

Intro Part II: Responding to the Worldview Challenge

II. Responding to the Worldview Challenge

Popular culture affects us and those around us on the level of worldview – the assumptions we make about reality everyday – often without realizing it. This worldview effect is both obvious and elusive: we know it happens, but we often don't stop to think about what it means. How should we respond when our worldview is challenged? Though it might be tempting to move to a high and lofty mountain to avoid popular culture altogether, it usually doesn't work; you only end up creating another type of popular culture. Rather, I believe that the proper response for Christians to a worldview challenge like popular culture is to ask questions, to understand from a biblical perspective what popular culture is and how it works. In our parable, consider the Bible as the lens on the microscope that studies the flug. A biblical worldview helps us sort out the good from the bad. Our task as Christians, then, is to respond to popular culture as a messy, deeply meaningful, mixture. And I believe the only appropriate response to something that messy and that meaningful is apologetics.

Consider the connection between popular culture and apologetics. Christians who engage unbelieving popular culture desperately need the tools apologetics provides. But the reverse is also true: to remain relevant, apologetics desperately needs contact with the messages and worldviews communicated by popular culture. Popular cultural engagement and apologetics need each other. Consider what happens when they are isolated from each other. On the one hand, there is a lot of Christian literature out there that deals with popular culture (how to protect your children, media literacy, etc.); but there is precious little that actually deals with popular culture as this messy, meaningful, and ultimately religious phenomenon. For that, you need a worldview approach, namely, apologetics. On the other hand, there are plenty of apologetics books out there that treat apologetics as if it were a hard science (evidence for the resurrection, evidence for an intelligent designer, philosophical arguments for theism, and so on). But there is precious little apologetical literature that actually engages popular culture. I fear that Christian apologists unwittingly contribute to their own perceived irrelevance by presenting arguments that simply do not deal with people where they actually live. And people do indeed live in an atmosphere suffused with popular culture. Christians who want to reach out to their non-Christian friends and neighbors need a worldview-oriented approach, an approach that deals with popular culture in all its complicated, messed-up glory.

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