

Spirit-Filled Pastor: The Most Dangerous Virus Infecting the Church Today

By now, most know what cancel culture is: Something you did in your past will be used to silence, stop and “cancel” you.

Whether it's Mike Lindell, whose pillow company lost many retailers after he publicly questioned the election, or Goya Foods, who upset people when they thanked former President Trump, the cancel culture doesn't tolerate opposing views. So much for being tolerant.

Do you see the irony? The cancel culture protects *Cuties* on Netflix and loves Cardi B lyrics, but its proponents can't stand Bible verses, worship songs or views that oppose them. Dr. Seuss is bad; Dumbo is a racist, and Speedy Gonzales offends.

Granted, things from the past may need to be changed from time to time, but if you focus on children's books and cartoon characters and say nothing against child porn, human trafficking, little kids being intentionally confused about their gender or the killing of innocent children in the womb, you've lost all credibility.

The Church—Friend or Foe?

I am not especially surprised by the actions of the world; it is simply being true to its fallen nature. Rather, it's the actions of the so-called church that are disturbing. In 2020, the cancel culture in the church became a reality for me. I was scheduled to speak at a church in Palos Verdes, California, but when the assistant pastor found out that my political views differed from his, he complained to the elders, and just like that, I was canceled—never mind the fact

that my message didn't even touch on politics. Listen to it here, and let me know if a church should cancel this type of message or if it's exactly what we need to hear.

I received another surprise in May 2020. I had been corresponding with Pastor Jack Hibbs about opening our church on May 31. Once we decided to open, I was shocked by how many pastors came against us. I even shared with one prominent pastor in my area how happy I was when Pastor John MacArthur and the elders at Grace Community Church also opened. To my utter dismay, he wasn't happy at all.

By this time, the shenanigans and the agendas of many political leaders were becoming apparent (more here). We not only had a legitimate virus to deal with but agendas and ulterior motives working against us as well. Would churches capitulate and use Romans 13 out of context, or would they meet to fast, pray and contend for the truth? Would they be cowards or watchmen?

Around this time, our local newspaper also canceled my articles, which had been featured for over a decade. Many liberal Christians no doubt complained and swayed the editor. Facebook also shadow banned me, causing our audience to drop from a quarter-million people per month to around ten thousand. Apparently, my views didn't fit their narratives. They, along with YouTube, also banned my video on vaccines and immunity and removed some of my sermons.

'My View Is the Right View,' So They Say

One local pastor who still hadn't opened his church a year into COVID told me that I was actually hurting the gospel because of my views. Apparently, you're not allowed to share solid biblical teaching if you hold beliefs that oppose liberal "Christians." "You're hurting the gospel with your views unless your views align with my views," so they say.

Then in July 2020 I was hit again. We held church services at

JetHawk Stadium in Lancaster, California, and it wasn't primarily unbelievers who were complaining. Other Christians and pastors were gossiping and backbiting. It is telling that none of them seemed to be excited that over 10,000 people attended the four-month event, and we had over 150 baptisms, the majority of which were spontaneous.

Sadly, within the church, the cancel culture is often fueled by jealousy and arrogance. "They don't think like I think, so God cannot be using them," goes the reasoning. There have been other groups throughout the ages who behaved in similar ways—the Pharisees come to mind, as well as the pastors and denominations who have stood against many of the past revivals simply because God had the audacity to use someone else and in a way that differed from them.

So while the cancel culture is not a new thing, it is new in America, and it's on the rise. Our nation is increasingly polarized, with people unable to have civil conversations with those who have dissimilar views and who actually take pleasure in destroying the lives and livelihoods of those who dare to have a different opinion.

Pleasing Man Rather Than God

As I wrote last week in my article on why churches should open, all pastors relate to COVID differently depending on their perspective and circumstances. They are under tremendous pressure and need more grace, not less. I'm sure that many do much good in their communities, and for that, I applaud them. However, I don't think cowardice should go unchecked, for "iron sharpens iron" (Prov. 27:17a).

Let me state up front that without the Spirit of God, I'm a coward. Without deep seasons of prayer and fasting, I'm weak. Without extended times of heartfelt worship where I weep, repent and realign my heart with Christ, I would drift from God. My heart breaks for the church, but the truth is that

many Christians are being influenced by social media rather than by God's Spirit, spend more time criticizing others rather than looking in the mirror and more time reading left-leaning liberals instead of reading and applying God's Word. Like Samson, they do not know that the Spirit has departed (Judg. 16:20).

Sadly, many pastors are joining the cancel culture, keeping their church doors locked and aligning with ungodly organizations because they have either lost the compass of truth or the boldness of the Spirit—or possibly both. They are distant from Christ and therefore seek to be pleasers of men rather than lovers of God: “For am I now seeking the approval of men or of God? Or am I trying to please men? For if I were still trying to please men, I would not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10).

They may cancel people, ideas, concepts, videos, articles and sermons, but they can never cancel God!

For more on this topic from Pastor Shane, check out “Why Do Many People Despise Preachers Today” at [this link](#) and “An Open Letter to Silent Pastors—Fight or Fade Away” [here](#). {eo}

Shane Idleman is the founder and lead pastor of Westside Christian Fellowship in Southern California. More can be found at [www.shaneidleman.com](#), and free downloads of his books are available at [www.shaneidleman.com](#). Visit him on Facebook and subscribe to his podcast.

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