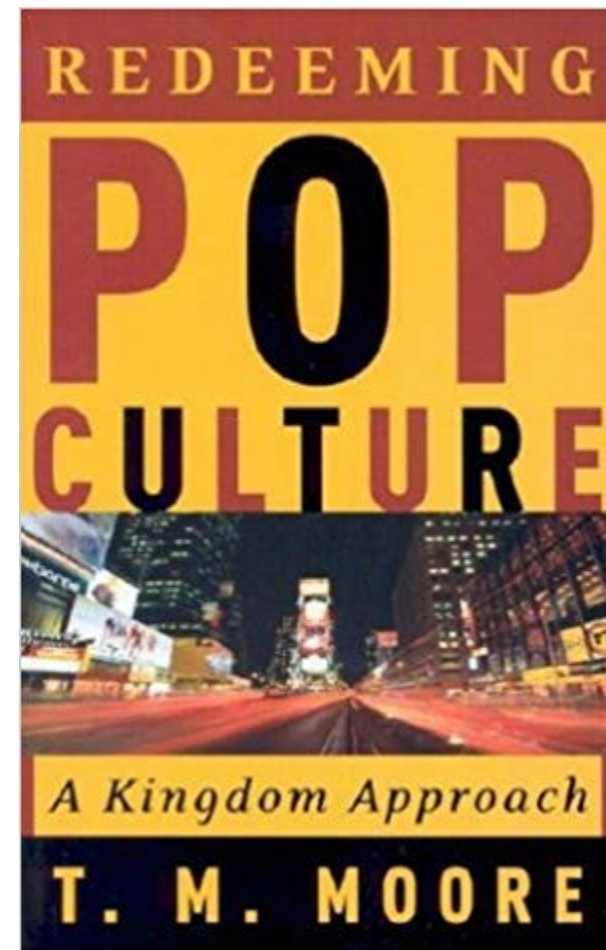
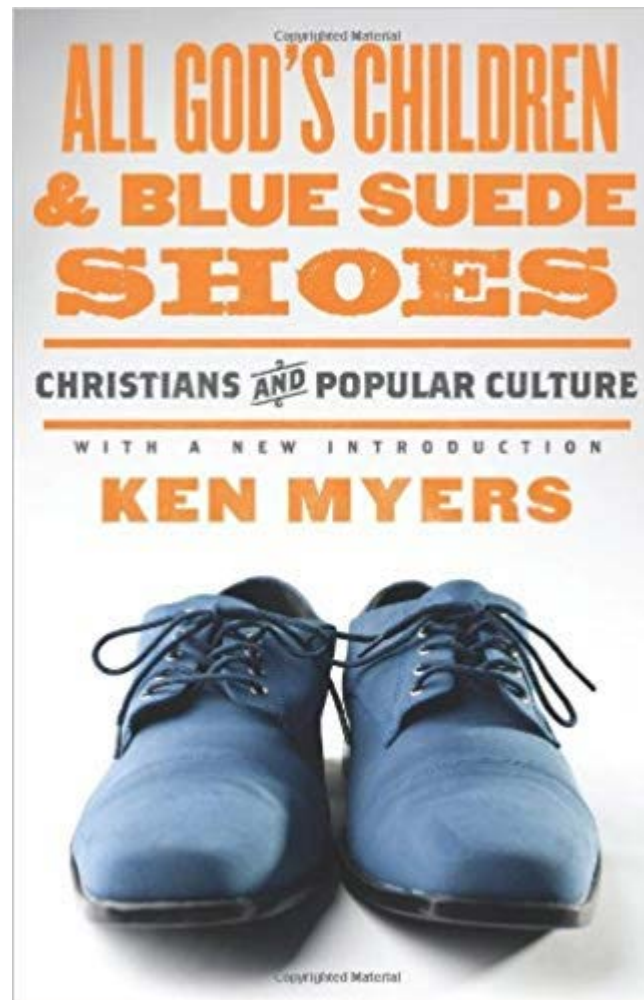
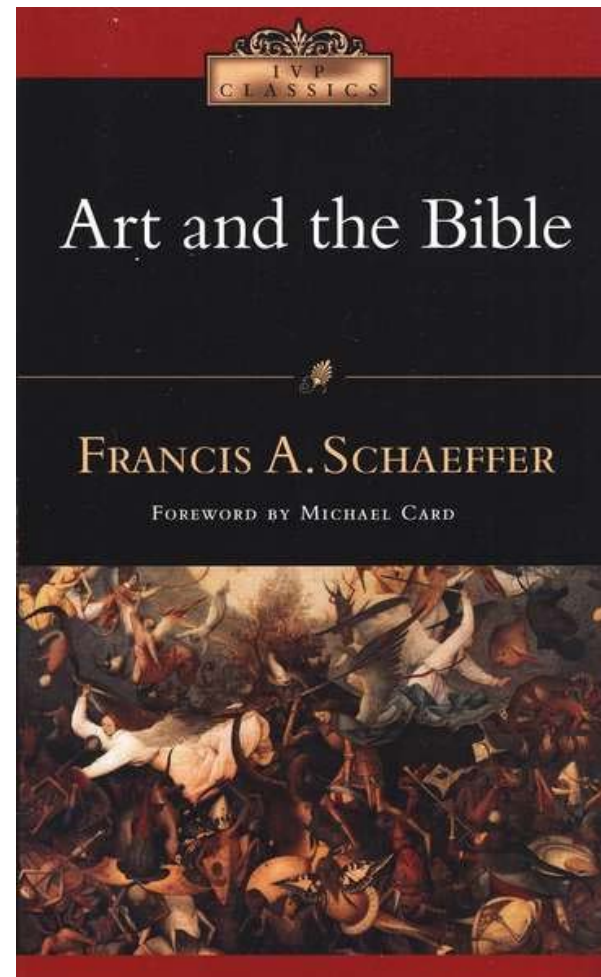


# Arts, Entertainment, & The Kingdom of God



# Resources





# The Need for Biblical Discernment

“I believe that the challenge of living with popular culture may well be as serious for modern Christians as persecution and plagues were for the saints of earlier centuries.”

Ken Myers

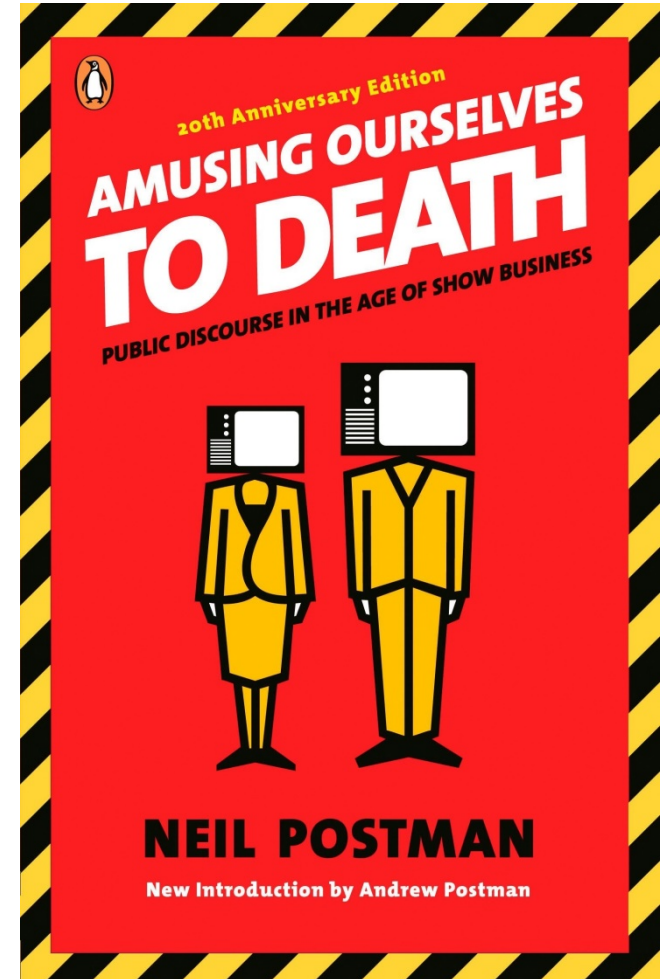
“I believe I am not mistaken in saying that Christianity is a demanding and serious religion. When it is delivered as easy and amusing, it is another kind of religion altogether.”

Neil Postman

“Test all things; *hold fast* what is good.

*Abstain* from every form of evil.”

I Thessalonians 5:21,22



# Abstaining from Evil

“...you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the *futility* of their minds. They are *darkened* in their understanding, *alienated* from the life of God because of the *ignorance* that is in them, due to their *hardness of heart*.”

Ephesians 4:17,18



# Holding Fast to the Good

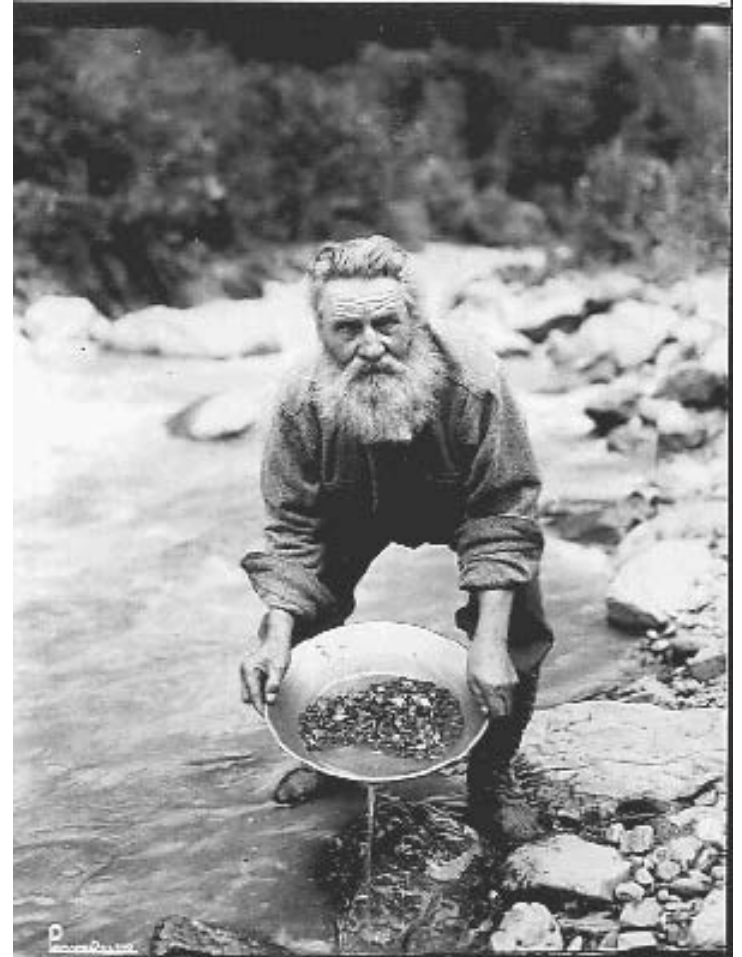
“Every good gift and every perfect gift is *from above*, coming down from the Father of lights...”

James 1:17

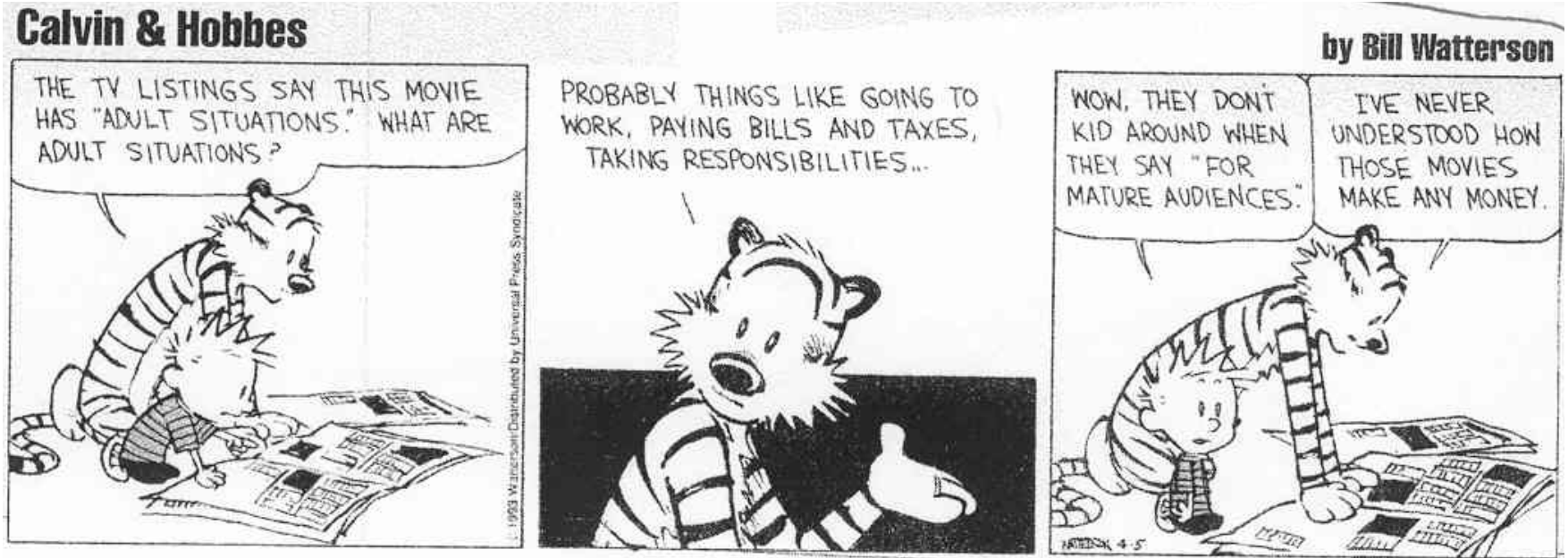
“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, *that it may impart grace to the hearers.*”

Ephesians 4:29

“Popular culture can have its moments of transcendence.”  
Graham Cray



# Mature Content?



“But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”

Hebrews 5:14

# The Degradation of Arts & Entertainment – 4 Responses

**Escape**

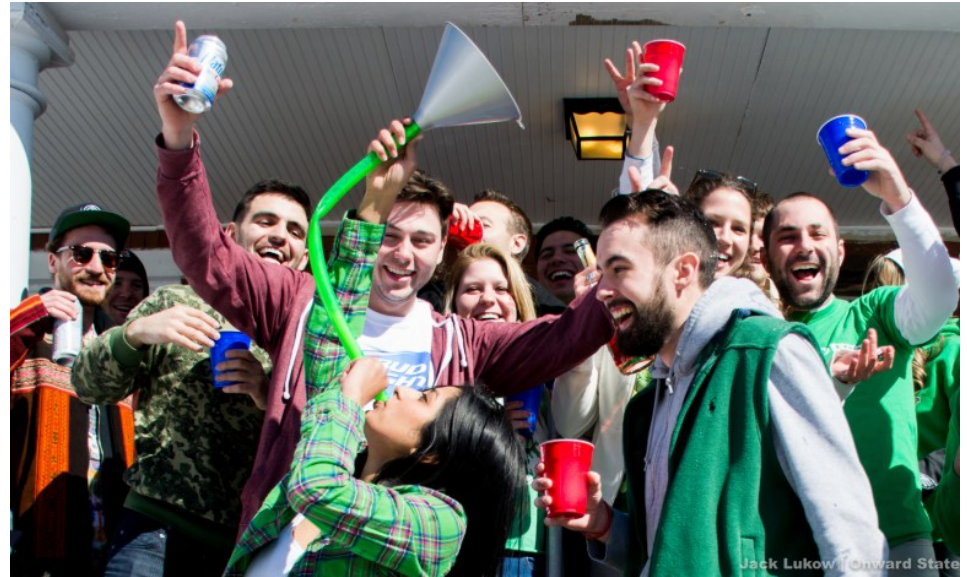




# Conform

“Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

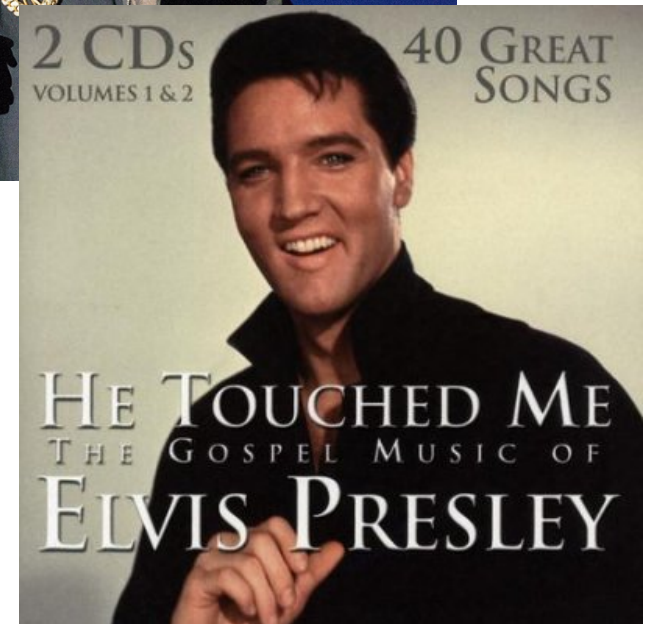
James 4:4



# Compartmentalize

“Like so many rhythm & blues superstars -- from Little Richard to Al Green to Prince - R Kelly has long been a divided soul, endlessly trying to reconcile carnal impulses with Christian faith.”

Rolling Stone



# Transform

“You are the salt of the earth...You  
are the light of the world.”

Matthew 5:13,14

“Criticize by creating.”

Michelangelo

“My lord, I should be sorry if I only  
entertained them. I wish to make  
them better.”

George Frideric Handel

“Give me the making of the songs of  
a nation, and I care not who makes  
its laws.”

Andrew Fletcher



# Pursuing Excellence

“....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.”

Philippians 4:8

Our goal: “...to learn how to gain the benefits of popular culture without being overwhelmed by it.”

T.M. Moore



# Our Mission

“...in your hearts *set apart Christ as Lord*. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for *the hope that you have*.”

I Peter 3:15

“For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and *take every thought captive to obey Christ...*”

II Corinthians 10:3-5

# Paul & Cultural Awareness

“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth...From one man He made every nation of men...God did this so the men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him, though He is not far from each one of us. ‘For in Him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are His offspring.’”

Acts 17:24-28

“I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the Gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.”

I Corinthians 22,23



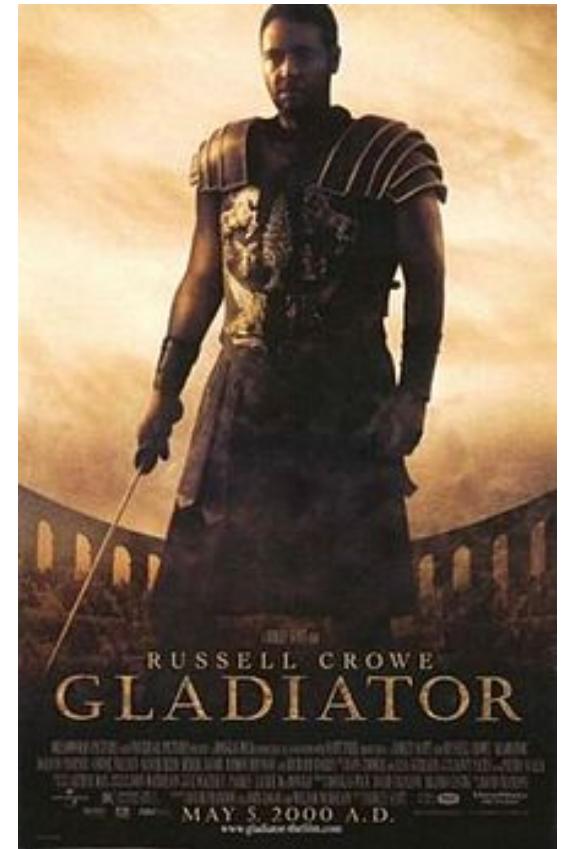
“...stories form our culture. I profoundly believe that. The storytelling impulse is built into us and it’s the way we explain and describe our entire lives, all the time...Every time we write a story we are in fact creating a moral structure and that moral structure is influencing the people who see that film. And they add up, all these films, to a sense of what is acceptable in life and what is not. So we have an enormous power, particularly the movies that are widely seen. You may think if they’re pure entertainment, there is no moral message in it, but that is not true...”



***Bill Nicholson,  
Screenwriter,  
“Les Miserables”,  
“Gladiator”***

Imagine every film you ever saw exalted people with guns and said: ‘The people with guns win because they’ve got guns, and everybody who hasn’t got a gun is a pathetic loser.’ We would develop as a society – perhaps we are developing as a society – where people want guns in order not to be losers.

In fact, that’s not what the movies say. They nearly always show that the person who has right on their side has the ‘best gun’ if you like. I know that is a bit pathetic, but there is a moral story operating there. So we are conditioning our society all the time and we should take responsibility for that.”





“I can remember going to movies in college and crying through them because I saw them as very powerful human expressions of worldviews. Too often, Hollywood movies express lies and ugliness with great detriment. And I would weep, just desiring that God would be glorified in big silver screen stories in the way that lies and falsehoods were too often glorified. So, some of my interest was just simply the desire to see God glorified in a powerful medium of beauty. . . . I want to create beauty that honors God and glorifies Him because when I do, I feel His pleasure. And that is enough for me.” *Brian Godawa, Screenwriter*



# Redeeming Pop Culture

- We must redeem our own involvement with culture
  - “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God...”

Romans 12:2
  - “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.”

Ephesians 5:11,12
- We must reach others immersed in the culture
  - Jesus: “...He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

Matthew 9:36
- We must seek to transform culture
  - “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? ...You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.”

Matthew 5:13,14

# Our God the Artist





“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was very good.*”

Genesis 1

# Creativity = Godliness

“The heavens declare the  
glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the  
work of his hands.

Day after day they pour  
forth speech;  
night after night they  
display knowledge.”

Psalm 19:1,2



“He determines the  
number of the stars;  
He gives to all of them  
their names.

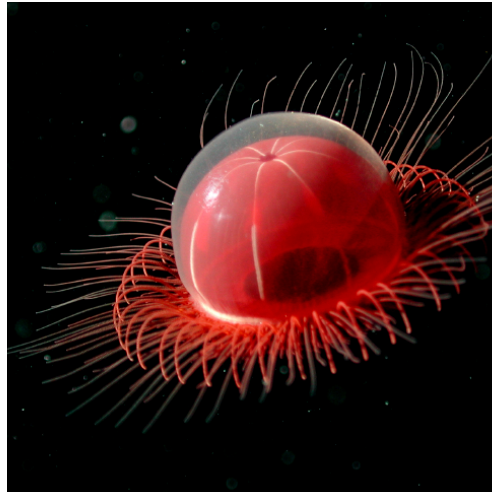
Great is our Lord, and  
abundant in power; His  
understanding is  
beyond measure.”

Psalm 147:4,5



“So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds...”

Genesis 1:21



“It struck me, after reading my umpteenth book on the problem of pain, that *I have never even seen a book on ‘the problem of pleasure.’* Nor have I met a philosopher who goes around shaking his or her head in perplexity over the question of why we experience pleasure. Yet it looms as a huge question: the philosophical equivalent, for atheists, to the problem of pain for Christians. On the issue of pleasure, Christians can breathe easier. A good and loving God would naturally want his creatures to experience delight, joy, and personal fulfillment. Christians start from that assumption and then look for ways to explain the origin of suffering. *But should not atheists have an equal obligation to explain the origin of pleasure in a world of randomness and meaninglessness?*”

Phillip Yancey





# What is Beautiful?

- God *defines* “beauty”
- God *created* beauty
- God *is* beauty



“One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord...”

Psalm 27:4

# THE VISUAL ARTS

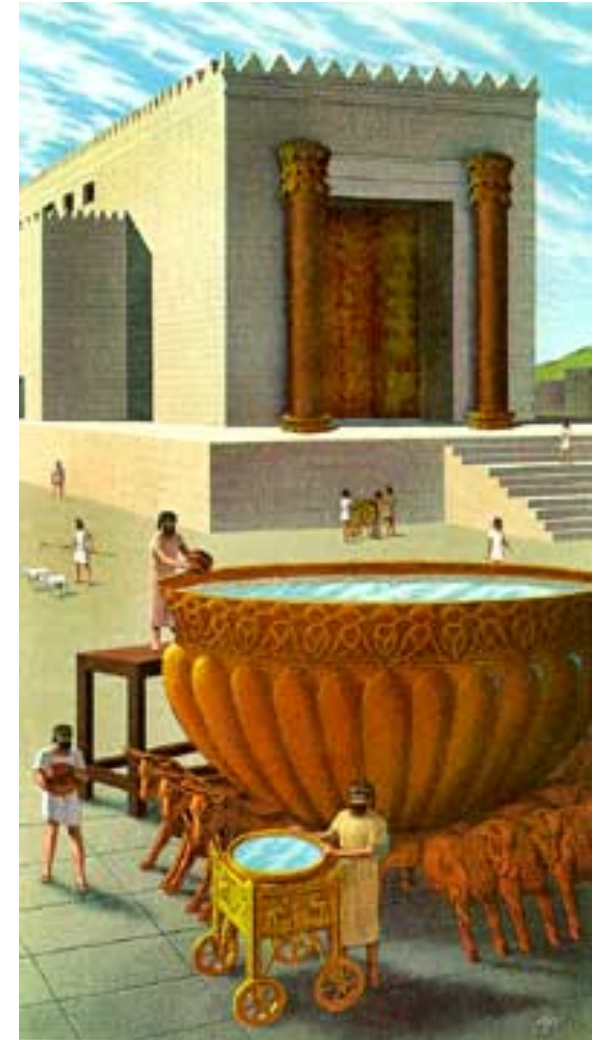


“Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord...The larger room he paneled with cypress which he overlaid with fine gold, and he carved palm trees and chainwork on it. And he decorated the house with precious stones *for beauty.*”

II Chronicles 3:6

“For Aaron's sons you shall make coats and sashes and caps. You shall make them *for glory and beauty.*”

Exodus 28:40



# LITERATURE



- **Poetry** – “For love is as strong as death, Jealousy as cruel as the grave; Its flames are flames of fire, A most vehement flame.”  
Song of Solomon 8:6

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”

Matthew 7:7

- **History** – “Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land...” Exodus 14:21

# LITERATURE



- **Songs** – “Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth! Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day....”  
Psalm 95:1
- **Proverbs** – “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”  
Proverbs 15:1
- **Letters** – “Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.”  
I Thessalonians 5:26
- **Visions** – “And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne...stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes...”  
Revelation 5:6

# DRAMA



- “...son of man, take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem. Lay siege against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around...this will be a sign to the house of Israel.”

Ezekiel 4:1-3

- “Then Jesus answered and said, ‘A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves...’”

Luke 10:30

- “...a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea...he took Paul’s belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said,... ‘so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt’...”

Acts 21:10,11

# DANCE



- “So David danced before the Lord with all his might...”  
    II Samuel 6:14
- “Let them praise His name with the dance...”  
    Ps. 149:3



# MUSIC



“Praise the Lord!...Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; Praise Him with the lute and harp!...Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.”

Psalm 150

# Made in the Image of Our Creator

- “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man *in Our image*, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion...over all the earth...” Genesis 1:26
- “...you...have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge *according to the image of Him* who created him...”  
Colossians 3:10



Norman Rockwell *Triple Self Portrait* Oil on canvas  
*Saturday Evening Post* cover, February 13, 1960  
©1960, The Curtis Publishing Company  
From the permanent collection of The Norman Rockwell Museum

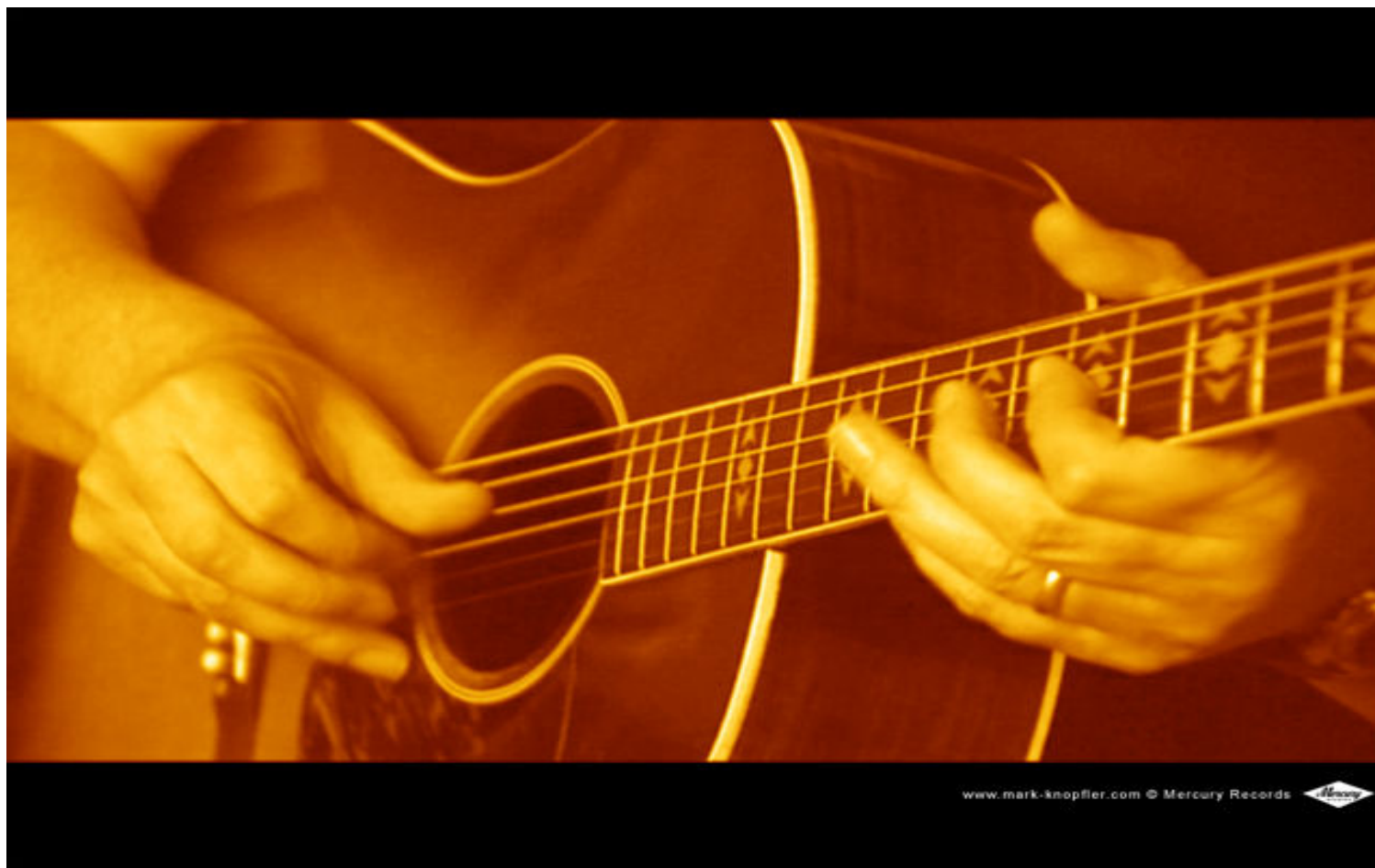


# Godliness = Creativity

“If the opening chapters of Genesis portray God as a creative artist, then it only stands to reason that the people He made in His image will also be artists. Art is an imaginative activity, and in the act of creating, we reflect the mind of our Maker. Like God Himself, said Abraham Kuyper, we have ‘the possibility both to create something beautiful, and to delight in it.’ This is true of all artists, and indeed of all people, but it has special significance for Christians. Because we know God as both our Creator and our Redeemer, we seek to display His beauty and grace in our life and work.”

Philip Graham Ryken

# Redeeming the Arts



# The Kingdom Mandate

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

Genesis 1:27,28

“When I look at Your heavens...what is man that you are mindful of him?... You have given him dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet...”

Psalms 8:4,6

“...the Christian cannot be satisfied as long as any human activity is either opposed to Christianity or out of all connection with Christianity...The Christian, therefore, cannot be indifferent to any branch of human endeavor. It must be brought into some relationship with the Gospel.”

J. Gresham Machen

“...amid the various cultures and subcultures of the world, an all-embracing, all-transcending reality has been established which – even more than popular culture – cuts across, infiltrates, pervades, and will ultimately overwhelm and supplant all others. This is the presence – and the culture – of the Kingdom of God.”

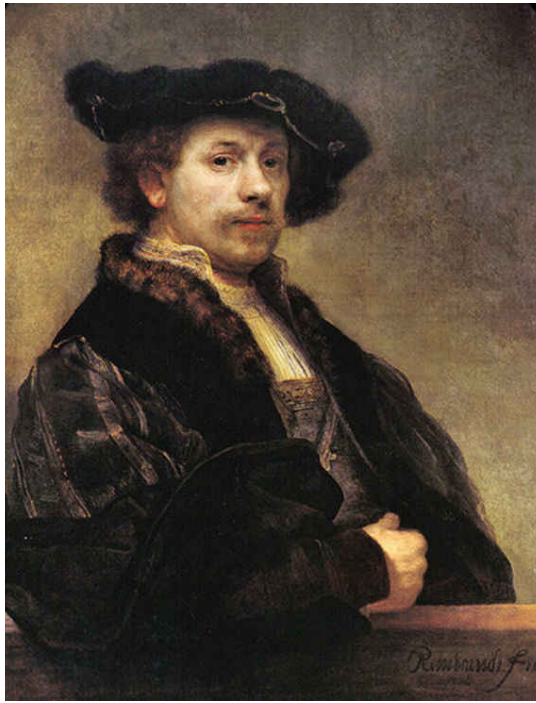
T.M. Moore

# The Calling of an Artist

“Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘See, ***I have called by name*** Bezalel the son of Uri,...And ***I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to design artistic works...I have put wisdom in the hearts of all who are gifted artisans...***”

Exodus 31:1-6

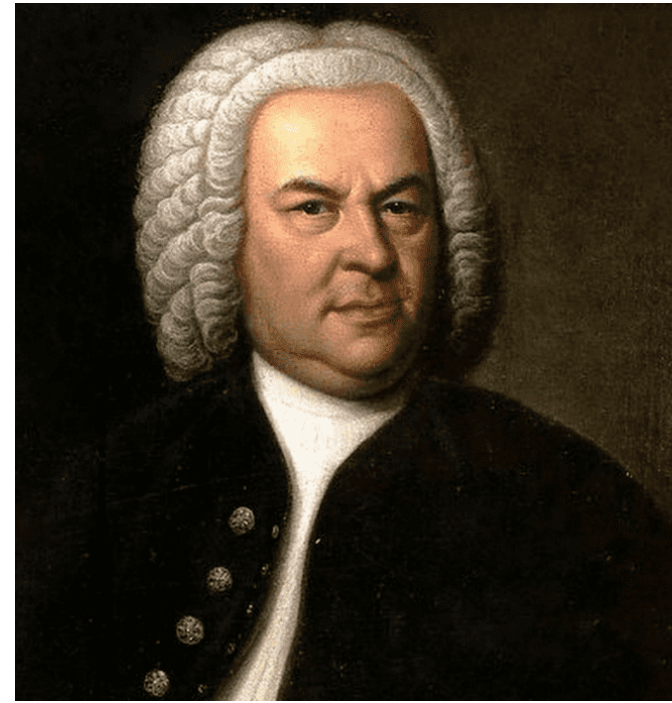




Rembrandt



G.F. Handel



J.S. Bach

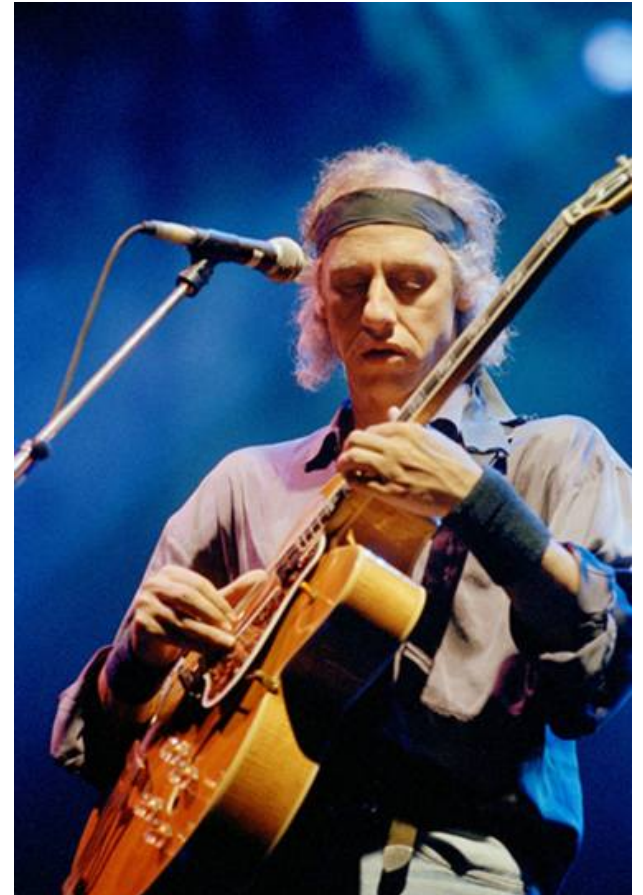
“Historically, Christians have always used art as a vital means of communicating. Tragically, in the twentieth century, the Christian community has virtually divorced itself from this arena.”

Nelson Price

# Common Grace

“...the Spirit of God is at work among those creators of popular culture who do not bow the knee to Jesus Christ... God’s Spirit works with those who possess those gifts to enable them to deploy them in remarkable, even brilliant, ways, even though they do not acknowledge the Source of these gifts and may use them for ends other than those of the Kingdom of God.”

T.M. Moore



# Common Grace – Separating Art and Artist?

“To measure art and our use and enjoyment of it by the personal worthiness of those who make it or have made it would land us straight in a cultural ghetto. Even more, it would be dishonoring to God. He gives genius and talent to whom He wills. To put it bluntly, for a Christian to say, ‘I will not have anything to do with the great and worthy works of artists whose lives were not good’ is to fall into the impiety of questioning the wisdom of God in bestowing the gifts of His grace where He wills.”

Frank E. Gaebelin



Franz Schubert



“Art cannot be totally and fundamentally separated from the artist. Christians have to affirm the fact that we do know that we are morally responsible for every one of our purchases. We are economic actors with moral significance and moral accountability for our economic and consumer decisions.”

Albert Mohler



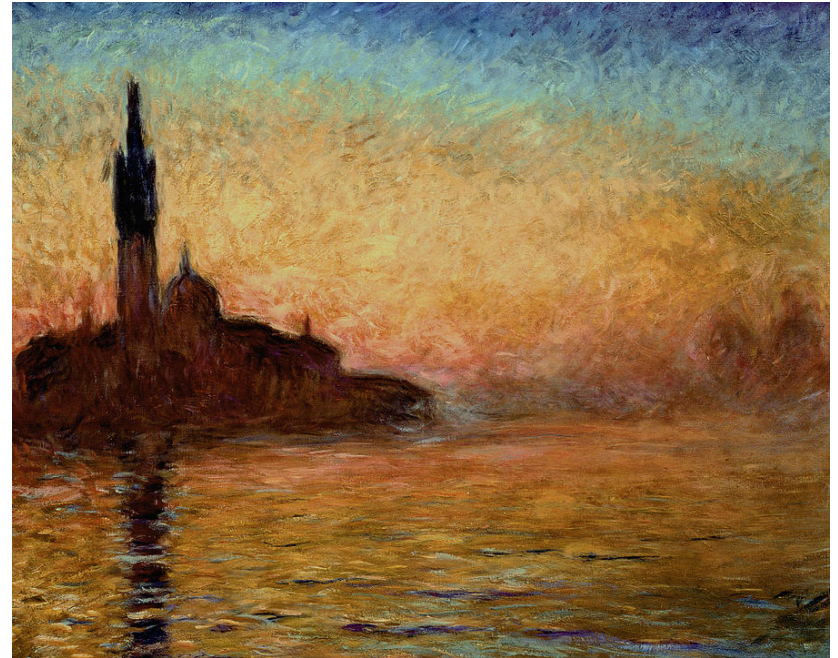
# “Plundering the Egyptians”

“...the sinner's wealth is laid up  
for the righteous.”

Proverbs 13:22

“And the city has no need of sun  
or moon to shine on it, for the  
glory of God gives it light, and  
its lamp is the Lamb. By its light  
will the nations walk, and *the  
kings of the earth will bring their  
glory into it...*”

Revelation 21:23,24



# “Plundering the Egyptians”

“Moreover, if those who are called philosophers . . . have said aught that is true and in harmony with our faith, we are not only not to shrink from it, but to claim it for our own use from those who have unlawful possession of it. For, as the Egyptians had . . . vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, and garments, which the same people when going out of Egypt appropriated to themselves, designing them for a better use, not doing this on their own authority, but by the command of God . . . in the same way all branches of heathen learning . . . contain also liberal instruction which is better adapted to the use of the truth... Now these are, so to speak, their gold and silver, which they did not create themselves, but dug out of the mines of God’s providence which are everywhere scattered abroad, and are perversely and unlawfully prostituting to the worship of devils. These, therefore, the Christian, when he separates himself in spirit from the miserable fellowship of these men, ought to take away from them, and to devote to their proper use in preaching the gospel.”

St. Augustine

# Seeking Transcendence

“...popular culture has its origins in the souls of men and women. For this reason, all popular culture has something inescapably religious about it... popular culture represents an attempt on the part of those who create and engage in it to bring some satisfaction to the longing of their soul, to find fulfillment and meaning, or to establish some kind of identity.”

T.M. Moore



# Worshiping Creatures Instead of the Creator

“For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.”

Romans 1:21-23



# Worshipping Art

And [Hezekiah] broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it...”

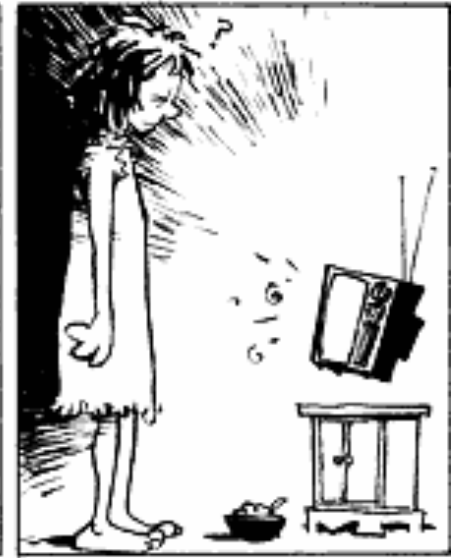
II Kings 18:4



# The Idolatry Issue

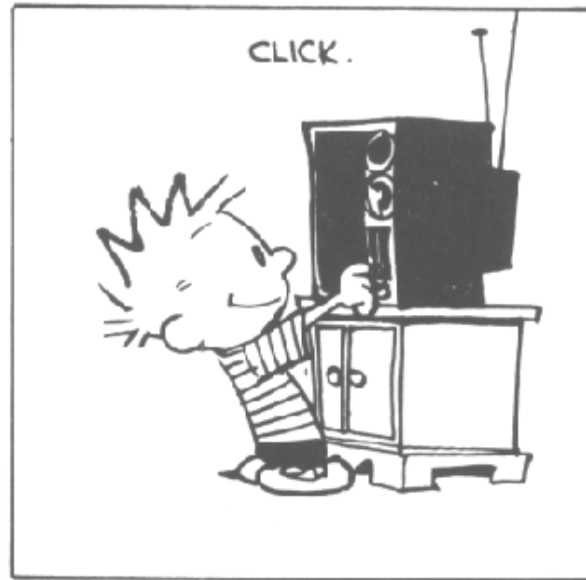


THANK YOU FOR THE ARTIFICIALITY OF QUICK SOLUTIONS AND FOR THE INSIDIOUS MANIPULATION OF HUMAN DESIRES FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.



“ ‘All things are lawful for me,’ but not all things are helpful. ‘All things are lawful for me,’ but *I will not be dominated by anything*...do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

I Corinthians 6:12-20



“... television viewing didn’t peak until 2009-2010, when the average American household watched 8 hours and 55 minutes of TV per day... Over the last 8 years, all the new, non-TV things - Facebook, phones, YouTube, Netflix - have only cut about an hour per day from the dizzying amount of TV that the average household watches. Americans are still watching more than 7 hours and 50 minutes per household per day.”

Atlantic Magazine



# Loving Art as a Reflection of God's Glory

“By emptying Nature of divinity... you may fill her with Deity, for she is now the bearer of messages. There is a sense in which nature-worship silences her – as if a child or a savage were so impressed with the postman's uniform that he omitted to take in the letters.”

C.S. Lewis

“He loves Thee too little, who loves anything together with Thee, which he loves not for Thy sake.”

St. Augustine



# Biblical Separation



“Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.”

II Corinthians 6:17

“Walk as children of light...and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”

Ephesians 5:8-11

# *UnBiblical Separation*

“There are those professing Christians who have completely rejected the Biblical admonition to ‘come out from among them and be ye separate.’ They prefer to get just as close as possible to the world in their dress, hairstyles, recreational activities, and music and still appear respectable. There is such a short step from this posture to a life of worldly depravity... Not everyone who performs music that is patterned after the world goes into a life of deep sin...but for the Christian, the best road is the ‘high road’ far away from any association with evil.”

Denny Sweatt, Bob Jones University

# Biblical Discernment – From What Are We to Separate?

“For **everything God created is good**, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.”

I Timothy 4:4

“There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things **which come out of him**, those are the things that defile him.”

Mark 7:15



# A False Dichotomy

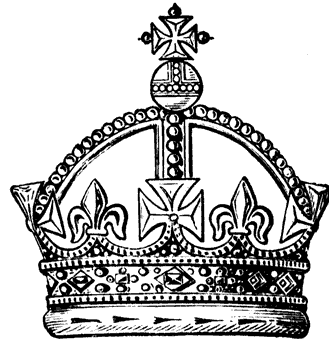
## “SECULAR”

- Work
- Entertainment
- Sports
- Hobbies
- The Arts

## “SACRED”

- Worship
- Bible Study
- Prayer
- Fellowship
- Witness

# Jesus Is Lord of All



Worship

Work

Bible Study

Sports

Prayer

Hobbies

Witness

The Arts

*“...whatever you do, do it **all** for the glory  
of God.”*     *1 Corinthians 10:31*

# “Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music?”



“We must distinguish carefully between style and message. Let me say firmly that there is no such thing as a godly style or an ungodly style.”

Francis Schaeffer

# Legalism or License

“I’ve seen many in my generation overcorrect from legalistic faith environments that were hostile, or at best apathetic, toward the arts. Desperately seeking to shed evangelicalism’s legalistic and inartistic reputation, many – myself included – have at times swung the pendulum to the other extreme, engaging the arts with an uncritical, “everything-is-awesome!” enthusiasm that is, in the end, just as simplistic as the legalism we wanted to lose... A fierce devotion to Scripture and a groundedness in the ‘peculiar orthodoxy’ of trinitarian Christian faith should be the *starting place* in our art-making and art-appreciating, not a dubious add-on to justify any and every TV show, movie, or musical work we love.”

Brett

McCracken





# Four Kinds of Art

“There are four kinds of people in the realm of art. The first is a **born-again man** who writes or paints within the total **Christian worldview**. The second is the **non-Christian** who expresses his own **non-Christian worldview**. The third is the man who is personally a **non-Christian** but nevertheless writes or paints on the basis of **the Christian consensus** by which he has been influenced...The fourth person is **the born-again Christian** who does not understand what the total Christian worldview should be and therefore produces art which embodies a **non-Christian worldview**.”

Francis Schaeffer

# Four Kinds of Art

1. Bad Art / False Message
2. Bad Art / True Message
3. Good Art / False Message
4. Good Art / True Message

# The 3-Legged Stool With Braces

## - T.M. Moore

### □ The Standards:

□ Beauty

□ Truth

□ Goodness

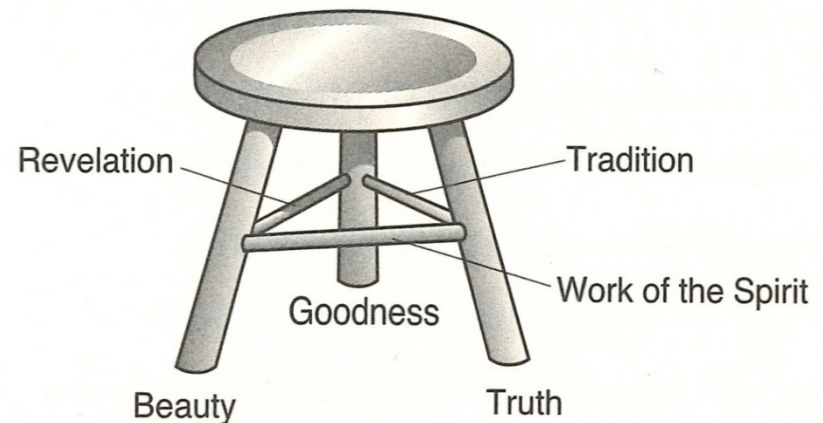
### □ The Supports:

□ Revelation

□ Tradition

□ The Holy Spirit

THREE-LEGGED STOOL AND BRACES



# Absolute Standards & Art

- There is **truth** and there are lies
  - ▣ Os Guinness – “spot the lie”
  - ▣ Logic
- There is **good** and there is evil
  - ▣ Goals & purposes
- There are objective standards for **beauty** and excellence
  - ▣ Art Appreciation courses



# Post-Modern “Standards”

- Beauty, Truth, & Goodness – “only in the eye of the beholder”?
- “In those days there was no King in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Judges 21:25

- “If everything is art, then nothing is art.”

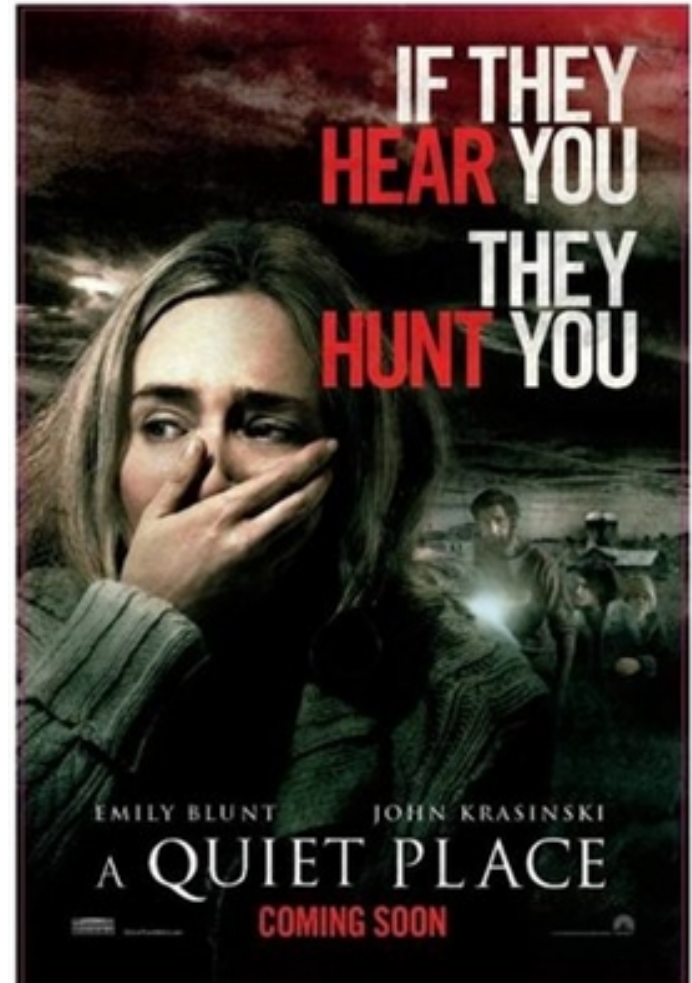
Arthur Danto



“Untitled” by Christopher Wool

# Characteristics of a True Message

- Consistent with a Biblical world-view
- Presents sin accurately – *doesn't glorify sin*
- Points people *toward* God and His grace, not away from Him



# No Neutrality

“...art can lead you to God...if it's not doing that, it's leading you the other way. It's certainly not leading you nowhere.”

*Bob Dylan*



# The Worldview of the Artist

- C. Scott Shidemantle

- What is the nature of the world?
- What is wrong with the world?
- What is the remedy for the world?
- Where are things heading in the future?







“...if life informs art, then one does not have to affirm strict allegory for spiritual elements to show up in one’s work. And perhaps Tolkien’s Middle-Earth is even more beloved because its rich spiritual landscape is not manufactured. Instead, it is informed naturally by a man who loved a true story well - and all its elements of courage, friendship, self-sacrifice and more - and allowed it to overflow into his work.”

Anthony

Chiorazzi, Relevant Magazine

# Man-Centered or God-Centered?

“Our culture is extremely narcissistic and man-centered, and it seems that much of Christian music has followed suit. The Bible, however, is radically God-centered, and I believe that a radically God-centered worldview should be reflected in the songs we write... Because of our man-centered tendencies, the songs we sing about God usually deal with the things we like about Him (which are usually the things that directly benefit us the most), such as His love, mercy and forgiveness, etc. These things are glorious and we should write songs about them. However, if that’s all we talk about, we create an incomplete and deficient view of God, which is not in line with His self-revelation.”

Shai Linne



# The Medium of the Message



“Too much in the arts-theology conversation treats the arts merely as packaging of *content*, where the message is the primary level at which theology is engaged (‘Does a character function as a Christ figure? Does the plot have redemptive qualities? Is a gospel to be found?’). Too little attention is paid to the medium itself. How do the unique *stylistic* capacities of certain forms bear witness to theological truth?”

Brett McCracken

# Four Standards for Judging a Work of Art

- Francis Schaeffer

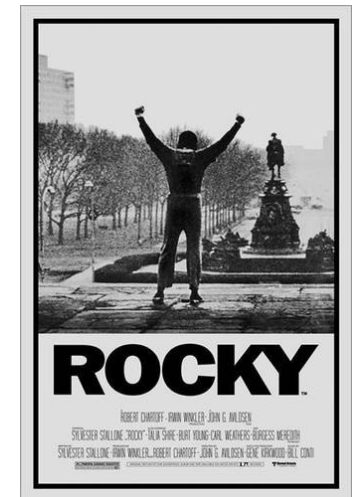
- **Content** – the worldview in light of God’s Word
- **Technical Excellence**
  - ▣ proportion, harmony, simplicity, complexity
- **Validity** – is the artist honest to himself and his worldview?
- **Integration of Content & Vehicle** – does the style of art fit the message?
  - ▣ Minor and major themes of life



# Characteristics of Good Art

- Steve Lawhead

- ❑ **Uniqueness** – not an imitation, mass-marketed
- ❑ **Excellence in craftsmanship**
- ❑ **Maturity** – well-developed
- ❑ **Intelligence** – makes you think
- ❑ **Wholeness, consistency** – all the parts fit together
- ❑ **Spontaneity** – the work has “life”; not “slick”, “packaged”
- ❑ **Durability** – has enduring appeal



# Objective Beauty

“When beauty is uncoupled from truth, we potentially distrust our own perception of beauty – the beauty our eyes see, or our ears hear. What we then experience is not seen as disclosing anything beyond the individual person.”

Kate Harrison Brennan



# The Role of Personal Tastes

- The good and bad of personal tastes
- The training and discipline of our tastes
- Refining and expanding our tastes



# The Power of Association

- Sinful Content
  - ▣ Endorsing lies
  - ▣ Glorifying sin
- Sinful Context
  - ▣ “Sex, drugs, & rock ‘n roll”
  - ▣ Art on the cultural fringes





# The Weaker Brother Issue

“Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.”

Romans

14:20

“‘Everything is permissible’ – but not everything is beneficial... not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.”

I Corinthians 10:23,24



# Laying Down Our “Rights” for the Sake of Others

“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Philippians 2:4-8



# The Importance of Prayer

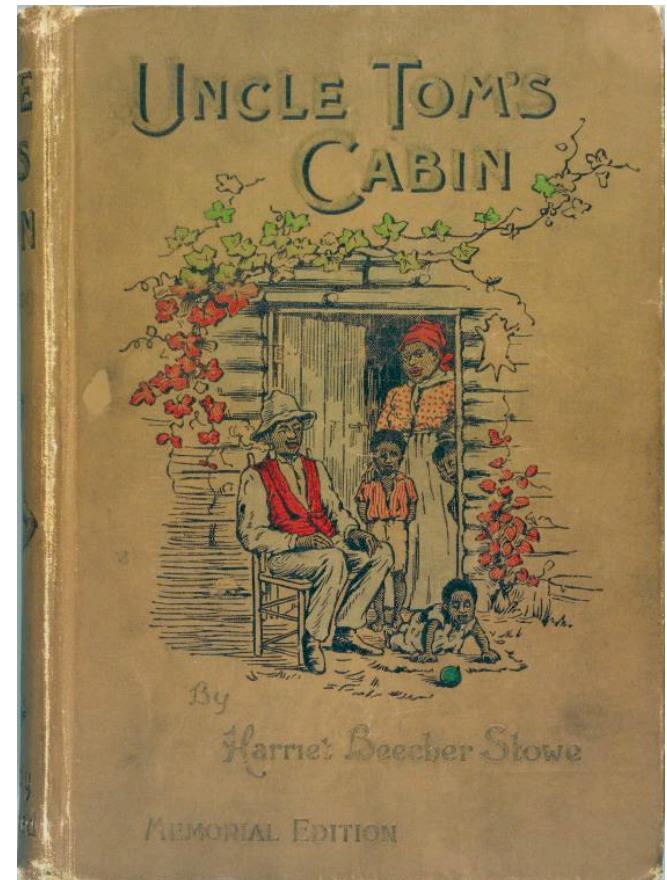
- For protection
- For self-awareness
- For wisdom
- For culture makers & shapers



# The Power of Art

According to legend, Abraham Lincoln greeted Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1862 by saying “So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war.”

Frederick Douglas: “She has baptized with holy fire myriads who before cared nothing for the bleeding slave.”



# Culture Reflectors or Shapers?

“To a certain extent, popular culture is a reflection of the environment within which it emerges. At the same time, it serves to shape that environment and to influence the larger culture of which it is a part.”

Moore

T.M.



# The Danger of Great Art

“Art is dangerous. It is one of the attractions – when it ceases to be dangerous you don’t want it.”

Duke Ellington

“We should realize that if something untrue or immoral is stated in great art it can be far more destructive and devastating than if it is expressed in poor art...the greater the artistic expression, the more important it is to consciously bring it and its world view under the judgment of Christ and the Bible.”

Francis Schaeffer

“...*art is power*. It influences the mind, the nerves, the feelings, the soul. It carries messages of hope, hostility, derision, and moral rebuke. It can fight material and spiritual evils, and transmit the ideals of a community now living, long past, or soon to be born. In a word, art is deemed universally important because it helps men to live and remember... But in saying that these are truths, we are saying also that *art is dangerous*. It is dangerous, first, because all powerful things can be dangerous, and it is dangerous also because, while we tend to venerate art as one great and good thing, its various uses are most often antagonistic: art can dignify and exalt the civilization that gives it birth and also weaken and destroy it.”

Jacques Barzun

# The Goal

“The question becomes... whether as Christians we will aspire to high aesthetic standards. All too often we settle for something that is functional, but not beautiful.... Sometimes we produce what can be described only as ‘kitsch’... Ultimately this kind of art dishonors God because it is not in keeping with the truth and beauty of His character... Art has tremendous power to shape culture and touch the human heart... when Christians abandon the artistic community, we lose a significant opportunity to communicate Christ to our culture. Furthermore, when we settle for trivial expressions of the truth in worship and art, we ourselves are diminished, as we suffer a loss of transcendence. What we need to recover... is a full Biblical understanding of the arts – not for art’s sake, but for God’s sake.”

Philip Graham Ryken





“The Biblical justification for art is clear: We are called to live out the full image of God in every area of life. When God created the world, He cared enough to make it beautiful. His people ought to value creativity and beauty as well...***God does not call His people merely to dissent. He calls us to renew culture by creating things of beauty. The truth is that the best way to drive out bad art is to encourage good art.***”

Chuck Colson

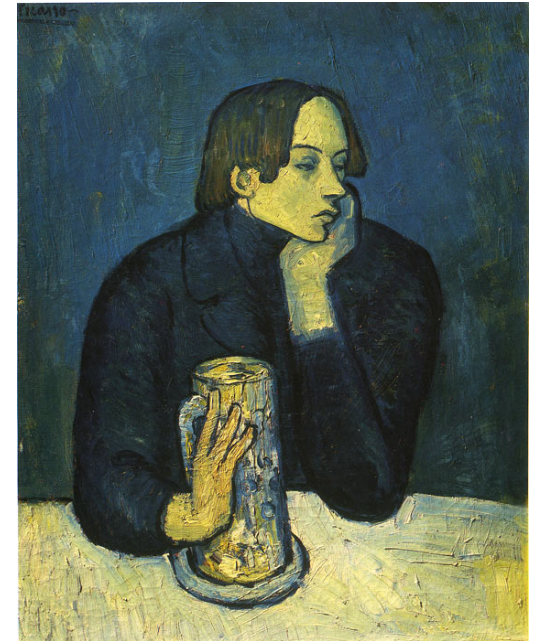
# Review / Examples

1. Bad Art / False Message
2. Bad Art / True Message
3. Good Art / False Message
4. Good Art / True Message

# Good Art / Good Message - A Common Grace Example

Woke up this morning my house was cold  
Checked out the furnace she wasn't burnin'  
Went out and hoped in my old Ford  
Hit the engine but she ain't turnin'  
We've given each other some hard lessons lately  
But we ain't learnin'  
We're the same sad story, that's a fact  
One step up and two steps back

Bird on a wire outside my motel room  
But he ain't singin'  
Girl in white outside a church in June  
But the church bells they ain't ringing  
I'm sittin' here in this bar tonight  
But all I'm thinkin' is  
I'm the same old story same old act  
One step up and two steps back



It's the same thing night on night  
Who's wrong baby who's right  
Another fight and I slam the door  
On another battle in our dirty little war  
When I look at myself I don't see  
The man I wanted to be  
Somewhere along the line I slipped off track  
I'm caught movin' one step up and two steps back

There's a girl across the bar  
I get the message she's sendin'  
She ain't lookin' too married  
And me, well honey, I'm pretending...  
Last night I dreamed I held you in my arms  
The music was never-ending  
We danced as the evening sky faded to black  
One step up and two steps back...

Bruce Springsteen



# Good Art / Good Message - A God-Centered Example

Empty me out / Fill me with You  
Lord there is nothin' / I can give to You  
I lay down my life / Here at Your feet  
You give me life / So completely

Now, I... I died with You / Was buried with You  
The moment I believed  
And I... I rose with You / Ascended with You  
Into the heavenlies

Lord, it's not me / It's You inside of me  
And Jesus, You're all / These eyes can see

Empty me out / Fill me with You  
Lord there is nothin' / I can give to You  
I lay down my life / Here at Your feet  
You give me life / So completely...



Liz Vice