

Chapter 8

1. Discuss ways the Christian Cultural landscape mapped out in this chapter can be used to evaluate popular artworks.

They shape the contours of this landscape, the cultural meanings that represent a cultural landscape that resonates with Christian beliefs. For example, God is at work in the world, and an invisible spiritual realm exists. Believing people inhabit this landscape, and faith is integral to all of life. Human sin is real, and evil exists. God offers forgiveness and the possibility of redemption.

2. As Christians, can we take spiritual implications out of spiritual “depictions” like the force in Star Wars, for example as being a kind of reference to Christianity? Are we justified in doing so?

As Christians we cannot take spiritual implications out of spiritual depictions. As much as the events in the movies might be non-fictional, they do affirm that there is more reality than what we experience with our senses. Yes, we are justified to do so because the forces depicted in the in artworks demonstrate that just living in God's world bears witness to the existence of unseen dimensions of the universe that we experience in our ordinary lives.

3. What makes movies with strong villains, like The Silence of the Lambs or Basic Instinct, so appealing even to Christians?

This may be because human being is made up of both good and bad which is as a result of our sinful nature some people have a certain attractiveness to evil. Christian popular artwork will

- 4. The author argues, “An honest artistic representation of God’s world in popular art will include images and metaphors of chaos, injustice, pain, suffering, and alienation, for they are all part of living in a fallen world” But many Christians tend to avoid and even criticize such depictions in popular art. If we live in a fallen world, how are we to make the conflict between good and evil real?**

This is based on our attitude, action and the issues we are dealing with. Whether we approve or disapprove, and if we remain ambiguous. Also, by not communicating explicitly stating so much as displaying ideals, beliefs, values, attitudes, and assumptions.

- 5. Why do people Christians included want, even demand, happy endings? What should we make of our cultural obsession with living happily ever after?**

People, including Christians want, even demand happy endings because it assumes that all things work out for the best for good people. When happy endings are contrived and fabricated, Christians should be critical of them, for they tend to trivialize human experience instead of enlarging it.

Chapter 9

- 1. How should Christians respond to melodrama? Explain why the melodramatic vision runs against the grain of the main tenets of the Christian faith.**

This can be done by Christians accepting uncritically the ideals, beliefs, and the values of the American mainstream culture.

2. What are the basic characteristics of the classical Hollywood film? How might these features work against portrayals of a Christian cultural landscape?

The basic characteristics of the classical Hollywood film are Cause and effect and the main character pursuit of a goal. These might work against portrayals of a Christian cultural landscape because its not attributed to God's will, since their belief is that one thing causes another to happen. And, by buying into the narrative that all problems can be solved making all things right with the world. Hollywood heroes are idealized and identified with certain traits, the most important being self-reliance and goal achievable.

3. To what extent do you think people believe they should be healthy, wealthy, and successful because they deserve it for being good?

The belief that God is not the source of redemption, but "some magical outside assistance," is a cultural synthesis of American individualism and Christianity.

4. The author maintains that "the cultural landscape of the Hollywood film clearly exaggerates individualism, favoring individual over corporate or institutional solutions to problems and conflicts." How might these features work against such portrayals distort our understanding of similar events in the real world?

Hollywood films exaggerate individualism and deal with social issues by reducing personal matters. This is what the author calls the Wizard of Oz Syndrome is very human-centered approach to life, with characters on a journey to self-realization.

- 5. Generate a list of movies and consider ways they affirm or oppose the themes highlighted in this chapter, the classical Hollywood formula, melodrama, self-reliant individualism, religion, and materialism.**

Casablanca (1942)

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939)

The Firm (1993)

Mission Impossible (1996)

Boyz N the Hood (1991)

Amistad (1997)

Mississippi Burning (1988)

- 6. How does the general treatment of materialism in the Hollywood landscape compare with a Christian understanding of wealth and poverty?**

Scripture warns against trusting in materialism as a means of salvation, while also presenting a more complex understanding of poverty than the tenets of self-reliant individualism allow.

7. As Christians, what should we make of the assumptions about materialism that are so prevalent in Hollywood films?

The attributes, desires, and values of materialism are a powerful force in North American life, and an underlying assumption in mainstream Hollywood films is that the goal in life is to become rich.

Chapter 10

1. Describe gender stereotypes prevalent in films, TV programs, and music videos, and evaluate them from your Christian perspective.

In Hollywood films the ideal male is virile, strong, unrestrained, and unattached man of adventure. While the woman is a wife, mother, and a mainstay of hearth and home. From a Christian perspective we should be critical of these misconceptions of God's male and female image bearers, for they distort our identities, relationships, and roles for service in God's kingdom.

2. "While Christians do well to recoil from our culture's obsession with sex," the author contends, "we should not abandon it as a topic for artistic treatment or criticism." Is there a proper place for the erotic in popular art? If so, how should it appear in a Christian cultural landscape?

Christian treatment of sex will situate the variety of sexual experiences in the proper context of human love and marriage, while rejecting the practices of lust and promiscuity.

3. Spend some time talking about Christian perspective on sex.

Sexuality is an inseparable part of being human; that we have bodies and sexual urges is one aspect of being fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God. Scripture treats the full range of human sexuality, everything from marital faithfulness to adultery, rape and incest. In presenting these topics it gives us a perspective on sex.

4. Can you think of popular artworks that treat sex appropriately?

Though the popular arts often present alluring images and portrayals of sex these depictions often ignore the larger realities of life.

Chapter 11

1. What place does violence hold in American mythology and the Hollywood landscape? How should we think about this as Christians?

Violence is central to American mythology as a means of justice, retribution, and as salvation from evil; however, while the Bible depicts evil and violence as real, it also shows it at odds with the best of human experience.

2. How is violence in the bible different from the violence we see in Hollywood films?

There is a trend in America to intensify an equation of masculinity with the capacity for violence, and Christians should work at being critical of this social construction.

3. Can you think of popular artworks that treat violence appropriately?

This can be done by developing rigorous tools for analysis for popular arts and culture in order to reduce the risk of cultural accommodation.

4. Is violence artistically necessary? Can art do without it?

No, violence is not artistically necessary, Yes art can do without it.