

Faith and Culture

Introduction

Have you ever been part of a conversation that sounded something like this? Dad- "I don't like the words to that song!" Child- "I don't care about the words. I just like the music!"

The idea is that we can somehow participate in something negative, but not have it influence us. The truth is, what we consume (see, listen to, or participate in) will have an influence on us. Our culture, the world we live in, has a big influence on who we are and how we perceive the world.

The question is, how do Christians faithfully engage in the world around us? What movies, series, are ok to watch? What events should we participate in? What news should we consume? What trends should we follow?

Your social media feed is built on algorithms that figure out your interest. It learns your interest based on where you linger – from video clips to advertisements and more. It is designed to keep you engaged by giving you what you want. Some will say, I can't help but be surrounded by bad influence, it keeps on popping up on my feed. But the truth is, it pops up on your feed because you are interested in it. What would your social media use say about the influences and desires of your life?

As followers of Jesus, we are in the world, but the greatest influence of our life is our God. We live for an audience of One. Jesus prayed for his disciples regarding how we walk in the world. How are we called to be in the world but not of the world?

Read Your Bible

James 4:1-10

John 15:18-25

Apply God's Word to Your Life:

1. What are the biggest influencers, positive or negative, in our culture right now?
2. How does what we consume change us?
3. What limits have you put on what you will view, listen to, or participate in? For yourself? For your family?
4. How should a follower of Christ look different than the world?
5. What habits could we form to keep Jesus as our number one influence?
6. What do you think James means by saying, "friendship with the world, means enmity with God"?
7. What do you believe Jesus means by saying we don't belong to this world? How does that change us?

Reflecting on the text:

1. What have you learned about God?

2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray

Lord, transform our lives. Give us hearts that beat only for you, minds that delight in your words, and let us live lives that reflect your promises. Protect us from the evil of this world. Help us not to be transformed by our culture, but to become, by your good news of salvation, transformers of the world around us. In Jesus' Name. Amen.