

Good News for Anxious Christians

WEEK 5 **VIRTUE** (CH. 7-WHY YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP GETTING TRANSFORMED ALL THE TIME)

"...in our culture: we take it for granted that we *have* to buy Christmas presents, whereas the responsibility to join other Christians in worship does not get nearly so powerful a grip on our hearts." (p. 118) In addition, we not only feel we have to buy something, but that we *have* to give something tangible.

The true meaning of Christmas: <https://youtu.be/IR2aPIrF8j0>

What are the Christmas traditions that are most important to you?

When you think of Christmas, is worship the first image that comes to mind?

How do your children/grandchildren perceive Christmas?

What if all the consumerist traditions were taken out of Christmas? What would it look like?

The consumerist ideology 1) creates a need for participants to continually invest (reinvest), and 2) implies that newer products are better, in order to maintain a participant's desire to participate. While it may be generally true that a participant of any society will have to consume and reinvest and also that improvements can be made to products, it is not always true that they're better; sometimes a peach is just a peach or a car transportation.

How is this ideology sneak into church celebrations like Christmas?

What are the Christmas traditions that are most important to you?

Do the traditions you hold close have a Christian foundation and example Christian virtues?

Virtues are "an enduring pattern of feeling and thought, choice and action, and perception." (p. 123) Or a "habit of the heart". (p. 124) Feeling and thought are used together to understand the outside reality in coordination with our inside reality; choice and action are the internal processing of outside stimuli with the result/intent of influencing the world outside; all of these depend on perception (see Cary's example of mother and child, bottom of p. 123) which depend on morals.

What might stop or impede virtues (like love)?

How can Christian morals shape us for a lifetime of virtue? (Galatians 5:22)

Do you intentionally cultivate virtues in others?

What does Cary mean by "cultivating an ordinary human"?

What patterns/traditions in your church have cultivated virtues in you?

How is Christian virtue counter-cultural?

Can you be both, counter-cultural and at the same time an ordinary human?

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WEEK 5 **VIRTUE** (CH. 7-*WHY YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP GETTING TRANSFORMED ALL THE TIME*)

Something I want to remember...
Something I learned...
Something that was clarified...
Something I don't understand...
Something I don't agree with...