

February 26, 2023

Jesus came proclaiming good news to the poor, proclaiming liberty to captives, opening the eyes of the blind, and setting the oppressed free. Does that mean he was “woke”? What does “woke” even mean? The use of the term has certainly evolved over time.

The word “woke” originated in the African American community. In 1938, the Black American singer-songwriter Lead Belly, in an afterword to one of his songs, said, **“I advise everybody, be a little careful when they go along through there – best stay woke, keep their eyes open.”**

Some scholars argue that “stay woke” echoes Martin Luther King Jr.’s words in 1968, just months before his death: **“Today, our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change.”**

I believe we can safely say that originally the word was used as an equivalent to “awake.” To be “woke” meant that one was alert to racial prejudice and social discrimination. African Americans were encouraged to be aware of and actively attentive to these issues. How would Jesus interact with this original definition of “woke”?

- Jesus engages in meaningful, loving relationship.
- Jesus transforms His disciples’ way of seeing.
- Jesus is building the most diverse, transformative community on earth!

Reflection Questions:

- How has Jesus changed your way of seeing people who are different from you?
- Who is Jesus asking you to befriend?
- What would it look like for you to be family to the newcomers to Willingdon?

WILLINGDON CHURCH ELDERS

Phil Balzer	Alfred Gomez	Mark Loewen	Norm Schmidt
John Best	Ray Harms-Wiebe	Dave Marshall	Ed Thiessen
Roman Bondartchouk	Ruben Heyn	Ken Redekopp	Wayne Wiebe
Ken Dyck	Danny Lee	Rick Reimer	
Jim Eisenhauer	Paul Lee	Vince Reimer	

Please continue to pray for the elders.

If you wish to contact an elder, please email elders@willingdon.org.