



Discussion Questions

CULTURAL APOLOGETICS

by Paul M. Gould

Chapter 2: Disenchantment

1. When the author described typical things going on in his home as “the grandeur of heaven” on display, what was your *initial response* (before finishing the chapter)?
2. The concept of failing to see reality “in its proper light” is developed throughout this chapter. Have you recognized any areas of disenchantment in your own life? If so, what do you think led to this conception of reality?
3. What moments or “signs of transcendence” have helped restore your sense of wonder or meaning?
4. What examples of the four characteristics of disenchantment have you personally observed or experienced? (pp. 52-60)
 - The felt absence of God (God is unwelcome, unnecessary, unimaginable)
 - A consumer culture (viewing things and people as commodities, not as gifts)
 - Blindness and foolishness (disenchantment of reality results in foolishness)
 - Idolatry (seeking fulfillment on our own terms through pursuit of God-substitutes)
5. How does understanding disenchantment help with evangelism and apologetics?
6. Sociologist Peter Berger’s “five signals of transcendence” (the presence of redemptive power in this world) are discussed on pp. 62-64:
 - Human propensity for order
 - Pervasiveness of human play
 - Human propensity to hope
 - Human demand for condemnation/damnation of perpetrators of evil
 - Reality of humor→Do you find these equally compelling? Why or why not?

7. The chapter ends with a call for apologists to help bring re-enchantment to a disenchanted culture by reawakening universal human longings and redirecting them toward their proper end. At this point in your reading, does this challenge appeal to you? Do you think it will be effective? Why or why not?

8. What concepts or quotes impacted you most in this chapter?