

The Concurrently Companion



Episode 31: Confederate monuments and constructive revision

Topic introduction

What do we think about and how do we respond to the issue of institutions changing their names, or removing memorials of those figures—specifically Confederate—whom we might believe to have an unsavory past or associations of which we are no longer proud?

Key terms: memorialize, revisionism, historical revision, confederate, reconciliation, empathetic imagination, cultural heritage

Questions to ask your kids and students

What are the positive and negative versions of historical revision? What would make revision *constructive* versus *destructive*? Can we ever revise history perfectly? Explain your answer.

As we examine human history with a biblical worldview, what elements can we expect to see? (Refer to the chapters or lenses of the Redemptive Narrative.)

What glorious themes might exist? What ruinous themes might exist? What redemptive themes or themes of reconciliation and restoration?

What is the difference between *remembering* and *memorializing*?

What is the benefit of remembering the things that are broken? What affirms that based on our biblical worldview?

What criteria should we use to determine whether our esteem for something (a person, place, thing, idea, philosophy) has become harmful to ourselves or hurtful to our neighbors and broader community?

What could motivate us to tear down a monument? What scripture might support the tearing down of monuments? (Consider passages related to idols and pagan symbols.)

Who are the stakeholders (various people and communities) we need to consider when we seek to revise history well? What other criteria beyond considering stakeholders in the story might we need to consider?

How can we preserve and honor culture even while we revise, rename, seek to reconcile and repair?

In what ways might we fall into oversimplification of these issues? How does Jonathan use Star Wars to illustrate these potential oversimplifications? What is *good* about complexity?

An old adage says, “Those who fail to study history are doomed to repeat it.” How is this thought helpful to our process?

What questions might you ask to try to learn from another’s experience regarding that person’s cultural heritage and experience?

How do we respond to this aspect of culture with discernment, with wisdom, with compassion? How do we actually engage the work that is before us without shirking it? And how do we do so in a manner that is not divisive, but that welcomes and even fosters community?

Scriptural anchors/provision

From Philippians 4:4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand. . . . Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

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