**Socialization on Steroids**

Webster defines socialization as the process beginning during childhood by which individuals acquire the values, habits, and attitudes of a society. As part of the process, certain behaviors deemed unacceptable are stigmatized so folks are shamed from engaging in them.

Some in our society have chosen to take a vigilante approach to controlling the behavior of others. The article “Vigilante Rituals Theory” in the European Journal of Criminality provides a perfect description of the modern Cancel Culture mob. Mr. Asif and Mr. Weenink write, “We suggest that people perceive some values – ‘moral imperatives’ – as essential to their group identity. Behavior that violates such moral imperatives arouses strong emotions, such as fear, righteous anger, and a desire for punitive action.” This vigilante mindset is leading some to seek to destroy the reputations, livelihood and future of anyone with the audacity to disagree with their opinions.

Regardless of your personal views, all good-hearted people should stand shoulder-to-shoulder in opposition to the scourge of Cancel Culture. Here are three good reasons.

**Cancel Culture practitioners enforce “values” that are not universally accepted.** Such potentially controversial topics as abortion, morality and race relations are issues best discussed calmly and respectfully. To marginalize and silence any opposition by force simply because one’s positions won’t stand up to scrutiny is both sad and dangerous. When the end result is to destroy the life of a person for simply living by the loving principles of Scripture, society has overstepped its bounds.

**Cancel Culture practitioners are hateful, intolerant and vindictive.**  The apostle Paul taught the proper attitude we should exhibit toward those with whom we disagree in Colossians 4:5-6. He indicated that we should make the most of each opportunity by conducting ourselves with wisdom. “Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.” Does that sound like your typical CC warrior?

**The Cancel Culture practitioner is merciless and unforgiving.** If there is one thing every one of us needs, it is forgiveness. We have all made mistakes, no exceptions. Yet, once the CC mob has targeted a violator, no amount of contrition or apologizing will appease them. The alleged infraction is so egregious, the perpetrator is forever defined by the mistake. They must be punished. Jesus made it clear that each of us will, one day, need the mercy of our Creator, but that mercy will be withheld from those who were merciless to their fellow man (Matthew 6:15).

I choose to treat others with kindness. If someone disagrees with me, I will tolerate the differences that are insignificant and try to reason with them on those that matter. If possible, so far as it depends on me, I will be at peace with all men (Romans 12:18).

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