

Pastors Perspective Column for November 2022

By Pastor Tim White

The Matter of Sin & Cancel Culture

What do you think about the concept of “sin”? In my September column, I made a note about addressing the matter of sin in our world in a future edition. Well, the future is now. First, the Bible clarifies that our sin separates us from God (Isa 59:2; Eph. 4:18), which cannot be good.

The definition of “sin” is “to miss the mark; to do or go wrong, to wander from righteous ways.” Romans 5:12 tells us that “sin entered the world through one man (Adam is held responsible even though Eve sinned first), and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.” Regardless of your belief about sin’s origin, you and I can probably agree that it is bad and that we live in a world filled with it.

The Bible states that God created the world and all that is in it, including human beings, and when He finished, He said that it was “good” (Genesis 1 and 2). Adam and Eve were innocent and did not know evil. However, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was in the middle of the Garden of Eden, and God commanded them never to eat from this tree, or else they would die. Well, we know what happened.

The serpent in the Garden convinced Eve that God had been dishonest with them because, in reality, God was afraid that she and her husband would become like Him. (i.e., The Creator had lied to them to protect His place at the top!) So, Eve rejected God’s words and put her faith and trust in the serpent’s words – that God had lied to her and the serpent was the source of Truth. As a result, she believed they would become like God – what could go wrong? What, indeed!

From a biblical standpoint, this event (rejecting God’s command and desiring to be like God) in the Garden is how “sin” entered the world. However, we know that they did not physically die that day, but spiritually they became “dead in their sin” (Col 2:13). Romans 6:23 begins with “The wages of sin is death....” Adam and Eve suddenly became aware of their nakedness and tried to hide when God came that evening. Humanity has been trying to hide from God and his Truth ever since.

I am sure we are all aware of the social cancer spreading through our nation today, known as “Cancel Culture.” In Dr. David Jeremiah’s book, “Where Do We Go From Here?” (Chap. 7), he explains that cancel culture is dependent on “betrayal,” as the Bible predicts will characterize the society in the final days (See Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-9). The farther we as a nation strays from our Judeo-Christian roots, the farther down the road to oppression and loss of our God-given rights we travel.

Those infected by this “cultural cancer” aim at those with different beliefs than their own, seeking to find anything they can use to shame them publicly, silence them socially, and eventually destroy them. If you are a victim of this godless practice, then your “sins” will be

forever held over your head, and there is no opportunity for forgiveness. Some incredible patriots who love God and their nation have seen their lives turned upside down because they happened to “Like” someone’s social media post, own a firearm, or voted for Donald Trump in 2020.

There is much more I could say about cancel culture, but that can be for another day. My purpose here is to contrast the way a godless culture deals with people’s sins with the way God the Father does. Would it surprise you to learn that God, through Christ, has His own version of “Cancel Culture”?

The Apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Colossae about God’s Heavenly version of “Cancel Culture” (Col. 2:13-15). In verse 13, he notes that before faith in Christ, they “were dead in your sins” due to their “sinful nature” – spiritually dead and separated from God. However, Paul declares the liberating Truth: “God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.”

And how did He do that? By “canceling” that which stood against us – he writes, “(v. 14) ...having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.” Jesus did not erase or eliminate the Law of God; instead, He fulfilled the demands for punishment of law-breakers (sinners).

Today’s cancel culture accuses, shames, and makes outcasts of those they deem to have sinned against society. On the other hand, God’s “cancel culture” forgives, cleanses, and sets free those who have sinned against His holy Law. Quite a difference!

Once again, as they nailed Jesus to the cross, the entire record of our sins and guilt was also nailed upon it. Then, when Jesus died six hours later, He took our sins with Him into the grave, forever canceling the judgment we deserve. And now, the road to “canceling” the eternal judgment due to our sin begins with Jesus’ words, “Repent and believe the Good News.”

Christian or not, we all know we sin – but there is a remedy – regardless of what you have done and how long you have done it, the promise of forgiveness and a new heart and life is yours through faith in Christ. Call out to Him immediately if you realize your need for His forgiveness and want to surrender your life to Christ. Use your own words as you confess your sins and desire to turn from them and turn to Christ as your Lord and Savior. “He is never far from any one of us” (Acts 17:27).