



Discussion Questions

CULTURAL APOLOGETICS

by Paul M. Gould

Chapter 8: Home

Appendix: Applying the Model to Non-Western Cultures

1. Gould tells how his climb of Longs Peak was a picture of a spiritual reality and a fitting metaphor for life's journey. Have you had an experience that clarified how your loves and longings motivate you, or that you could use as a metaphor for your spiritual journey?
2. This chapter discusses people's attempts to fulfill their deepest longings through pleasure, material goods, fame, accomplishment, wealth, or good works.
 - a. How have you been convinced that these pursuits fail to satisfy our deepest longings in the way that only God can?
 - b. How/why do you think Christians can be tempted to follow these empty pursuits?
3. Using Pascal's three types of people, Gould presents the journey of faith in three stages with two transitions (see Fig. 8.1 on p. 212). Did this illustration and the explanations on the following pages help to clarify practical application of cultural apologetics? If so, how?
4. In this chapter, Gould suggests we need to think years or even generations ahead, pushing back on reductive and pragmatic impulses that characterize much of contemporary Christian ministry.
 - a. Does this way of thinking challenge you? If so, how?
 - b. How can we encourage others in the church to look beyond immediate needs and focus more on patiently "tilling the soil" over time?

[Whether or not you believe we were made to dance, you might enjoy watching the video mentioned on p. 216: <https://youtu.be/zlfKdbWwruY?si=58sWSoalFqsQ1dgY>]

5. The Appendix explains how to apply the principles from the book to non-Western cultures, emphasizing the need to understand those we hope to reach by recognizing their ways of perceiving and living, their dominant culture-shaping institutions, their sacred beliefs, and their plausibility structures.
 - a. How has what you've learned from this book changed how you view cross-cultural ministry?

 - b. How has this book helped to prepare you for future ministry opportunities, either locally or cross-culturally?

6. Explain how this book met, exceeded, or fell short of your initial expectations.

7. What were your biggest takeaways or favorite quotes from this book?

Write down your questions for the Q&A with Paul Gould next week! Send us as many as you'd like, in no specific order. We will choose and consolidate the most relevant questions to include as many as we can for a good one-hour Q&A. Thank you in advance for your participation!