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The Doulos Monthly Newsletter

MAY 2021

Is Redemption Canceled?

By Rachel Pease

In his sermon on Easter Sunday, Pastor Rob spoke briefly about the problems with “cancel culture” in our modern society. Specifically, he talked about the worrisome subtext of canceling someone over a joke they made years ago, or something they did wrong in their past. The premise upon which cancel culture exists, he said, is that people are unable to change — that the offending person is still the same and, therefore, they need to be canceled.

What is Cancel Culture?

This is something I have been thinking about recently, too. But before I delve into my thoughts, here is a definition of cancel culture from the ubiquitous Wikipedia:

Cancel culture [...] is a modern form of ostracism in which someone is thrust out of social or professional circles — whether it be online, on social media, or in person. Those who are subject to this ostracism are said to have been “canceled.” The notion of cancel culture is a variant on the term “call-out culture” and constitutes a form of boycotting involving an individual (usually a celebrity) who is deemed to have acted or spoken in a questionable or controversial manner. For those on the receiving end of cancel culture, the consequences can lead to loss of reputation and income, from which it can be hard to recover.

Pastor Rob made clear — and I will, too — that having concerns about cancel culture isn’t the same as thinking bad behavior should just be tolerated. And, there are absolutely times when people need to be held accountable for what they’ve said or done. The nagging worry I have is this: is redemption canceled in our culture, too? In our society, is there any way for someone’s slate to be wiped clean and for them to recover from their missteps? Is there any understanding or compassion available to them?

The truth is, we have all said and done things we shouldn’t have. In the life of every single person on the planet, there is something they should be sorry for. I can assure you that there are plenty of things I have said and done that I regret and that I would never want others to know about. After all, Alexander Pope said “to err is human; to forgive divine.” The Apostle Paul put it

another way when he said “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

The Counter-Cultural Beauty of Redemption

The glory of the gospel is that there is hope for our missteps and forgiveness for our sin. Our modern culture chafes at the notion of sin, but in the same breath, they are unable to offer grace and mercy. Tolerance and acceptance are widely touted — but only for those deemed deserving. A person can be revered one moment and ostracized the next. What’s missing? The beauty and transforming power of redemption.

In Christ’s culture, sin is what is canceled, thanks to the redeeming power of the cross. People are never canceled. Instead, we are valued, made whole, forgiven, justified and brought near to the heart of the God who created us. The old passes away, and we are made new. We are fundamentally changed. “As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.” Psalm 103:12.

Cancel culture should reinforce for us as believers that the way of Jesus is radically different from the way of the world around us. It is important for us to notice all the ways, big and small, our culture strays from the truth of the gospel and keep our minds centered on Christ. Paul urges believers to resist the influence of the world on behavior and thoughts. Romans 12:2 says “Do not conform any longer 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.”

So, the next time you see cancel culture at work in the world around us, remember: Jesus will always offer redemption. That can never be canceled.



Dillsburg Brethren in Christ Staff



Rob Douglass
Senior Pastor



Jeff Conrady
Associate Pastor



Naomi Smith
Associate Pastor



Esther Spurrier
Pastor of
Congregational Care



Kathy Bennett
Administrative
Assistant

The Doulos Newsletter Information

Doulos Editor: Carolyn Kimmel

Layout: Anne-Marie Brandt

Please send submissions for the
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carolynkimmel@comcast.net

or place them in Carolyn's church
mailbox by **May 8th**.



Join Us for a Service of Remembrance on May 16

This year has brought many changes in the lives of people in our congregation--changes we didn't get to share and process together. Our Sunday morning service on May 16 will be a Service of Remembrance to remember those loved ones who died in the last year, those we didn't get to gather for and remember together. Marlin Zook is one of these, Sylvia Klick is another. We want to be able to remember these loved ones together and tell how their lives impacted us.

There are a number of others in the church who have lost loved ones also in this year, and we want to know who those people were and to hear a bit about their lives during our time together. We are extending an invitation to people in our community who are also grieving the death of a loved one. In the service we will encourage people to name those they have lost and to share a memory. If you would like, you will be given space to have a poster or other small memorial to the person so that you can share some of your loss with us.

The service will be followed by a funeral meal. All this will happen outside in the green space and the parking lot to allow for greater participation. We'll pray that the weather cooperates, but I'm sure we'll have a back-up plan.

Pastor Esther Spurrier



Join us at Corner Life!

Come to our green space for dinner and stay for songs, games and family-friendly devotions. A no-cost meal will be served from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. and eaten picnic-style, with activities to follow.

Our next Corner Life gatherings are planned for **May 12, May 26 and June 9**. Bring something to sit on and a mask to wear while moving about. These are fair weather-only events, but the meals will be available on a drive-through basis if the weather keeps us from gathering on the lawn.

If you have questions about the events, contact Naomi Smith (naomi@dillsburgbic.org), and if you are willing to help with cooking, serving food or cleaning up, contact Jaylene Shannon (localoutreach@dillsburgbic.org).

May 12

Taco Rice Bowls
Veggies
Dessert

May 26

Macaroni & Cheese
Stewed Tomatoes
Fruit
Dessert

Gluten-free options will be available. Menu is subject to change.

They will know...

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:35

Editor’s Note: This month we debut a new column written by... you! We would love to hear stories—or even a couple of sentences—from our DBIC church family about how you have blessed others or been blessed by others as you strive to love the Lord with all your heart and to extend that love to your neighbors. What questions or simple actions are helping you to get to know your neighbors and to share your faith in everyday life with them? What are you learning? What are they learning and sharing with you? Kimberly Tucker starts us off this month. Please email your stories to carolynkimmel@comcast.net.

By Kimberly Tucker

For Christmas of 2019, Dillsburg BIC created an Advent devotional, and I began praying about who I could share it with... who needed a message of hope and reminder of God’s love?

I perceived Holy Spirit telling me I should give a copy to an old friend whom I’ll call Jane for this story. I put the devotional and some homemade raspberry jam in a Christmas gift bag and drove to her house. No one answered the door when I rang the doorbell. I hung the gift bag on the door knob.

Two weeks later, I drove to her house and the gift bag was still hanging on the door knob. As I walked around the property, it became clear to me that she was no longer living in the house. After doing a little research on the computer, I found her new address and hung the gift bag filled with the devotional, jam and my phone number on the door knob of her new residence.

Jane messaged me through my husband’s Facebook page. This was the beginning of sharing our lives together after a hiatus of close to a decade of only serendipitous passing.

On Valentine’s Day last year, I sent her flowers since her husband had died several years earlier very unexpectedly. At the beginning of March 2020, we attended a Celtic concert at a library before the COVID shelter-in-place order took effect. After the concert, we had quite a lengthy conversation during which Jane mentioned that her adult daughter was baptized, and she was a little disappointed that her daughter had not invited her to the baptism nor to church with her. I do not know Jane’s religious background, but this clearly was a door left wide open to discuss spiritual matters!

I told her that she was welcome to come with me to church. Little did we know that houses of worship around the world would soon need to worship virtually due to the COVID pandemic! I gave her the link to our worship service. She thanked me and said her adult son and daughter also gave her their churches links as well! It was good to know that God was using her children as well to reach out to her. Throughout the summer, we connected through Facebook messaging and occasionally meeting at the Dillsburg Farmers Market.

In November, I purchased an iPhone with money I earned from working with the U.S. Census. Now we weekly text each other about how our week went—sharing from the heart!

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind...You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22: 37, 39



Hope for Better Times

By Ron Sider

Sometimes the current situation seems hopeless. Political gridlock with the parties deeply divided seems to prevent negotiation and compromise. There is a huge gap between the rich and the poor with the richest 1% having about twice as much wealth as the bottom 90%. A radical self-centered individualism and widespread decay in family life prevail. And the number of Americans who claim to have religious faith has declined dramatically. One is tempted to feel that there is no achievable solution to this interlocking complex of problems.

But a recent book by Robert D Putnam and Shaylyn Romney Garrett offers hope for genuine improvement. (Putnam, Author of “Bowling Alone”, is a distinguished professor of public policy at Harvard and Garrett is a former student of Putnam.) In “The Upswing” (2020), they point out that all the major factors that prompt despair today were also present in the 1890s with equal intensity, but that in the next 70 years, things improved dramatically.

Around 1900, huge corporate monopolies successfully fought unions, oppressed workers and made vast wealth for a tiny few. Substance abuse was widespread and family life was decaying. A radical individualism made selfishness a virtue. Political platforms moved toward the extremes as politicians demonized each other rather than seeking compromise. “Inequality, political polarization, social dislocation and cultural narcissism prevailed” (p.8).

Then in the 70 years from 1890 to 1960, things changed slowly but substantially. Economic inequality decreased dramatically. Negotiation and compromise grew much stronger in politics. Social life became more cohesive, strengthening community and family ties. And concern for “we” rather than “I” became much stronger in the culture as people focused more on responsibilities to one another rather than narrow self interest.

Economic equality grew in this period. In 1913 the richest 1% of Americans received 19% of the national income. But in 1976 their share had dropped about 50% to 10.5% of total income. After taxes and transfers, the richest 1%’s share of national income dropped from 18% to 8%. While the real income of the top 1% rose 21.5% in this period, the average family income of the bottom 99% grew 300%!

“The Upswing” shows how similar improvements happened in politics (more collaboration), stronger family life, increased religious engagement and a much stronger sense of “we” and the common good.

Then about 1970, things began to reverse. Economic inequality dramatically increased. 0.1% of American families today hold 20% of household wealth and the top 1% have nearly twice as large a share of national wealth as the bottom 90%. Between 1974 and 2014, the inflation adjusted income for the bottom 10% rose a mere \$388 while the income for the top 1% rose by \$929,108 – – and \$4,846,718 for the top 0.1%!

“The Upswing” traces the same kind of decay in most other areas from 1970 to the present. Politics has become increasingly divisive and unable to compromise. Radical individualism has increased as family life, religious institutions and labor unions decayed. Divorce and cohabitation have soared. And the culture has largely abandoned a sense of “we” and returned to a radical individualism.

I find “The Upswing” deeply encouraging. It shows that a radically unjust, politically dysfunctional, socially disruptive and radically individualistic culture slowly improved from 1900 to about 1970. Putnam and Garrett suggest that the same thing can happen again.

Read the book and be encouraged.

This book, however, does not suggest what would cause such a change for the better. I believe Christians who truly believe and live central biblical principles can play a crucial role. The Bible’s vigorous demand for justice for the poor certainly calls us to structural changes that empower the bottom 50%. The biblical teaching on human selfishness (and the resulting political fact that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely) calls for structural changes that reduce the political and economic power of the very rich. Jesus’ command to love the neighbor as oneself certainly points to actions that emphasize “we” as much as “I”. Biblical teaching on sex and marriage can restore family life.

I beg God to raise up a generation of Christian activists who model and promote biblical principles so winsomely that they slowly transform today’s broken society.





Blessed are the Peace-Fakers?

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Matt. 5:9

People who use escape responses are usually intent on 'peace-faking,' or making things look good even then they are not. This is especially common in the church, where people are often more concerned about the appearance of peace than the reality of peace. Attack responses are used by people who are prone to 'peace-breaking.' They are more than willing to sacrifice peace and unity to get what they want.

*Taken from [The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict](#)
by Ken Sande, Updated Edition (Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 2003) p. 28.*

Food for Thought

Being a peacemaker is difficult. There is no other way to honestly speak about it. It is hard, humbling, and sometimes humiliating work. But consider this: The peace that Christ achieved for us was hard. Jesus is described as a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief (Isa. 53:3). It was humbling. Jesus humbled himself to the point of death, even death on a cross (Phil. 2:8). And it was humiliating. Jesus endured the cross, despising the shame (Heb. 12:2). All this was done so that peace, not just an appearance of peace, but the reality of peace would be achieved between God and human beings.

But believe it or not, being a peace-faker is difficult too. It takes a great deal of emotional energy to smile and wave or shake hands with someone at church when your heart is hardened against that person. Continuing to function in a civil manner alongside a co-worker who has wronged you can feel like splitting rocks in a prison camp. Tip-toeing around sensitive issues in your family while a dangerous current of anger and resentment boils beneath the surface can often make you physically sick inside. And what is the result of all this? The appearance of peace, but not the reality. For all of that time, and energy, and heartache, you end up with something that is not real.

Hebrews 12:3 says, "For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lost heart." Are you feeling weary? Yes, it's hard and yes, there is hostility, but consider Jesus and don't lose heart. With His strength and presence, it is doable. Remember, the goal is God's peace. And while it may not always be pretty, it's always real.

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Leadership Council Report By Avis Whitesel

Here are some highlights from the March Leadership Council meeting:


Some Financial reports of note:

- Loan Balance as of the end of February was \$44,279.
- Jodie Smiley at Paxton Street Ministries was blessed by the Christ Birthday offering.
- February offerings looked low, but we are right now \$1,000 ahead of budget.

We were blessed by the spring in-gathering offering, which will be used to demolish the shed and replace it with a two-door garage shed and other equipment that is needed for the outdoor services. Any additional funds will be used for Properties and Facilities.

We discussed Sunday morning worship services and decided that we will move outside beginning in May with streaming to the sanctuary for those who are unable to be outside.

The full minutes of the Leadership Council meeting are located on the bulletin board in the lobby. If you would like additional information or to follow up on any items, please contact any LC member: Pastor Rob Douglass, Phil Engle, Randy Fish, Ray Knepper, Sharon Miller, Rachel Pease, Heidi Tucker or Avis Whitesel.



Stop Traffic

By Marj Strayer

A few months ago, you were introduced to one of ladies served by Peace Promise. In that article I shared that this young lady, whom I called J, almost died at the hands of a trafficker. When she had recovered, she expressed a desire to turn her life around. However, upon arriving at her home she was contacted by the trafficker and she once again hooked up with him.

Patty Seamans has always said that the women they help must want to be helped. So, Patty had to wait and pray. Prayer partners were called into action to pray for Jessica. Within a day or two, Jessica called Patty and asked Patty to come and get her. Patty picked her up and took her to a house offered by a friend of Peace Promise that was off the beaten path. They stayed there until Patty could locate a program and safe house out of state. It needed to be far enough away to reduce the possibility that her trafficker would find her. Her cell phone was destroyed and her computer was wiped clean. All the while, Patty ministered to Jessica and explained that in order for her to be truly free, she would have to leave her home and go to a safe place where she could receive the help she needed to not only experience freedom physically but also mentally, emotionally and spiritually. She needed to heal. Jessica was finally ready to make that decision.

After much prayer, again calling on the prayer warriors, God provided a placement for Jessica in a state far enough away to ensure her safety. Patty purchased two plane tickets, and she and Jessica boarded a plane. Jessica is now safe, and she is in a program designed to bring her that healing and wholeness she so desperately needs. Jessica and all of us are hopeful that this will bring her to that "life turned around" she is looking for. This is one of several such stories.

On April 9, we heard the story of Nikki, who also was trafficked. Peace Promise made it possible for her to enter a two-year program offering counseling and education at The Well. Nikki was baptized there and graduated with a degree in cosmetology. She now manages her own salon and has been mentoring other ladies involved with Peace Promise. This is a beautiful work of the Lord. We are so thankful and so proud of Nikki.

Again, thank you Dillsburg for the many ways you support Peace Promise. You play a big role in this story. Your generosity has helped make it possible to hire a much-needed assistant for Patty Seamans. That is huge! You are such a blessing.

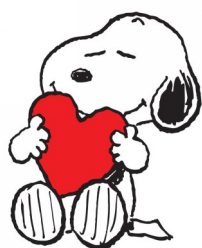


The church has an email address which you can use for needs, issues, concerns, or suggestion related to the coronavirus outbreak: connect@dillsburgbic.org

Please use this address to connect with the church leadership about any needs you may be experiencing during this time.



WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES




Glen & Cindi Brubaker	May 7
Robert & Karen Pomeroy	May 8
Shelby & Audra Sieber	May 23
Rick & Charity Miller	May 25
Bob & Gail Brubaker	May 27
Seth & Becca Wierwille	May 27
Eric & Corie Thuma	May 29
Dwight & Annabeth Rotz	May 30
Isaac & Heidi Tucker	May 31



Grace Spurrier	May 2	Scott Raboci	May 10	Charity Miller	May 20
Kimberly Tucker	May 2	Anna Weiser	May 10	Garret VanDyke	May 21
Levi Sowers	May 2	Helen Leach	May 11	Abraham Waris	May 21
Raelyn Brubaker	May 4	Levi Pomeroy	May 11	Meredith Engle	May 24
Kathy Renard	May 6	Shekinah Waris	May 13	Nina Hoover	May 28
Paul Cathro	May 6	Jim Shelly	May 13	Wendy Zwally	May 28
Spencer Sieber	May 6	Barb Miller	May 17	Xayvion Tucker	May 29
Bob Hess	May 7	Reece Thuma	May 17	Miriam Smith	May 29
Ellen Hoover	May 9	Jessica Jacobs	May 19	Amy Kimmel	May 31
Ruth Zook	May 9	Faithe Spurrier	May 20	Samuel Walsh	May 31



May 2021

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1 7:00 pm ZOOM Prayer Gathering
2 10:00 am Worship	3	4 7:00 pm ZOOM Men's Book Study	5 9:00 am ZOOM Women's Bible Study 6:30 pm ZOOM Gathering	6 10:00 am—6 pm Blood Drive (FH) 6:30 pm Fresh Hope meeting (Orange Room)	7 11:00 am ZOOM Book Bunch	8 Doulos Deadline 7:00 pm ZOOM Prayer Gathering
9 10:00 am Worship	10	11 7:00 pm ZOOM Men's Book Study	12 9:00 am ZOOM Women's Bible Study 5:00 pm Corner Life	13 6:30 pm Fresh Hope meeting (Orange Room) 6:30 pm ZOOM Human Trafficking Meeting	14 11:00 am ZOOM Book Bunch	15 7:00 pm ZOOM Prayer Gathering
16 10:00 am Worship	17	18 7:00 pm ZOOM Men's Book Study	19 9:00 am ZOOM Women's Bible Study 6:30 pm ZOOM Gathering	20 6:30 pm Fresh Hope meeting (Orange Room) 6:30 pm ZOOM Leadership Council	21 11:00 am ZOOM Book Bunch 6:30 pm ZOOM Deacon Meeting	22 9:00 am ZOOM Prayer Walking 7:00 pm ZOOM Prayer Gathering
23 10:00 am Worship	24 7:00 pm ZOOM Ministry Council	25 7:00 pm ZOOM Men's Book Study	26 9:00 am ZOOM Women's Bible Study 5:00 pm Corner Life	27 6:30 pm Fresh Hope meeting (Orange Room)	28 11:00 am ZOOM Book Bunch	29 7:00 pm ZOOM Prayer Gathering
30 10:00 am Worship	31					

These events subject to change. Stay tuned for information from DBIC on any canceled or rescheduled events.