

## The Arts: Creativity and Beauty

### Exodus 31:1-11

The Arts reflect a divine commission of human creativity. While the Arts can lead to idolatry, they are intended to provide a platform to communicate about God, man, and our world. As a result, the Arts should be enjoyed in all their diversity but with a careful filter.

#### Commission of Creativity

- Its Commission

“Creativity is part of that inherited image because God is a designer and maker. Our desire to create, our ability to make concepts tangible and our pleasure in making are all reflections of God’s original ‘let there be’ and ‘it was good.’” - Steve Turner

- Its Scope

“In this way, ‘Christian art’ is not distinguished by a regenerated outlook on the whole of life but by a narrow focus on Bible stories, saints, martyrs, and the individual’s relationship with God. ‘Christian art’ in this sense is usually an aid to worship or a means of evangelism.”

“The worship experience offered to Catholics is theatrical and sensual: the sight of processions, colored robes, mitres, flickering candles, stained glass and sacred art, the sound of chanting and singing, the smell of incense, the taste of bread and wine, the touch of the priests’ hands.”

“It was so impressive, with different colored vestments for the different Masses: white and gold, or green and gold. I guess I made the association between going to the cathedral and to the movie theatre at an early age.” - Scorcese

“The problem that has affected the church down through the ages with regard to art can be put very simply: How much of life is Christ to be Lord over? Is he only interested in that part of life we think of as religious or spiritual? Or is he interested in every facet of our lives – body, soul, mind and spirit? The sort of art we make as Christians will illustrate our answer.”

#### Value the Arts in all their Diversity

#### Platform for Prophecy

- NOT for Idolatry

“The modern temptation is to make art with the intention that it becomes idolized.”- Turner

“You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth ... You shall not worship them or serve them.” - Exodus 20:3-5

- BUT for Prophecy

– Music in 1 Samuel 10:5 ...

“You will meet a group of prophets ... with harp, tambourine, flute, and a lyre before them, and they will prophesy.”

“[In the 1960’s], musicians were no longer entertainers but prophets and shamans.”- Turner

“[Rock n’ roll musicians became] the philosopher-poets of the new religion.” - Timothy Leary

- Model & Statue in Ezekiel 4
- Painting in Jeremiah 13:1-11
- Movie or Play in Hosea

“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets ... in these last days has spoken to us in His Son ... And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature.”

- Hebrews 1:1-3

“Instinct of artist is to ask questions about origins, identity, behavior, and destiny.”

### **Principles to Participate**

- Enjoy the Creativity of Man in Art
- With a Critical Filter

“It is just the literature that we read for ‘amusement,’ or ‘purely for pleasure’ that may have the greatest and least suspected influence upon us. It is the literature that we read with the least effort that can have the easiest and most insidious influence upon us.” - T.S. Elliot

- Does it expose immorality?

“It is a contradiction in terms to attempt a sinless literature of sinful man.”

- John Henry Cardinal Newman

“If the obstacles the writer introduces either don’t seem challenging enough (for example, the protagonist is handed back too much change in a store and worries about whether to return it) or don’t seem real enough (for example, a fight ensues but no punches are seen to land and no blood is spilled), then evil doesn’t appear evil enough, and if good triumphs, it won’t appear good enough. This is why so much ‘Christian fiction’ lacks the ring of truth. The action doesn’t appear to take place in the ‘real world.’” - Turner

- Does it celebrate immorality?
  - Do others dictate your choices?
- Develop Your Gifts & Skills