

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

Christians and the Cancel Culture

Joe R. Price

As in the first century, evil permeates this age (Gal. 1:4). The *“rulers of the darkness of this age”* mount many efforts to disturb, distract, discourage, and destroy faithful Christians. With sober minds and watchful eyes, we must see these tactics and equip ourselves with spiritual weapons to pull down Satan’s strongholds (1 Pet. 5:8; Eph. 5:14-17; 2 Cor. 10:3-5).

The cancel culture is a tactic being used to silence righteousness and truth. “Cancel culture refers to the popular practice of withdrawing support for (canceling) public figures and companies after they have done or said something considered objectionable or offensive. Cancel culture is generally discussed as being performed on social media in the form of group shaming” (Dictionary.com). Again, “the phenomenon of promoting the ‘canceling’ of people, brands and even shows and movies due to what some consider to be offensive or problematic remarks or ideologies...” (Kato).

The Bible records many attempts to cancel God’s truth and God’s people. Early Christians lived in a culture that tried to cancel them (Heb. 10:32-33; Acts 8:1; 9:1-2; 26:9-11). The enforcement of emperor worship put saints under extreme economic hardships, costing many their lives when they refused to relinquish their faith for the sake of the state and societal approval (Rev. 2:10; 13:15-17).

Cancel culture tries to eliminate anyone deemed a foe for daring to resist its accepted norms (those sanctioned and promoted by secularists and influencers who refuse to retain God in their knowledge). Make no mistake; we live in a society caught in the turbulence and turmoil of the downward spiral of its moral collapse (Rom. 1:18-32). While virtue signaling their “Moral Betters” they display their moral corruption (cf. Matt. 6:1-4; 23:5-12). Christians must *“continue in the faith”* in the face of the cancel culture (Col. 1:21-23).

Cancel Culture: “Kill the Children!”

Previous cultures killed children to eliminate threats. Pharaoh ordered the death of the male Hebrew babies (Exod. 1:15-22). Herod ordered the male children’s slaughter in and around Bethlehem in his murderous attempt to extinguish a potential rival (Matt. 2:16-19). Even now, millions of unborn children are exterminated through abortion to relieve shortsighted, selfish, sinful desires.

The cancel culture attacks truth and decency under the guise of protecting children. Children’s physical and spiritual development is being “killed” to advance a secular agenda in public schools. Disguised as anti-bias, anti-bullying instruction, curricula indoctrinate children with an “inclusion” ethos supporting the LGBTQ community. Since God is impartial, unbiased, and bullies no one, we are against every form of bias (Acts 10:34; John 3:16; Matt. 7:12; Rom. 13:8, 10). But we will not deny truth at the altar of conformity. God is pleased with exposing the darkness of the transgender agenda, and we seek His acceptance (Eph. 5:8-11). Christians do so without bullying those who disagree. Can the same be said of the cancel culture? No. The cancel culture uses bullying tactics while signaling their virtue and canceling those they say are bullies (Rom. 2:1). That’s rich!

The cancel culture calls us biased and bigoted when we object to redefining marriage to include “same-sex” relationships and redefining families to include same-gender parents (Gen. 2:21-24).

Cancel Culture: “Silence God’s Prophets”

Queen Jezebel canceled the prophets of the Lord with a massacre (1 Kings 18:4). Christ’s apostles and prophets

were similarly canceled (Acts 7:54-60; 12:1-2; John 21:18-19; 2 Tim. 4:6).

Truth is under attack. The cancel culture silences people who call for equal justice under the law by labeling them as racists. Some apologize for not supporting “Black Lives Matter.” We support the statement that black lives matter. We are not racists or unsympathetic to racial disparities and mistreatment when we say all lives matter. (God says all lives matter, Acts 17:25-26. Then again, the cancel culture also tries to cancel God.) We do not affirm the BLM Organization. By their admission, it exists to disrupt the nuclear family as a “queer-affirming network” (Mohler).

Truth welcomes honest and open investigation (Isa. 1:18-20; 41:21). The cancel culture casts aside the truth with little regard for the opposition. For the cancel culture, freedom to speak only goes one way. Whether one is on the political left or right, mob rule and violent assault against communities, businesses, and even the U.S. Capitol, cannot be tolerated. God commanded Israel not to follow a mob to do evil and pervert justice (Exod. 23:2). Christians do not respond with evil against evil (Rom. 12:17-21; 13:8, 10).

Cancel Culture: “Destroy God’s Word”

King Jehoiakim exemplifies the cancel culture. He cut and burned the scroll of God’s word when it was read to him, commanding that Jeremiah and Baruch be arrested (Jer. 36:20-26).

We already hear calls to destroy books and ban others from publication. Simon & Schuster canceled U.S. Senator Josh Hawley’s book’s publication in the wake of the U.S. Capitol riot (Bolton). Another publisher picked it up, but the cancel culture had an impact. Christians who write gospel material will face threats of censorship, too. Why wouldn’t we?

The cancel culture tries to silence God’s word on moral issues. For instance, The Queen James Bible (a “Gay Bible...based on The King James Bible, edited to prevent homophobic misinterpretation”) changes (cancels) every negative reference to the sin of homosexuality. Preaching against homosexuality is legally ruled against as hate speech in Sweden (Duigon). Canada has adopted laws that head in the same direction (Kumar). America does not seem to be far behind (Rhein).

Christians will “*contend earnestly for the faith*” in the face of the cancel culture (Jude 3). Censoring the truth of God does not make it go away (Acts 4:17-20; 5:27-32, 40-42). We will either stand with faithful saints or with faithless secularists. We cannot serve two Masters. We must not be ashamed of Christ and His words in this cancel culture age (Mk. 8:38).

Cancel Culture: “Demonize the Opposition”

The cancel culture demonizes its opposition in at least three ways. (1) The cancel culture uses misrepresentations and lies against its target. Jesus and Stephen were “canceled” this way (Lk. 23:1-2; Acts 6:10-14). Expect similar treatment when you speak the truth of the gospel (John 15:18-20). (2) The cancel culture marginalizes opponents. Paul, for example, was “canceled” by Tertullus as an extremist (“*ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes,*” Acts 24:5). Such treatment intends to shame a person into silence or convict him as guilty without the right to be heard (cf. Acts 21:33-22:1). (3) The cancel culture demands conformity. The cancel culture comforts itself in the strength of numbers. The Roman Empire identified the nonconformists (Christians) and persecuted them unto death (Rev. 13:16-17). Yet, the Rome Empire fell. Those who imitate its culture of cancellation will also fail (Rev. 13:18).

Conclusion

Through Peter, the Holy Spirit said, “*For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*” (1 Pet. 2:15). We muzzle (render “speechless,” Matt. 22:12) those who foolishly speak without knowledge and reason. – *The Spirit’s Sword*, April 18, 2021. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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