

What the Coronavirus Can Never Cancel

If you scroll through Instagram these days, you know it's cool to say "canceled." As in, "I'm canceling this bad weather." "Consider yourself canceled, 2020.

It's apparently the hip way to dismiss stuff we don't like.

People post about "canceling" restaurants, mood swings, products or even other people ... it's pretty self-indulgent. But on the other hand, wouldn't it be sweet if we could *cancel* coronavirus?

After all, seems like the coronavirus pandemic has had no problem cancelling life as we know it.

Sports—canceled.

School—canceled.

Work—canceled.

Church gatherings—canceled.

Weddings—canceled, too.

I mean, even Disneyland is cancelled!

In a few weeks' time, everything we're familiar with stopped.

But not *everything* has been cancelled by the coronavirus. Some things never stop or change.

If you've been a Christian for any amount of time, these realities are not new to you, but try to suspend your familiarity with these words and let the truth sink in, wash over you ... make you *feel* something.

Grace Is Not Canceled

God never changes even when our circumstances do. And God's way of salvation is not cancelled by the coronavirus.

I love talking about God's grace. It's His favor to us that He doesn't make us earn—and we couldn't earn if we tried. I like to say grace is "God's Riches At Christ's Expense." God's grace *is* the finished work of Jesus. And it not only changes our eternal future, but it beautifies our reality in the present because the Lord acts graciously toward us in the details of our daily lives.

That means we have to keep our eyes and ears wide open to witness the work God is doing right now. There's grace to be found even now, and nothing can cancel grace—no pandemic, no persecution. Nothing.

Kindness Is Not Canceled

My beloved bride, Lynn, always says, "Kindness matters."

Ironically, even though everyone is physically separated right now, this season has the potential to bring people and communities together like never before. In the face of intensified fear and anxiety, we have an unprecedented opportunity to break into the void with greater kindness.

People are getting so creative about showing kindness! My neighbor, who is a nurse, posted a note on our community mailbox: "If you need help, I'm here for you." On my last plane ride, our entire row shared sanitizing supplies so everyone was safe.

It's the little things.

And now more than ever, we need to walk in kindness and give hope to others.

Speaking of hope ...

Hope Is Not Canceled

Hope will never be cancelled. Why? In Romans 5:3b-5, Paul says, “tribulation produces patience, patience produces character, and character produces hope. And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”

Hope is both an eternal reality given to us by God, and a choice we make. That’s the part we have to walk in now. When we choose hope, we choose to trust that no matter how big something seems, God is bigger and in control even when things *feel* out of control. My friends, we have hope that can’t be cancelled because of Jesus, so let’s choose it!

So, let’s be people of determined, unchanging grace and kindness and hope. The coronavirus can’t rob us of these things unless we let it. {eoa}

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