

COUNTER CULTURE

FOLLOWING JESUS IN A CANCEL CULTURE

Identities
WEEK ONE

Cancel culture is when more than one person is offended by an opposing action or view and then leverage that to destroy what the opposing person can say and do.

²²...“The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”

²³Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. ²⁴For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. ²⁵What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?

Luke 9:22-25 (NIV)

Jesus taught that we can only find life when we daily deny ourselves, die to ourselves, and follow Him.

¹⁶You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷Everyone will hate you because of me. ¹⁸But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹Stand firm, and you will win life.

Luke 21:16-19 (NIV)

Jesus didn't encourage his disciples to fight for their own rights but to stand firm and stand up when things are not right.

Jesus countered the cultural beliefs of who God was and how to have life, and He led people to change their minds and follow Him.

¹²Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)

SERIES BIG IDEA:

Jesus and scripture direct Christ-followers to live counter the culture, not conform to it.

As Christ-followers, we think differently about ourselves because we see humanity in view of God's mercy—all of humanity is born broken.

We don't live for our salvation. We live from our salvation.

¹⁷So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

Ephesians 4:17-18 (NIV)

People who live and think like secular culture are separated from the life of God and are ignorant of the hardness of their hearts.

Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

Ephesians 4:19 (NIV)

When people lose sensitivity, they lose self-control.

²⁰That, however, is not the way of life you learned ²¹when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 4:20-24 (NIV)

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TEACHING BIG IDEA:

In Christ, we are new and His truth determines how we think, what we say, and what we do.

I will follow Jesus and His truth and find my identity in becoming like Him.

My new identity in Christ leads me to do what is right and just.



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TEACHING SUMMARY:

We live in a world that screams that identity is what ultimately matters and it is not wrong.

Our identity is what drives how we think, speak, and live.

Our identity is of utmost importance. But where the world goes wrong is what creates our identity.

The world says our identity is defined by a litany of things such as our gender, political affiliation, race, job, status in society, etc.

Scripture teaches us that our identity is one of two things. We are either a child of God or a child of wrath and those are the two options. Our identity is defined by our standing with God.

Have we flung off our sinful nature through repentance, put on our new self that only comes from God when we accept Him as Lord, and committed ourselves to following Him and His truth? The answer to that question is what defines who we are and defines our identity. It will affect not only the temporary but the eternal.

TALK IT OVER:

Do you believe that Christ and our standing with Him is what truly defines us? Why or why not?

Where have you experienced a change in how you think, speak, and live based upon your relationship with Jesus?

In what ways does culture still affect your actions, thoughts, and words?

What is one next step you can take today?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

- Mon: Proverbs 21:2-4
- Tue: 1 John 2:15-17
- Wed: Colossians 2:6-15
- Thu: Micah 6:1-8
- Fri: 1 Peter 3:8-17
- Sat: Ephesians 2:1-10