

Talk It Over

Truth Has an Edge

(week 3)

“Truth Against the Cancel Culture”

SMALL TALK

What was your favorite TV show growing up that got cancelled or is no longer on?

VIEWPOINT

Read Matthew 10:14-15 again. What is Jesus recommending in this passage and why is He doing it?

Read Galatians 5:13-26. How does this description of the Christian differ from the ways of the world?

Read Matthew 28:18-20 again. What mission is assigned to Jesus followers?

GETTING PERSONAL

What are some areas you struggle with currently in our culture?

How do you think you are doing at trusting God in our current culture?

Is your life marked by being slow to speak, the golden rule, and living with anticipation? Please explain.

PRACTICE!

We discussed being slow to speak, practicing the golden rule, and living with anticipation. Of these three ways we address culture, which one do you most need to work on?

Truth & Cancel Culture

Intro - Hello / Welcome / Glad to be here

- Today, we are talking about a potentially triggering topic. Some of you may be familiar with it, some of you may not.

Our topic today is Truth and Cancel Culture.

- For those of you who know what it is, I want to ask you for humility & an open heart.
- **Our ultimate goal is to address the question of how we respond in our current cultural moment.** (Death of Christendom, massive shifts in lifestyle) (SD beach guy story)

Here's the desire we are orienting our time around together: **We want the way of Jesus over the way of culture.** (We want our lives to look more like Jesus, not the world)

Here's our roadmap - What is cancel culture? What does the Bible say? How do we respond?

What is cancel culture?

Even if you're not familiar with the term, you've likely heard of it.

- Here's the definition: *Cancel culture or call-out culture is a modern form of ostracism in which someone or something is thrust out of social or professional circles – whether it be online, on social media, or in person.*
- You may have also heard of it as outrage culture, overly sensitive people, or being politically correct or PC. And if you're not then someone is going to try to get you kicked out.

Let me give some examples... (purposefully vague)

- We've seen celebrities who have said stuff about politics, social issues, etc, and people make a call to cancel them.
- We've seen old landmarks that represent things unpopular in culture be torn down - cancelled.
- We've seen politicians be asked to leave office for something they did twenty years prior.
- We've seen well known people who have committed terrible abuses of people, have that brought to life. Some of them we grew up watching on T.V.
- We've seen churches navigate cancel culture. Pastors who went a long time without accountability and therefore were abusive in power or towards others, they are cancelled or ostracized.
- Maybe someone you worked with voiced an unpopular opinion and was let go because of that opinion.
- It sounds like this - we won't watch their movies anymore, recall them from the office, fire them, we won't listen to their music, kick them out of the church.

Ill - We have all said & done things that we wouldn't want broadcast. (Ills - Those friends you have who always bring up the good old days? // Guy best man speech at my wedding)

As a pastor, I wrestle with it regularly. What do you say when you have a mic strapped to your face and anyone can pull a sound byte of you from the internet? (No one wants to talk to a pastor)

Now, here are two things about cancel culture that may be helpful:

1. Cancel culture is not new. Humans have been exiling people forever. (Freedom fries 2003, Winston Churchill, Abraham Lincoln, leaving the tribe)
 - o *What is new is that we have more well known people, more divisive view points, everything we do lives online, and anyone has a platform.*
2. Cancel culture has done good things and it has done bad things.
 - o It has exposed dark sin in the lives of people who were not held accountable. Calls to cancel serial abusers of women, children, or positions of power is a good thing.
 - o It has also been used as a political tool by both sides to wage war against their enemies.

Truth:

- It seems like everywhere we look, everyone is yelling at each other.
- We seem more divided than ever. (Ill - don't talk about politics at the dinner table)
- Ultimately, we need to develop a Christian perspective on the raging, screaming culture.

What does the Bible say about cancel culture?

- The Bible doesn't use that language directly. But, we look at Jesus and attempt to discern God's design and way for us to live.
- Jesus cancelled others & Jesus was cancelled
 - *"If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town."* Matthew 10:14-15 NIV
 - It's a poor turn of phrase, but Jesus experiences cancellation and rejection from people.
 - The loyalties of people are fickle - the same crowd that cheers for Jesus also yells, 'we want Barabas'. It's why we need to place our faith in something unshakeable.
 - Ill - Summer Staff, they love you & then they hate you.
- Jesus is not focused on cultural dominance
 - Jesus comes to bring a heavenly kingdom, not an earthly one
 - *"Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.""* John 18:36 NIV

- Jesus intends to create a type of people who are citizens of Heaven and ambassadors on earth. You and I are part of the kingdom of God as our first loyalty.
- If Jesus wanted cultural superiority he wouldn't have been born to people in poverty in a barn.
- We do not need to stress as much as we do about the insane culture we live in. The Bible doesn't promise us we get our way and everyone agrees with everything we say. It says blessed are you when you are persecuted for righteousness sake.
- Hard truth - If we want everyone to think like us and act like us, we will live perpetually disappointed.
- Our goal is to do the right, God honoring thing regardless of what culture says.
- With the yelling going on, we are watching our world at large hunger for a savior. We are watching fear and a desire for justice and goodness - although misplaced.
- Jesus Told Us What He Wants Us to Focus On
 - *"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.""* Matthew 28:18-20 NIV
 - Some of these things happening in culture are distractions to us. They are small potatoes. (Ill - I've had so much time hijacked by a stupid news story about another person who said or did something dumb)
 - Are you saying I shouldn't be involved in culture or issues? No. But, as we approach each of those things, we approach them on mission.
 - **We are talking about truth - we have got to hold fast to truth in a world of cancelling and noise.**
 - Cancel culture is another distraction. It distracts us and makes us feel out of control. Jesus wants us to take action and share the good news of who He is. (Ill - guy in Home Depot, hey boys, get moving, doesn't matter if you do it wrong)

I want us all to see that culture is challenging. We live in a difficult, connected time. Here's the final question...

How do we respond to this cultural moment?

Every Christian in history had unique cultural challenges to face. (Rome, creation of America, the world wars)

- We are slow to speak
 - *"My dear **brothers and sisters**, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires."* James 1:19-20 NIV
 - Ill - flip the words around.

- Everyone is so loud right now. It seems like the world is screaming at each other. We will be set apart by listening. We seek to understand before being understood. We ingest through the lens of the gospel.
- Often we listen only so we get our turn. Let's truly listen. Everyone is trying to figure it out.
- Story - slowly ministering to Royce my barber
- We practice the golden rule
 - *"Do to others as you would have them do to you."* Luke 6:31 NIV
 - We have an opportunity to be a light in an angry world. Let's welcome people into our communities and our fold.
 - I would want people to try to understand where I'm coming from. I want love from others.
 - If we want to see positive cultural change for the gospel, it starts with our actions towards others.
- We live with anticipation
 - *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."* John 3:16-17 NIV
 - We do not live in paradise. We live in a fallen, broken world. We live in a world with hate, pain, disease, hypocrisy, disaster, and heartbreak.
 - But the Jesus follower has hope. We have hope that one day God will return to set all things right.
 - If you find yourself discouraged, take hope in this.
 - We have hope that although we are not always the best carriers of the message, God has chosen to use broken people like you and I.

If this all sounds difficult, it should. It forces us to stretch our faith and follow the role of a disciple. The goal is that we become more like Jesus. It is a worthwhile calling.

Vision - In a world of pain and cultural yelling matches, we can get our heads out of the sand and understand that it is a broken world. We can choose to focus our attention on Jesus. When we do we have greater perspective, joy, and impact.

Prayer