



## **FREE SPEECH AND THE WOKE MOB:**

### ***First Amendment Issues***

*"If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they don't want to hear."*

—George Orwell

Netflix opened Pandora's Box when it streamed a Dave Chapelle 2021 comedy special. The comedian did a bit about trans people, causing a firestorm of controversy.

Predictably, the woke mob demanded that Netflix cancel Chapelle. But the liberal streaming company refused to cave in to the mob. An online headline from a Hollywood entertainment site reads: Why Netflix's Defense of Dave Chapelle is a Game Changer.

There needs to be some game changers. We are in danger of losing our First Amendment rights to free speech in America. Let's talk about Free Speech and the Woke Mob.

### **An Orwellian Age**

***The American Thinker*, an online blog designed to help us think rationally in an age of irrationality, posted a November 11, 2020 essay by Chet Richards entitled *Free Speech and the Woke Mob*. It contains a lot of takeaways, but I loved these lines:**

***"The woke mob has claimed a never fundamental right: The right not to be offended. How can anyone really know what is in the mind of another? This presumed new right of the woke assumes that anyone speaking must be able to telepathically see into the mind of the listener."***

It's impossible not to offend everyone. And here's the kicker, according to Mr. Richards: "To upset even *one* person among the millions is forbidden." In George Orwell's prophetic novel about a dystopian future, 1984, language is redefined to eliminate all politically incorrect speech that offends the cultural elite. Orwell calls it newspeak. In Orwell's world of "Big Brother," people are only allowed to use newspeak. George Orwell came up short with the 1984 date, but his dystopian vision seems to be coming true as we approach 2024.

The issue today is *free* speech versus *nice* speech. Last week I watched a twitter debate over U.S. Swimming coach, [Cynthia Millen](#), resigning in protest over transgender swimmer Lia Thomas who has been shattering women's swimming records while competing for the University of Pennsylvania. The twitter debate began with reasoned arguments about the huge advantages a transgendered man has over women swimmers.

But several tweets cut through the reasoned arguments with the ultimate postmodern argument: "It's just mean to make Lia Thomas feel bad." Forget about how female swimmers are at a disadvantage, or whether women's sports are going to be thrown into chaos by male transgender competitors—all that matters is that we not say or do anything that offends Lia Thomas or the LGBTQ mob.

This is a major dilemma for Christians. Certainly, a follower of Jesus never wants to hurt other people's feelings. On the other hand, we are called to speak the truth. Sure, we must do it in love. But we can't just go along just to get along. Sometimes the most loving thing we can do is to tell the unvarnished truth. However, it might come across as mean or offensive to folks. It might even get us canceled by the woke mob. But, then, speaking the truth got Jesus crucified. Down through the centuries, speaking the truth has gotten millions of his followers persecuted and martyred.

So, what are the road rules for Christians when it comes to free speech issues in a social media world controlled by the woke mob?

#### BIBLICAL ROAD RULES ON SPEECH

##### 1. We have a different Constitution.

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; *or abridging the freedom of speech*, or of the press, or the right of people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

**Philippians 3:20. Our citizenship is in heaven. Our Savior, Jesus Christ comes from there. 1) Our primary citizenship is in heaven, we are just passing through the USA [Hebrews 11:16] 2) The Bible, not the U.S. Constitution, tells us how we should behave.**

**KEY TAKE AWAY: At times we can't say what we want to say. At other times we have to say what we don't want to say.**

**2. Even the U.S. Constitution has limits to Free Speech.**

- **Hate Speech**
- **Inciting Violence**
- **Supporting Terrorism**
- **Public Employee Speech**
- **Defamation**
- **Intellectual Property**
- **Direct Threats**

**3. There are Places Immune to "Free Speech" Protections.**

**4. Respond Correctly to the Times .[I Chronicles 12:32]**

**5. Freedom of Speech has Consequences .[Matthew 5:11&12]**

**6. Free Speech Carries Responsibilities.**

- **Speak the Truth.** [John 14:6]
- **Season Speech with Grace.** [Colossians 4:6]
- **Avoid Pejorative Labels.** [Matthew 5:22; Matthew 16:10]
- **Use Wholesome Speech.** [Ephesians 4:29]

7. **The Ultimate Issue in Our Free Speech.**