. Yet she was removed from her post.

2. Six Dr. Seuss books recently pulled off bookshelves and various retailers stopped selling them. “If I Ran The Zoo”, “I Saw It On Mulberry Street” etc.
3. Mr. Potato Head, and now Oral Roberts University.
 - a. Headline “No, Oral Roberts University basketball doesn't deserve to be canceled from NCAA Sweet 16”
 - b. This is a stunning 180 from the arguments we heard in 2009 when LGBTQ+ advocates maintained, “All we want is the right to marry. How will my gay marriage hurt you?” Now it's: “We want your college accreditation, your athletic participation and more.”
3. Some would even point to the country music group, “The Dixie Chicks” as they had concerts cancelled and radio stations stopped playing their music due to their stance on the Gulf War.

C) Understanding Cancel Culture

1. If someone expresses an opinion or says something that is deemed inappropriate then pressure is placed on them to express regret.
 - a. In many cases the events or words spoken will be from the past.
 - b. In 1970's a lot of things were said and done under the guise of being open minded, or free spirited, as the shackles of old fashion morality were cast aside.
 - c. Ironically a lot of the same things are happening today- vulgar language, sexual exploitation, etc.
2. Pressure is often in the form of boycotts, not being allowed

on social platforms, pressure placed on sponsors to withdraw their sponsorship of a show or movie.

3. Cancel culture is an attack on free speech. Any ideology not in harmony with what is now socially acceptable is deemed inappropriate and “cancelled.”
4. “Socially accepted dogma” is tolerated and all else is ostracized. There are things one dare not question or say.

II) Bible Examples

A) Micaiah

1 Kings 22:8 *And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, There is still one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of Jehovah. But I hate him, for he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. 9 And the king of Israel called an officer and said, Hurry and bring Micaiah the son of Imlah to hurry. 10 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah each sat on his throne, having put on their robes, in a floor in the entrance of the gate of Samaria. And all the prophets prophesied before them. 11 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made horns of iron for himself. And he said, So says Jehovah, With these you shall push the Syrians until you have crushed them. 12 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth in Gilead and prosper, for the LORD shall deliver it into the king's hands. 13 And the messenger that had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets are good to the king with one mouth. Please let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak good.*

1 Kings 22:23 *"Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying*

spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you." 24 Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the spirit from the LORD go from me to speak to you?" 25 And Micaiah said, "Indeed, you shall see on that day when you go into an inner chamber to hide!" 26 So the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son; 27 "and say, 'Thus says the king: "Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I come in peace.'"" 28 But Micaiah said, "If you ever return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Take heed, all you people!"

1. Micaiah was told what the others had said and then told to go along with it.
2. He dared to contradict the lies and spoke the truth.
3. Cancel culture is not concerned about the truth as much as social dogma.

B) Jeremiah

Jeremiah 36:1 Now it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: **2** "Take a scroll of a book and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah even to this day. **3** "It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin." **4** Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son

of Neriah; and Baruch wrote on a scroll of a book, at the instruction of Jeremiah, all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him.

Jeremiah 36:7 *"It may be that they will present their supplication before the LORD, and everyone will turn from his evil way. For great is the anger and the fury that the LORD has pronounced against this people."*

1. How many wanted to hear the message? How many changed? None.
2. Baruch takes the message to the leaders.

Jeremiah 36:15 *And they said to him, "Sit down now, and read it in our hearing." So Baruch read it in their hearing. 16 Now it happened, when they had heard all the words, that they looked in fear from one to another, and said to Baruch, "We will surely tell the king of all these words." 17 And they asked Baruch, saying, "Tell us now, how did you write all these words-at his instruction?" 18 So Baruch answered them, "He proclaimed with his mouth all these words to me, and I wrote them with ink in the book." 19 Then the princes said to Baruch, "Go and hide, you and Jeremiah; and let no one know where you are."*

3. They will take the message to the king but they know he will not accept it.

Jeremiah 36:22 *Now the king was sitting in the winter house in the ninth month, with a fire burning on the hearth before him. 23 And it happened, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, that the king cut it with the scribe's knife and cast it into the fire that was on the*

hearth, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.

4. God's reaction, write it again.

Jeremiah 36:28 "Take yet another scroll, and write on it all the former words that were in the first scroll which Jehoiakim the king of Judah has burned.

5. God's word cannot be cancelled.

III) Lessons To Learn

A) Cancel culture has always opposed the Bible.

1. The Gospel of Christ has always been outside the cultural norms.

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. **19** For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." **20** Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? **21** For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. **22** For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; **23** but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, **24** but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25** Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the

weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. 27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

2. Even today many so-called Christians do not hold to the teaching of Christ due to social dogma.
3. Many today would cancel our ability to preach the truth.
4. Many today say there is nothing really wrong except the teaching that something is wrong.

1 Peter 4:4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.

B) Not in man to direct his own steps

Jeremiah 10:23 O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.

1. People biting and devouring one another.
2. Reminds me of the French Revolution where the leaders were often executed by their own movement.
3. Man's standard or morality changes, what is proper to say, manner of dress, etc.

C) Our culture is going down the wrong pathway.

Jeremiah 6:16 Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And

walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'

Jeremiah 6:17 *Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.'* **18** *Therefore hear, you nations, And know, O congregation, what is among them.* **19** *Hear, O earth! Behold, I will certainly bring calamity on this people-The fruit of their thoughts, Because they have not heeded My words, Nor My law, but rejected it.*

1. Our culture is running as fast as it can away from God.
2. Fortunately we can choose to walk in the “good way” we can choose to obey God. The only one that can cancel your obedience and hope of heaven is you.