

CANCELED

WEEK 1 (HYBRID)

BIG IDEA

Love people who aren't like you.

BIBLE

John 4:1-26, 39-42; II Timothy 4:2-4;
Galatians 3:28

WHAT?

ACTIVITY

Say Something Like:

Welcome Back! I'm so glad to see you all after taking a few weeks off for Christmas. Speaking of Christmas, how did it go for everyone? What was the highlight of your Christmas Break?

Ask:

- Let's take a minute to reacquaint ourselves with one another. We're going to go around the room, in 30 or less, share
 - Your Name
 - The School You Go To
 - The Best Part of Your Christmas Break
 - One thing you are hopeful for this year.

ACTIVITY | Culture Cancellations

Say Something Like:

- Tonight, we're kicking off a new series called *Canceled*, as we do, I'd like to see if you can identify a few trends that some of us would like to see "canceled" forever.

INSTRUCTIONS:-

- *Divide your youth into groups of 5 or less. This might mean 2 teams, or 4.*
- *Invite one person from each team to the front, or have them just stand up.*
- *Explain to them you are going to describe a cultural trend that needs to be canceled. For each trend there will be three clues.*
- *The first person to identify the trend correctly will earn the points for their team. If they get it on the first clue, it's worth 3 points; second clue, 2 points; third clue, 1 point.*
- *You can only guess one time per clue and I'll each clue will be 10 seconds apart.*
- *After someone identifies the trend, take a group vote as to whether they think it should be "canceled" or not.*
- *Keep track of the team points. At the end of the game, award the winning team candy tickets to redeem at the end of the night.*

Say Something Like:

- We may disagree on whether or not Crocs should be canceled, but sometimes "canceling" things can be much more controversial than footwear.

DISCUSSION | Define the Terms

Say Something Like:

- In the last few years, terms like "online shaming," "call-out culture," and "cancel culture" have become popular. But it's not always clear what these words mean. What does it mean to . . .
 - Call out?
 - Shame?

- Cancel?

INSTRUCTIONS:-

- *Ask students to split into groups of 2-3 with the people sitting around them, and to quickly come up with definitions and examples for these terms.*
- *After 2-3 minutes, ask a few students to share with the whole group.*

Ask:

- When do you think it's right or justified for someone to get called out, shamed, or canceled? When do you think it's wrong or harmful?
- Do you see "cancel culture" happening more often online, in person, both, or neither? Why do you think that is?

PLAY MESSAGE VIDEO

SO WHAT?

DISCUSSION

Ask:

- What are some ways you've seen people avoid, dislike, or get angry with each other because of their differences?
- Have you ever felt uncomfortable, angry, or afraid of someone who was different than you? In what ways were you different from each other?
- Why do you think it was important for Jesus to show that He valued the Samaritan woman?
- What's one way valuing people who are different than us lead to more people hearing the good news of Jesus?

NOW WHAT?

RESPONSE | -Who do you struggle to love?

Say Something Like:

- You're probably not angry at any Samaritans right now, but I'm guessing there is a person, or maybe a group of people, who you struggle to love because of your differences. You may not hate them, but you might be . . .
 - Overlooking or avoiding them.
 - Uncomfortable around them.
 - Angry with or disgusted by them.
 - Afraid of them.
 - Mocking them.

Ask:

- So who is that for you? Is it a person? Is it a group of people? This is a safe place where you can admit who you're struggling to love, because we all sometimes struggle to love people who aren't like us.

Say Something Like:

- I know it's easier to cancel someone than love them. It's easier to ignore them than to start a conversation with them. It's easier to hate, mock, or avoid them than reach out to them. But that's not what Jesus

challenges us to do.

- Just like Jesus confronted the Jews with the reality that God loved Samaritans, the people you're thinking about are loved by God too. They may be different than you, but you're both made in the image of God, and that makes you valuable and worthy of love.

INSTRUCTIONS:*-In your packets, you'll find some handouts printed. Hand these out to your youth. Encourage students to write down the person, type, or group of people they struggle to love, and then place that fold that slip of paper and hand it in. This can be a reminder that people who aren't like them are valuable and worthy of love. While students respond, play or perform a song like "Build My Life," by Passion.*

Say Something Like:

- This won't always be easy. There will be people who are hard for you to understand, connect with, or care about because of your differences. But remember . . .
 - The people you struggle to love are made in the image of God, just like you are.
 - Our differences don't have to divide us.
 - We can love each other even when we don't agree.
- If you want to love like Jesus loves (and I hope you do), **love people who aren't like you**—don't be so quick to cancel them.

DISCUSSION

Have Someone Read:

- Galatians 3:28 - page 1452 in Your NIV Teen Study Bible

Ask:

- What is one way we could practice being "one in Christ," while celebrating the things that make us different?
- Think of someone who is different than you. How can you show value to that person like Jesus and the Samaritan woman did by . . .
 - Starting a conversation?
 - Treating them with respect?
 - Serving them?
 - Listening to them?
 - Learning from them?
 - Telling others what you learned from them?
- Who is someone you're struggling to love because they're different than you? What's one way you're going to value them this week?

PRAYER

Use the list above to form your prayers tonight. If you need to, write the list. Form a circle in the room with your leaders starting and ending the prayer. Have each youth pray a sentence prayer that includes one of the items on the list... They can be as specific or as vague as they want.

"Lord, help me to show value to _____ (*include name or be general "others", "My enemies", "my family", "bullies at school", etc*) by _____ (*name something from the list or come up with their own*).

REMINDER

Remind 8th grade students that confirmation starts Sunday. If they are planning to get confirmed this year, they need to get registered for it if they have not yet done so.