



# Discussion Questions

## CULTURAL APOLOGETICS

by Paul M. Gould

### Chapter 3: Reenchantment

1. Gould recounts how the enchantment he found in music as a child was later replaced by other desires as he learned to lower his expectations (pp. 66-67). Can you remember things that once enchanted you but were replaced by other desires? Looking back, do you think your expectations were lowered or raised by the new desires?
2. The author describes how the “slide toward sloth” (apathy toward God and things of God) is contagious, using the analogy of bite wounds from zombies (p.69). What are some real-life ways this apathy might be spread?
3. On pp. 72-82 the author discusses three ways cultural apologists can help reawaken a longing for transcendence that is unnoticed or suppressed:
  - The way of imagination (art, music, poetry, story)
  - The way of reason (argument from desire)
  - The way of morality (solution to our longing for happiness/goodness)Which of these is most appealing to you? Which would be most difficult? Why?
4. What is your response to the idea that the delight we experience in things we enjoy isn't found in the things themselves, but in what they beckon us toward? (p. 85 + footnote #54) Was this a new concept for you to consider? Was it helpful? Why or why not?
5. The ideas of transhumanism and posthumanism are quickly gaining traction in our culture. Discuss some practical and spiritual implications of this statement from p.89: “The promise of science is a new utopia where transformed humanity will live free of pain and free of constraint, free to do and be whatever we wish.” (If this is true, what follows?)

6. C.S. Lewis considered the stories of ancient paganism (dying and rising gods) to be “good dreams” that “point us to the true story of the world and help resacramentalize nature.” He is further quoted as saying “I sometimes wonder whether we shall not have to re-convert men to real Paganism as a preliminary to converting them to Christianity. If they were Stoics, Orphics, Mithraists, or (better still) peasants worshipping the Earth, our task might be easier.” (p. 91 + Footnote #73)

To what extent, if any, do you think this idea is credible?

### **Interlude: Looking at and Looking Along**

7. How does C.S. Lewis’s description of looking at a beam of light vs. looking along the beam to its source help your understanding of how to engage in cultural apologetics? (p.93)
8. What concepts and/or quotes in this week’s reading were most striking to you?