

Embodied

The Significance of Artful Discipleship

Embodied

Before We Begin:

1. "Art" (God's Artwork in Creation; Art as Music, Prose, Paintings, Pictures, Sculpting)
2. My Personal Engagement with Art
3. Audience for Artful Discipleship

Embodied

The Significance of Artful Discipleship:

1. "Art matters for God's sake!" (Adrienne Chapman)
2. Art Engages our Hearts to Love God and Love Neighbor.
3. Art Grows us in Discipleship.
4. Engaging Art (Practical Thoughts).

Embodied

The Significance of Artful Discipleship:

1. "Art matters for God's sake!" (Adrienne Chapman)

Embodied

(Art &) God's Story by David Arms



Creation:

Genesis 1:1-4: In the beginning, **God created** the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was **good**. And God separated the light from the darkness.



Genesis 1:26: Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

God the Great Artist gives us the same gift of creativity!



Fall:

Romans 1:21-23: For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

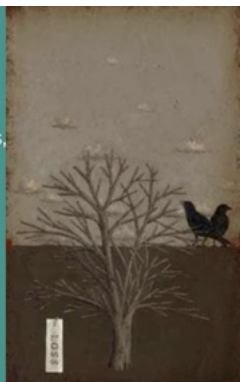


Fall:

1. Art as Idolatry - Promoting False Worship (Romans 1:21-23)

2. Instead of Loving God and Loving Others, Art is now rooted in the Love of Self: Self-Expression, Self-Promotion, Self-Glorification, Self-Pleasure

3. Art to Promote Lies and Propaganda (Individuals, Companies, Countries)

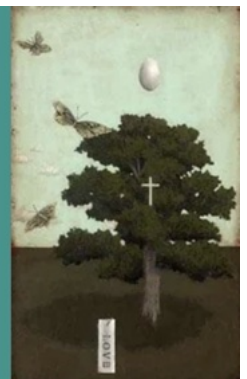


Redemption:

Colossians 1:15-20: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him **all things** were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—**all things** were created through him and for him. And he is before **all things**, and in him **all things** hold together. ...



...And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself **all things**, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.



Redemption:

"All things" with Art:

Not "shun, copy, or consume" but rather redemptive creating and cultivating (Andy Crouch, Culture Making)



New Creation:

Revelation 21:24-26: By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

Nations: people, music, language, culture, expression



Takeaway: Art matters for God's sake!

1. God is an Artist and Highlights Art:

- God chose to reveal and express himself personally through the Art form of written communication (Bible - poetry, narrative, parables, etc).
- The Tabernacle/Temple had beautiful art; there is worship with singing, clapping, and various instruments (Psalm 150).

Embodied

Reflective Question:

As you think about art from a Christian perspective, do you have a truncated view of discipleship?

Embodied

"God's desire for us is not only that we would simply know the truth of the gospel intellectually but that we would also experience the beauty of the gospel intimately. Art has the power to draw our hearts and minds into this intimate experience in more ways than mere words. Songs, music, paintings, books, sculptures, movies, photography and the like, can make this intimate experience a reality. Good art ensures we experience the gospel without minimising our understanding of the gospel." - Adi P

Embodied

The Significance of Artful Discipleship:

1. "Art matters for God's sake!" (Adrienne Chapman)

2. Art Engages our Hearts to Love God and Love Neighbor.

Embodied

Biblical Principle and Framework:

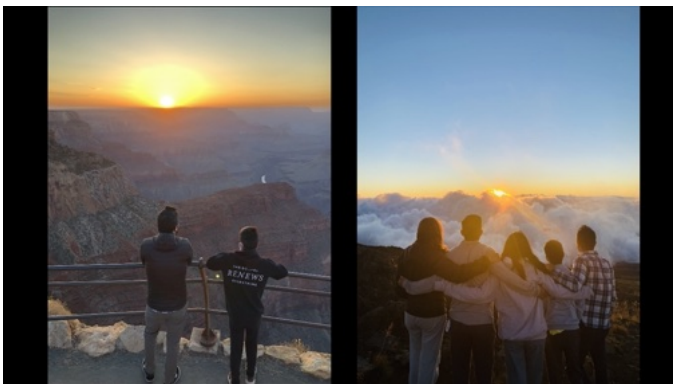
Mark 12:30-31: And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.



Art engages our hearts to:

Love God: God's Greatness and Nearness

Love Our Neighbors: Cultivates Empathy and Lament



Love Neighbor:

Art Helps Cultivate
Empathy and Lament

The Old Guitarist
by
Pablo Picasso



The Significance of Artful Discipleship:

1. "Art matters for God's sake!" (Adrienne Chapman)
2. Art Engages our Hearts to Love God and Love Neighbor.

3. Art Grows us in Discipleship.



4 Ways Art Grows Us in Discipleship (Arends):

1) Through Paying Attention

Matthew 11:15: He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

In our busyness and distraction, we struggle to hear (God) and see (with eyes of faith).



Carolyn Arends: "Only God can release us from spiritual deafness and blindness. But apprenticing ourselves to great art is one of the spiritual disciplines we can use to cooperate with him in the healing of our senses. Receptivity to art teaches us to focus, to press beyond surface impressions, and to look, listen, smell, touch and taste with care, thought, and patience."



A Vase of Flowers
by
Margaretha
Haverman (1716)

4 Ways Art Grows Us in Discipleship (Arends):

2) Through Appreciating Things (and People) for more than Usefulness

Psalm 27:4: One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.



Arends: "Many pieces of art have a practical purpose (think of a crystal water jug, or a richly elegant pen), but usually what helps us identify art as art is the fact that we appreciate it for more than its usefulness. We value it purely for its aesthetic qualities. In this sense, art is extra-utilitarian."



The following artwork is from Seffa Klein (WEB's) "Where Everything Belongs"



"The stubborn streaks of both pragmatism and narcissism in our culture push us towards utilitarianism. They make us highly prone to see other things —and especially other people— only in terms of how they map onto us and our perceived needs. We tend to pursue relationships that can fill particular roles in our lives, teach us something, or improve our professional or social standings."



"We can try, of course, to pay attention to others for who they really are, but the arts can help us train to appreciate things and people on their own terms. Only the God who takes note of every sparrow and knows the hairs on our heads can give us eyes to see every creature the way he does. But the arts can and should be means of grace, given to us by the Master Artist, that help us learn to attend to his image in every single one of his image bearers."



Embodied

4 Ways Art Grows Us in Discipleship (Arends):

3) Through Renewing our Minds (our Thoughts and Imaginations)

Romans 12:2: Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Embodied

"Juliet is the sun." - Shakespeare

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield" - Psalm 84:11

Embodied

4 Ways Art Grows Us in Discipleship (Arends):

4) Through Our Longings

Psalm 42:1-2: As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

Embodied

Arends: "The arts can be an important ally in recovering some of God's vision for the world—and in helping us experience the gap between what the world is now and what it can and will be. Why do truly breathtaking things bring tears to our eyes? Why does intense beauty actually hurt a little? Exquisite art reacquaints us with our incompleteness and awakens the hunger for more. Sometimes, for there to be genuine hope, we must despair of 'business as usual.'"

Embodied

Gary Molander: "Art not only communicates truth. It also creates emotional uprisings. In this way, art opens, then resolves nothing. ... It gives people the chance to sit, to contemplate, and to experience a wider variety of emotions."

Embodied

Take a moment to listen...



The Significance of Artful Discipleship:

1. "Art matters for God's sake!" (Adrienne Chapman)
2. Art Engages our Hearts to Love God and Love Neighbor.
3. Art Grows us in Discipleship.

4. Engaging Art (Practical Thoughts).



Engaging Art:

1. Read Redeeming Vision by Elissa Weichbrodt.
2. Listen to a Piece of Music.
3. Visit an Art Gallery.
4. Go for a Walk on your Sabbath with Attentive Seeing.
5. Take an Artist out for Coffee.
6. "Beauty will save the world." (Dostoevsky, The Idiot)



Abraham Kuyper (Lectures on Calvinism): "...the world of sounds, the world of forms, the world of colours, and the world of poetry can have no other source than God."



Embodied