

# OpenTheo

## Cancel Culture, The Inner-Ring, New Statues That Should Be Built, and Summer Reading Lists

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### Life and Books and Everything - Clearly Reformed

Originally released on July 1st, 2020, Kevin DeYoung, Collin Hansen, and Justin Taylor discuss cancel culture, the inner-ring, new statues that they think should be built, and their summer reading lists.

## Transcript

This is Life and Books and Everything hosted by Kevin DeYoung, Justin Taylor, and Collin Hansen Greetings and salutations, welcome back to Life and Books and Everything with Justin Taylor and Collin Hansen, I'm Kevin DeYoung. To give you some important announcements at the front end, in case you're one of the very few who don't make it, to the end of the podcast, I doubt that anyone, when you start, is good to the last drop, but we will be taking an indeterminate hiatus over the summer, probably a month, or sometime we'll come back in August, we anticipate, and we hope to be, I don't know if bigger and better than ever, but at least to be season two, as it were, podcast 2.0, and we're in the process of trying to figure out some sponsors, which will help us take some things to the next level with editing and notes, show notes, book links, all these things that people have been asking for, and I just want to say thank you to all the folks at Christ Covenant who have helped us here in season one, immeasurably so, to get us off the ground, and to do this, you know, really on a whim, hey, we have a pandemic, let's start a podcast, and have been nothing but cheerfully, wonderfully, professional and supportive, and we're thankful for them, and look forward to season two coming later this summer, even with some guests here and there. So stay tuned, this will be, then we anticipate perhaps the last you'll hear from us for a few weeks, and we want to talk about books, of course, we'll get to that, but just to continue with some of the conversations we've had over the past few weeks and relating to all the things swirling around in our world at the moment, actually one of our listeners wrote in, we're getting fan mail, and you have the people what they want, Kevin, and that's right, would you talk just a little bit about cancel culture, and it's become even more prevalent, and we've seen that the dinosaurs, the monsters are now eating their young as the cancel culture

giving, and take it away, that's not just going after conservatives, but even those who have gone after conservatives are now getting eaten up by the cancel culture, they're eating their old, they're eating their young, it's the young eating their old, what is this thing, I think most people have heard of the phrase now, but where did it come from, what is it, why is it problematic for Christians in particular? Man, I don't know about the origins of the etymology, I'm not sure about all of that, but I just know that my goodness, social media is such a perfect avenue for being able to expose unacceptable thoughts, I mean I think when you go back and you look at, if you read about the coddling of the American mind from looking off in hype, they talk about the way that language has shifted, that now you'll often hear people say that your language physically hurts me, it makes me physically ill.

So we've weaponized language, which now means that if you have said something that is not acceptable, then you cannot be redeemed, that you have said something that is permanent. Now it's gone through all kinds of different athletes because we go back to something that they wrote when they were 12 or they're 14 or 16 or something like that, which basically say hey parents, don't let your kids be on Twitter at age 12 or 14 or 16 for that matter, hopefully we'll see some changes there. But the cancel culture is not, it's not complete, not everybody gets canceled and therefore they lose their job, they lose their husband or their wife, they lose their friends.

I mean we've seen this inside Christian circles, we've seen that form within blog posts or something like that that are not supposed to say the right thing, so people want to cancel them, which means just, you're cast out, this is Old Testament religion here, you are outside of the camp, you are untouchable now. And I think it's a way of more or less policing thought, and I don't think it's a lot more complicated than that, it's being able to, in the absence of an ethic of persuasion, this is a way of using sort of a real power, it's not tangible in the way that we typically think of as power because it's not so much, the more powerful you are, the more likely you are to get canceled in some ways because the more vulnerable you are. So for example, you're representing a major institution and you do something in your personal life, maybe you have an episode that somebody captures on film, then you jeopardize the reputation of that company or some place that you represent, and therefore they can attack the company and force you then to be canceled and you get fired and things like that.

And you talked about the religious component to it in a sociological sense, then you start dealing with second and third and fourth degrees of separation, you should be canceled because you haven't canceled that person. And how often in a 24 hour news cycle is that basically the angle, either from the right or the left, this person who you've been associated with or likes you said something horrible, what will you do now? Yeah, and both sides are trying to use it. Have you seen just a Michigan state grad right, Jamel Hill? Yeah.

So she's been a key proponent of cancel culture, but then it turns out that she had been trying, she had said some things about trans, she made a trans joke, and then all of the right wing dudes have decided to pounce on her and say, see, so it's not just a left and a right thing, more popular among the left, more typical among the left, but the right has found, hey, this is fun, we can play this too. Well, you remember when we were in high school and we all read Nathaniel Hawthorne and Scarlet Letter, whether that's really indicative of what Puritans were like, but we read with horror, she had to wear the A for the adulterous around her neck and walk through town and look at this public shaming and you read it and you just think, how could people be like that? Well, we know how people can be like that because that's what people are like, that's human nature and we see it unleashed in our social media age, that it's not the, it's not sexual sins anymore, but it's saying the wrong word or using the wrong sort of joke or making the wrong sort of comment that makes people upset and it's not, and this is where it's very difficult and I'll get your feedback here, Justin. It's very difficult as Christians because on the one hand, there's a right sort of instinct as Christians, we do want to be sensitive to others.

You think of the proverb like a mad man shooting fire brands and deadly arrows as a man who hurts his neighbor and said, I was only joking. So we do care about how our words affect people. We don't want to just say, well, toughen up Buttercup and yet on the other hand, intentionality has been removed from discourse so that whatever you said, whatever your intention, whether they're ought to have been offense taken or not, they are violent, they are offensive if I perceive them to be and that is a dangerous place to be in when the intent but perception.

Yes, when the one receiving them, you saw it not quite cancel culture, but what was it in Oakland a few weeks ago when they found what they thought were nooses hanging in a park and it was actually an African American man who said this was a gym routine, these ropes that we've had hanging up and the white mayor or city council said it doesn't matter whatever your intention was, doesn't matter that you're black, these are offensive and must be taken down which just boggles the mind how we've gotten to that sort of point. Justin, you know well the ins and outs of the interwebs and have seen this. How do you sense what's going on, protect yourself against it, stand a thwart against it? I want to hear Justin respond to the accusation that John Piper invented cancel culture.

Yes, Sarah, Pauli and Bailey of the Washington Post and Colin and I would count as a friend said, I'm pretty surprised that conservatives, yeah, you worked with her at Christianity today and really respect Sarah and her work. Yeah, she said, I'm kind of surprised that conservatives are against cancel culture. They remember John Piper saying farewell of Rob Bell which that was a three-word tweet that John Piper did with the link going to my blog post which was responding to Rob Bell.

So I remember conversations with Colin on the phone as I felt like my world was coming in on me and the New York Times is calling me for comment and comments were

flooding in about what a terrible person I was. Kevin was involved with all that too, right Kevin? I was, I remember I had just done a Saturday, I just done a wedding, I was at my church at a wedding reception, I should have been paying attention to my wife and what was going on and I'm stepping out to talk to Colin or Justin about did you, the farewell Rob Bell and the books coming out and I don't think he invented cancel culture. No, do I think that tweet was canceling but John doesn't need us to ride to his defense.

No, but it's an interesting thing to think about. Samuel James my colleague at Crossway said I'm all about cancel culture, I don't know that I would use those words but when you're talking about the church and excommunication and putting the wolves outside of where the sheep are, there is a form of cancellation that's appropriate. It's when people, you know, unilaterally decide that they are the priests of prophetic of online discourse and can excommunicate anybody from polite conversation that it becomes more problematic.

But I think it is indicative, it is illustrative of the difference of John Piper would rejoice would be the first to tweet if Rob Bell were to repent and were to say that he was misguided and that he was leading people astray and that he misunderstood God's word and misrepresented political revelation. John would rejoice and say welcome back, I'm glad that you're here. Cancel culture is something different where it says you have committed the unforgivable, the unpardonable sin and there is no recourse.

It doesn't matter how sorry you are, it doesn't matter what forms of penance you do, you will be punished and you will not just be privately punished but you will be banished and annihilated essentially. I think the key to understanding all of it is the safety metaphor that we need to have safe places and the three of us work for institutions and we are part of churches and perhaps in the past had to have restraining orders against people who are violent and you don't say oh it's okay that you can come around if you just feel sorry or if you start doing better, no there is kind of a, there is no exceptions, you cannot come around here, you are eliminated and once you use that metaphor and apply it towards online discourse and somebody committing sins that are against the cultural narrative, I think it is hugely problematic. Colin said it's a culture that has lost faith and persuasion and of course the even deeper answer is that it has no place for grace.

We all want grace for ourselves but we want justice for other people and I think we are seeing that played out that the cancel culture is an anti-Christian form of action. Right and you talk about church discipline and I would agree, I would really push back against using that term because as any good book of church order will tell you the purposes in church discipline are ultimately to restore the offender, to bring glory to God, to protect the peace and purity of the church and as a pastor who has had a number of occasions where we have both exercise, suspension or excommunication but have also had occasions where we have welcomed people back, remember one woman coming to the table with tears and hugging me as she came up and she had been welcomed back to

the table upon many months or years and then coming to repentance. So there is grace available and while I don't deny that for some people, we can't judge into the human hearts and people feeling unsafe whether they should feel that way or not but actually do but I think it's safe to say that there is also just some simple human totem pole is going on.

If you're at the top of the totem pole or a different metaphor, if you're at the top of the building and you have a hundred people with you who have made it to the top or it seems like this is the place of moral excellence, if you push a few other people off there and then they push a few people off, you feel a little better about yourself. There's not very many people on top of this moral platform and you're there still, you feel safe for the moment and so pushing people off, it's the other metaphor, C.S. Lewis, it's the inner ring kind of phenomenon. It gives you the sense of moral excellence in virtue without having to do the hard work of developing patience and long-suffering and character but you push people off the cliff and you are still left for the time being and that feels good.

I think that's 100% true and if anybody out there has not read the inner ring by C.S. Lewis, that is a... Oh, what a great lecture. I think we're all pretty slow to say must reads but that is a must read I think for our times. One thing that's really power.

It's planetary power that S.A. has. And if you read that, you aren't just going to think, "Oh, C.S. Lewis saw what's wrong with other people." No. If you have any humility, you'll read it and you'll think, "Oh boy, that operates within my heart all the time.

Lord have mercy." One thing that's been new for me in this past few weeks is hearing more than one story, not about online cancel culture but kind of on the ground cancel culture among young people in particular and not even for saying something terrible or saying something that goes against the cultural orthodoxies but for failing to speak out. Say on the race issue, if somebody has Instagram and does not use that to protest, does not use that to condemn certain things which are good things to protest, good things to condemn. The very act of silence is taken as an act of violence and not being supportive and a lot of mean spiritedness and cancellation and critique coming just for the act of silence which I think is a different angle than just what we're seeing on Twitter or on other mediums.

Colin, has it ever been critical of TGC for not saying something? I do not know of what you speak. I think I appreciate that. That's why I love that people keep circulating the clip from Seinfeld and Kramer when he famously joins the AIDS Walk but won't wear the ribbon.

You will not wear the ribbon? Why don't you not wear the ribbon? They beat him up. They beat him up because he won't wear the AIDS ribbon. He's like, "I'm against AIDS.

I'm marching for AIDS. I just don't want to wear the ribbon." All they care about is you

have to wear the ribbon. You don't care about the ribbon.

Take us maybe on a brief tangent but we talked last time, Colin, you gave us a really good explanation of with the the bulkiness of media with everything being broken up into smaller and smaller bits. It encourages more polarity because you don't need to appeal to any vast swath of people because nobody is getting a big group of people. You just have to have a very passionate small fan base and you can be a pretty big deal.

What may seem counterintuitive as that has become more fragmented, we live in a time where our news and especially our politics has become nationalized and universalized. It used to say all politics is local and now it's a well, no politics is local. Everything.

It has to do with the internet. It has to do with the disappearance of local newspapers where you maybe have one liberal, one conservative newspaper. What you really want is to get the morning newspaper, the afternoon newspaper.

They tell you what's going on in your city. Well, that's all dead and dying. What matters then are what did Trump tweet today? What did Nancy Pelosi? What did AOC? These stories then, some of which in one sense what's happening in Seattle with the Chas or the Chop is a big deal.

In another sense, it's going to be forgotten and it doesn't really have any immediate bearing on probably Birmingham except that it's elevated as a national story. This happens all over the place so that any one of us can take the worst story, whether it's our worst fears on the right or on the left and say, yup, that's what's happening. That's what police are like everywhere.

That's what leftists are like everywhere and that's coming. You know the phrase, not picking instead of nitpicking. Like the worst example of a Christian, the worst example of someone of a different race, the worst example of a Democrat or a Republican, a police officer, whomever.

Because there are an innumerable number of stories at any one time, the narratives we want to create are basically non-falsifiable because no one really knows and you take any one of these stories and not to say all of them or none of them deserve national outcry or recognition. But you take any one of them and it becomes the state of the matter. That's what people are like.

That's what our country is like. Well, that's bound to be polarizing and the stories are never going to be with all the people gathering together to clean up after Minneapolis is going to be all the rest. Anything we do or is it just simply an awareness of what's happening that may at least keep some of our baser passions in check? What do you think, Colin? Two points there.

One is we need to understand how we got into this position and that's an economic

story. It's a story of advertising. So why did local media decline? It's because local media lost the delivery mechanism.

They lost their financing mechanism. So once Craigslist and things like that came in to replace classifieds and then once social media came in to be able to allow targeting through Facebook, especially and also now Instagram for advertising, you don't have any way to subsidize local media. So that's why we've lost that sort of pragmatic politics because you don't really care what, I mean, you can in some cases, but in a smaller town, especially, you don't really care which party you're mayor is a part of because the things that you typically think of for a national party aren't really relevant at a local level in the same way, especially because local governments and state governments, Illinois would beg to differ, but they have to live with their name.

They have a street government in Illinois. I'm not aware of. Not a good one.

Not a good one for a long time, but you just you have to live within your means at some level and it's easier to find that common ground. But again, there's no mechanism for news to be able to cover it except more or less what you're having come into place are these Chamber of Commerce newspapers, which are only positive news. They don't deal with any of the hard issues.

That's the first issue. So I don't know how we fix that. If we want local news, it's going to have to be philanthropic or it's going to have to come through the Chamber of Commerce and it's just going to be hyping local, like positive stories.

It's not bad. I think my house, we receive like two magazines and two newspapers that are all just subsidized through the advertising through a Chamber of Commerce type approach. But then the second issue is, and this is something that we can do.

I can't urge this strongly enough. Do not treat news as entertainment. I think that's why, Kevin, we see what happened in Seattle be so important to Charlotte or to Sioux City or to Birmingham because it's entertainment.

It's more or less a form of reality TV. It's kind of scripted for a certain audience to produce a certain effect. And like you said, it's that nut picking there.

The turn of news into entertainment where everything is a battle of good and evil between those horrible people trying to destroy your way of life and the good people trying to defend everything that's wonderful about this world is deeply destructive. And don't treat news as entertainment. This is not intended to be fun.

And maybe that's why in this pandemic we miss sports so much because it gets us out of that. What do you do, Colin, to work against that in your own life and your own mind? Because I believe that and yet I'm drawn to the headlines of you won't believe what somebody did and somebody said. Oh, that's tempting to click on rather than what was a

word article in the Atlantic or the Economist.

Yeah, I think maybe it's because I'm immersed in this all the time. It's not fun. It's kind of like when you become a parent, all of a sudden those stories about bad things that happened to little kids are very fun.

They're not very entertaining. They're not ones you want to click on. They just raise your anxiety and your fears all out of proportion of reality.

And that's I think maybe just if you're more exposed to it like I have been for a long period of time and you know more of what's going on behind the curtain, you just this has real damaging effects. First of all, the people who watch and just to our broader political and cultural ecosystem. So I don't know.

I guess that's not really a solution, but that's where I'm coming from. This is painful. When people are used, I guess when you're the object, like we'll go back to cancel culture, not so fun when you're being canceled, not so much in this case when you're the one who's being dragged all the time by people who think that it's entertaining to watch you being lied about.

That's not fun. Let me take this in a different direction that will try to be positive here. Hopefully that discussion was of some positive benefit, but we talked in previous episodes about tearing down statues and I think we agreed.

Some should be tearing down. You got to deal with a case by case basis. The mob should not be able to just lasso whatever they want.

There are channels to do this and many people are eager to respond to some of those. But I want to talk about what statues should be put in place. Then not thinking of the people that already have statues, maybe we find out later some of these people do, but as you think in your mind, who would you like to see have a statue? Somebody from the past who's famous to you or somebody you know now, this could be, you're welcome to take this in a somewhat humorous direction, the person who invented cinnamon or take it in a more serious direction.

Think about who are some of the people and we'll just throw out the caveat that if we find somebody tells some listeners, you didn't know that this person said this or this don't cancel us. We're not claiming to be biographical experts on these people. I have a list of several people, but I'll throw it to you first, Justin.

Do you have any thoughts of people you would like to see have recognized with a statue? I'm sure you guys will think of funny ones, but I would start with something serious in terms of my own past and life story, and that would be Tommy Frazier's run against the Florida Gators. Oh, that's a good one. That's a good one.



That did capture that moment that Nebraska fans have never been able to relive. And over 30 years would be just a glorious thing. I think I would stand there and weep as they just sculpted Florida Gator after Florida Gator after Florida Gator attempting to tackle touchdown Tommy.

So it's kind of starting off in a serious note that that would be at the top of my list. Another one I didn't think about, Justin, would be Alex Gordon's home run 2015 Game One World Series. That probably will be a statue at Kaufman Stadium soon.

It's not Nebraska alum. Husker. Yes, it's a sport called baseball, a little ball to hit it out of the park.

I thought you'd appreciate it at least because it's Nebraska alum. I didn't know you mentioned Nebraska. Next one, Justin.

The next one would be the Northwestern Hail Mary. Oh, no, you did not. You did not just go there.

The backup quarterback throwing a 50 yard to the Nebraska receiver that if you want to go to camp who were well, your question recruited. Yeah, really from Illinois. Yeah, if you go to YouTube, it's just an entertaining thing to listen to Nebraska, Northwestern, Hail Mary.

There's one YouTube where you can listen to the Nebraska radio call followed by the Northwestern radio call or maybe it's vice versa to hear. I remember where I was. Justin, I remember where I was.

Not happened. I texted you immediately afterwards. Oh, yeah.

Thank you. I appreciate it. That's a beautiful moment.

Okay, I'm going to jump in with you're getting me thinking of good sports ones, but it's a Michigan State fan. Jalen Jalen Watts Jackson. I'm going to put it the against Michigan, the botched fumble with no time left running back.

I mean that and then the surrender Cobra afterward. You remember where you were Kevin in Birmingham, Alabama. Alabama, I was driving from my hotel to Briarwood to speak at the missions conference.

I pulled up into the parking lot. I heard that Michigan State didn't get it on fourth and whatever and there was a minute and a half left and I was so frustrated. We were both ranked, I think in the top 10 Michigan State that year and I went into trying to pretend like I was spiritual to preach at a missions conference and I was just so distraught that we lost this game and I'm getting ready to speak and I my phone starts blowing up with text.

So I said something like, oh, excuse me. I think my wife may be wanting something and I went back into the bathroom. It was a new reception to watch this and people just say, you won't believe what happened.

Now it's hard for me to watch because he broke his hip when he got tackled by his own teammates but I'm sure that was worth it. So that would be one. I remember you watched the earlier part of that game at my in-laws house.

I do remember that. You weren't it? Yeah. Because the Royals were playing at the same time in the ALCS against the Blue Jays.

It was like a big sports afternoon. Okay, I'll drop in a few others and let you go, Colin. Sticking with sports, I haven't, I'm not an expert on him, but being from Michigan, Mike Illich.

So Mike Illich, not only Little Caesars, best value meal. Friend of the show. Friend of the show.

And I'm not a Tigers and a Red Wings fan but owned them, did right by them people. And some little, very philanthropic came out later in life that quietly he had been paying Rosa Parks rent in Detroit when she was facing, I think, some opposition from Nerduels. And really, American dream kind of story of born he and his wife of Macedonian immigrant parents and then making it rich with pizza and owning these sports franchises and doing as much as anybody to try to revitalize Detroit.

So there's probably a statue of him already. And then Norman Borlaug, you know him, he already won a Nobel Prize, but he's the father of the Green Revolution in farming. And you read about him and Greg Easterbrook's book on why things are much better than they seem.

But it's estimated that his revolution in farming techniques might have saved one billion lives. When we study history, there's the inevitable bias that it's almost impossible to study what didn't happen. So there's always a bias toward what did happen.

And so the heroes who did think, well, here's someone whose revolution in agriculture may have saved one billion lives with more sustainable yields around the world. So I have some Christian ones I'll get back to, but jump in. I'll transition into the Christian ones.

I had to look up who had a statue and who didn't. So two of my people who I wanted to have a statue did, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the Russian Christian in 20th century, there is a statue for him. And also Fannie Lou Hamer, the Mississippi Civil Rights activist, also a statue of her.

So the other ones, I got a few, Corey Tenboom or Betsy could be both, could they be

together? That'd be great. I didn't find one of Corey anywhere. Carl Henry feels like there should at least be a bust or something like that at the library that's named for him at Trinity.

I don't remember a bust, but they could put Carl in the numbers office perhaps. Yeah, that's true. That's probably right.

It never's office. Now, I think they could put like Carl on a bench out front and you could sit next to him. I think that would be fun.

John Newton, I don't think I saw it. Yeah, I had the letters of John Newton last week in the podcast. As far as I could tell, for a man who contributed so much socially, but also theologically and in our music, poetically, didn't see anything there.

What an only or somewhere. Yeah, you'd think. Louis Amperini, famously from the book *Unbroken*, put up a World War II vet statue right there, a man who had great contributions to the kingdom, but then also heroic effort in World War II and then a fictional character.

I figure if there is a biography of Atticus Finch, then there should at least be a statue of Atticus Finch. Though interesting in Monroville, there is a statue in Alabama here. There is a statue of the children from the book, but not of Atticus, which is a surprise.

So we should just, you know, somebody could make it in Gregory Peck's image. I suppose, Atticus Finch. That's good.

I got more. Justin, what do you have? Yeah, I'm from the Nebraska theme. Yeah, so it was 1993 Orange Bowl.

No, I'm just kidding. Tom Osborne does have a statue outside Memorial Stadium. So that's what he's been taking.

Does Charles Spurgeon have a statue anywhere? Scott, too. I've been. It's church many times.

It says Spurgeon's church. I don't know if there's a statue. I think there has to be.

You would think. I've seen obviously lots of paintings and drawings of him, but I've never seen a statue, so it seems like he would be. When there's got to be a C.S. Lewis statue somewhere, right? It seems like I've seen at least a bust of Lewis, but.

In Oxford, maybe. Lewis is worthy of one. I don't know if Wheaton's going to claim they have the original one.

That's all I know. Yeah. They've got the wardrobe.

Maybe they can put the statue inside of it or something like that. I guess when I'm just Baptist have the relics of Spurgeon's teeth or something. That would be the place for the statue.

Or again, it's a bust. Yeah. Yeah, I wonder if they have one there.

I don't know. I'm not up on my theological statues like I should be, but a guston would be one, certainly worthy, and I'm sure there's one somewhere, but no one knows what he looks like. So I guess he'd just kind of make it up.

But what's his name pronounced a guston and not Augustine? I have a whole vlog post on that. I know. What do we do? All right.

Do you have more? Nope. OK, I got some others. Samuel Zweimer.

Oh, I'm born in Islam, born in Vreaslyn, Michigan, by neck of the woods. There's a Zweimer cottage at Hope College. And when I was there, Ben Patterson was the chaplain.

You know, there was a big revival of interest in missions. And I don't know what's become of that, but there was renewed interest in Zweimer. So a missionary in the Arabian Peninsula and that part of the world for what, 20, 30 years, and then taught miseology at Princeton, but a wonderful writer and evangelical Calvinist.

So Samuel Zweimer, how about-- I don't know too much about him, but the story is fascinating. The documentary from a few years ago, Pastor Lee Jong-Rok, the Dropbox guy in Korea, saving the babies as they put them in the Dropbox. And I know some people were critical of, well, that's encouraging people to dispose of babies, but you know, he saved hundreds of babies that way.

One that would be maybe controversial, but someday there will be a statue. Once the politics of it are in the rearview mirror more distantly, but I do think there will be schools named after Clarence Thomas and a statue somewhere. I know you got to just sort of come down on was he telling the truth and it was a high tech lynching at his confirmation hearings, which from what I've read, I'm persuaded that it is.

But his PBS did a really remarkable documentary a couple months ago. It was available for free. I'm not sure if it still is, but it was just him narrating the story of his life and media clips and pictures, but a true rags to riches.

Not, I don't know if he's rich, but certainly from extreme racial animus and poverty to heights. So there's a great American story there and I think a story worth remembering. And then here's the last one.

Today, while we're recording this, the only justice to dissent in today's a terrible abortion

decision by actually attacking Roe v. Wade. Praise God for that. The only one, unfortunately.

Well, it was five, four decision, right? He was the only one who just sent it in his dissent specifically said what we should be going after here is the premise of the way the others may have agreed, but they didn't choose. That's all. And then I know you Nebraska.

That's right. You'll agree with this one. Don't want to embarrass her.

She's ever listening, but Johnny Eric's and Tata. Amen. I mean, about someone that without, you know, drawing attention to herself, because that's never her point, you feel like I want to be a holier person and heaven is worth it.

And you know, all of us at any time we've spent with her. So there will be a glorious statue and whether it's in her wheelchair or standing up, it would be a part of the process of standing up would be a beautiful. I'm going to think about it.

I mean, good statues like the, like the Dropbox pastor would be a great statue, but yeah, Johnny getting up, you know, starting to, starting to stand up or being welcomed up by Jesus. I mean, you don't do a statue of Jesus. Yeah, I can do it.

Just a hand. Just yeah, right. Like being led up would be beautiful.

That's beautiful. All right. Well, thank you for indulging me on our fundraising tour for these mini statues.

As we wrap this up and we take some breaks over the summer, we're going to be doing summer reading in our intrepid listeners may be interested to know what books you, what the three of us are going to be reading. You don't even have to pretend that you're going to finish all these books. Maybe you'll just start them or just make a dent further into some of them.

I have several thick books and I know I'm not going to finish most of them, but Justin, let's start with you. What's on your shelf that you hope to read over the next two months? Not a project that you, for something you're writing or studying, but you just want to read and enjoy and have fun. Yeah, I've got a number of books in the pipeline and I appreciate the caveat that we might not finish them or our eyes might get attracted to other shiny objects along the way.

So I guess in different categories, Stephen Ba, B-A-U-G-H has a big thick commentary on letter to Ephesians and our pastor at our church is preaching through Ephesians. So I'm trying to read through it and study through it as we go. Hans Rosling's Factfulness, this is an awkward time for this book perhaps, but it's ten reasons were wrong about the world and why things are better than you think.

When things feel bad and going to worse, but it's a very empirically based book on just why everything you hear from the media and all the, it sounds like similar to Greg Easterbrook's book, which I haven't read, but I'd like to dip into that. Dean Orton's book, "Gentle and Lolly." Some people might be surprised if I haven't read all the way through a crossway book, but we acquire them. You probably see a lot of books.

Cross-wished, 80-some books a year and obviously Dean's book is getting a lot of attention and it's something I think you can read through rather quickly because it's simply and clearly written, but I'm trying to read just a chapter at a time and go slowly because it is really a beautiful and profound book. On the fiction front, I don't read a ton of fiction and I'm like a lot of us want to read more fiction, but August Wilson was an African American playwright in the 80s, 90s who sought to write a cycle of ten plays about the African American experience through the 20th century, each play having a setting in one of the centuries, in one of the decades, and I've read Fences and I just completed the one on Ma Rainey, which Danza Washington is producing, all ten of them as films, and they, you know, all the caveats that has sexuality in it and has blasphemy, but I want to read more about African American literature. So also picked up James Baldwin's "Beel Street" could talk, so I've just started that and want to get into that a little bit more.

A couple others would be Erandolf Richards, Paul in first century letter writing on Secretary's Composition and Collections, a fascinating book on how Paul used secretaries, how he made copies of his own letters, the expense that that cost him, what was actually involved with the co-authors that he mentions in his letters, what implications that has for an erancy. It's a really interesting book, Bow mentions in his Ephesians commentary that he wishes more New Testament scholars would take his work into account, especially with the letter of Ephesians, people saying, "Well, Paul didn't write it because the style is different, the vocabulary is different." So that's one a little bit more of a technical study that I'd like to get into more. And then two others, John LeClare, I've never read any of his spy novels, but I've heard he's the greatest spy novelist ever, so the spy who came in from the cold is one that I'd like to dip into.

And then finally Christopher Caldwell's, "The Age of Entitlement, America Since the 1960s for more of a kind of a political, cultural analysis." So that's sitting in the pile next to me. If we check back in a couple of months, I probably will have seven other books that I look more interesting to me, but that's in the /file for right now. That's a great pile of books, and I really appreciate the disclaimer that you may not actually read much of them, but it's a good pile.

I have a similar pile. Okay, I'll zip through mine, and then we'll give Colin the last word as he probably has some books on Russian immigrants meeting Swedish with Ren in Minnesota. Something to heart-wish.

If anyone knows about a book like that, I would read it, so just let me know. Okay, I have ten books on my shelf, but most of them are in the category of "I've gotten partway through, and I need to see what I can get from the rest of them," because I'm probably not going to read through them slowly, but it's worth getting a few big ideas. So one of them is "The Myth of Disenchantment," which is really a book about magic and science and religion and how this idea that in the modern world we have had the triumph of science, and we have been disenchanting from the idea of spirits or the occult or talking to the dead is a myth, and he goes through, I think he starts a story with the curies, and he has lots of evidence to suggest that many of our heroes of capital as science were far from disenchanting.

They were into astrology and talking to the dead, and he's not advocating that that's good or bad, but as far as I can tell, he's making the case that we are not nearly as disenchanting as a modern world as we think we are. So that's an interesting book, "The Body" by Bill Bryson. I made it about halfway through that.

He's written a number of best-selling books, and this is a, he's just a wonderful writer, and so he goes through every part of the body and tells you amazing anecdotes and facts. I got about halfway through, and my wife took it, and she plowed all the way through, so I'll probably spend some time and see if I can finish that off. I also mentioned the morality of laughter a few episodes ago that I want to, I'll probably give that a quick skim through.

I'm partway through Amity Schle's book, "Great Society." She's written a number of these histories on the New Deal, or she has the book on Calvin Coolidge, but this one is on "Great Society," sort of a history of economic programs in the 60s, and she's going to be largely critical of what the Great Society actually accomplished. I've also started and need to plow my way through as much as I want to. John Turner's book, "They Knew They Were Pilgrims." This is the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrims landing at Plymouth Rock, and so Tommy Kidd has a nice blurb on this is the new definitive account.

Have you read any of it, Kevin? Yeah. Is it worth? Because it's on my list, so should I keep going or start it? Yeah, yeah, you should. Yeah, it's on your list.

It's going to be fair history, but it's certainly not going to romanticize the pilgrims, but say, "Okay, we shouldn't romanticize them for Thanksgiving," or "They're great tolerance necessarily," but here are things that were genuinely impressive about what they accomplished. Then I'll give, I'm not going to go through all 10 of the books that I'm looking out of my shelf. I'll give you then three books that I want to read more carefully.

One is Harvey Mansfield's book, "Manliness." What is he at Harvard? So a very counter-cultural book to even write that there is such a thing, let alone definable thing or something worth commending called "manliness." So I am reading through that. And then maybe you guys read Andrew Roberts' book that came out a year or two ago, his

single volume "Churchill Biography," which is supposed to be the best Churchill biography. I've read one or two others, parts of one or two others.

So I'd like to at least make a dent in that, it's a big book. And then finally I'll mention MacLae's book, "Land of Hope," an invitation to the great American story, which I'm well into it. And he writes well.

I think he's a conservative, he's a University of Oklahoma. I think he's trying to write a story of American history that is both something that can bind us together. So that's one of his big themes is as a nation we need to have a common sense of story purpose identity.

And so the name "Land of Hope" gives you a sense for he still thinks that America is a place where people dream and people want to come to. But he's definitely not in the camp of just presenting one great hero after another. He's very obviously from the get-go is saying there are things about our history that are ugly and we need to own up to them and we need to acknowledge them even if the ideals are ones that are worth remembering.

So a good textbook really doesn't do it justice because that sounds boring. But I love reading American history and so I'm looking forward to moving through that book, mostly a political history of the United States. Colin, what do you have on your wonderful list? No doubt some good fiction books that we should have heard of.

No, I learned my lesson last week. You guys really just made me look bad. No, I don't know your fancy books.

No, Kevin, I love Kevin. I love Kevin, William Shedd's Dogmatic Theology, that's the other one. I love that Kevin, you give us reviews of the books before you've even read them.

I read the introduction and I read the conclusion but I haven't read all the middle sentences. All right, well, I just appreciated that. I had Turner's book on my list but realistically, if I just finished Blight on Frederick Douglass and Taylor's sources of the self, the summer finally, that will be an accomplishment because whoa, oh man, those things are making me a long time.

So other than that, I'll just mention too. And one of them is an obituary for wisdom literature, the birth, death and intertextual reintegration of a biblical corpus by my little Will Kines here at Samford University. So I love the illustration.

I heard a great thing about what you know what to take, Colin, because I'm... Okay, thanks, Jesse. Who's the illustrator for that book? I don't know if we know what Job looked like but he looks like he's got a long beard. Okay.

There's no pictures. Is this Job or is this supposed to be Solomon? I'm not sure. Anyway,



one of Will's points is that the very concept of wisdom literature is owing to especially German liberalism and especially to anti-Semitism as well.

So he's talked, he's done presentations on this at A.A.R.S.P.L. things like that. Anyway, or S.B.L. That's the one I'll mention and then also, Irwin ends the beautiful community, unity, diversity and the church at its best. Did you... I just finished the three part series on the History Channel of Grant.

Oh, I didn't... I haven't watched it yet. Oh, yeah. I mean, it really... It presents... You know, he made mistakes in battle and in life but it's definitely a very positive, I think well deserved.

There already are statues of Grant and should be statues of Grant. So it makes me almost want to try the Ranchern biography but I didn't make it through his Washington one and so I probably wouldn't make it through... Did you make it through Hamilton? Because that's sitting on my shelf too. No, I didn't.

Okay. I know. So I throw this on the plate comes out Disney Plus.

Yeah, wait. It's easier to watch. It's just an easier to watch.

It's just an easier to watch. It's just an easier to watch. Yeah, I mean, that'll be for a lot of these libraries.

Yeah, when is... Come on, when is Disney Plus gonna help us get through the presidential biographies or the founding fathers? It's starting July 3rd. Yes. Well, thank you friends for joining us and thank you these two good friends for the talks for talking about books and we hope you have a great summer and hope to be with you on the other side of some wonderful rest and reading and recuperation and hope that you have as much fun as we do trying to read some good books.

Until next time, God bless.

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