

re:View Worldview Study
Topic 07x – Engaging Culture Extended Session

(To teach this session you will need: “07_Seen_EngagingCulture” DVD, television or projector, DVD player, student handouts, and this leader’s guide. You may also wish to use “reView_07x_VerseSlides.ppt” for the verses.)

NOTE: If you’re teaching the abbreviated 7-session series, you have already completed re:View. If you’re teaching the extended 13-session series, this is Session 13.

Extended Session Overview

We can isolate ourselves from culture, be assimilated by it, or better, engage it with the heart and mind of Christ. How do we build a bridge between culture and Christ like Paul in Athens? What would that look like in our day and in our youth group, and how do we need to change?

Suggested Session Layout

- Activity [15:00]
- Watch “Engaging Culture: Part B” Teaching Segment [4:00]
- Teaching Segment Discussion [5:00]
- Challenge [15:00]
- Total session time [35-40 mins.]*

Activity [15:00]

Play song or clip (see suggestions provided below or use your own) that communicates a powerful starting point to build a bridge between pop culture and Christ. If you choose your own, make sure you choose an example that clearly communicates such an issue.

Note: Don’t tell the students why you are playing the song, just play it.

Media	Starting Point	Building the Bridge
U2’s “Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For”	Inherent emptiness of life without God	Christ came to not only forgive sins, but to give life in all its fullness. (John 10:10)
Nirvana’s “Smells Like Teen Spirit”	Looking for identity and why I matter	I matter because God made me to reflect His glory and not my own. (Gen 1:26-28; Col. 3:10)

After playing the clip, say, “If you were riding in the car with a friend and this song came on the radio, how could you use its message to launch a spiritual conversation that leads to Christ?”

Activity (cont.)

Note:

- Don't worry about answering the "Building the Bridge" portion yet. We'll do that later in this session.
- We're not really concerned if the students struggle with this first question, because the point is to make them think about the theme which Dr. Brown will address, namely building bridges between culture and Christ. They will probably struggle a bit because they've just listened to it as entertainment rather than critically analyzing the message. The point of this activity is to get them to be proactive so that every time they listen they're thinking about how they can build a bridge from this particular starting point. The idea is that they'll never listen to a song the same way again.

After they've struggled with this question a little bit, play "Part B" of Dr. Brown's Teaching Segment on "Engaging Culture."

Watch "Engaging Culture: Part B" Teaching Segment [4:00]

Synopsis and Outline: Paul "makes himself a slave" to everyone in order that he may win them. The passages that follow describe how he tries to get into the heart and mind of people so he can build a bridge to Jesus Christ for them. How can we do this on a practical level?

- I. Putting 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 Into Practice
 - a. The Setting: Athens
 - b. Paul's Response to the Idols
- II. Lessons From Paul's Response
 - I. The People's Response to Paul's Message

(For your reference, a teaching outline of Dr. Brown's teaching segment can be found under "reView_07_TeachingSegmentOutline_B.pdf.")

Teaching Segment Discussion [5:00]

Paul knew the Bible, which allowed him to speak as he did to the people in Athens. Notice that he didn't quote from the Bible. Why?

Paul knew that the people in Athens would know nothing about the Bible and God. He pointed more broadly to history, human religion, and psychological truth. He quoted from their own poets and philosophers. He made them look at the truths present in great works of literature that point to the existence of the true God.

Can you think of a non-Christian movie, song lyric, or television show that states a truth that can be used to point to God?

Allow students to think about this out loud for a moment. Many stories have themes of sin, redemption, consequences, etc., that point to divine truth at the human level.

Challenge [15:00]

Have your students open their Bibles to Acts 17:16-34 and read through the passage. Stress that Paul was “greatly distressed” and “so he reasoned in the synagogues.” Break down the verses and ask the students what Paul’s methods of engaging culture were. They are listed for you below:

1. *He sought to understand the culture (verse 23).*
2. *He started where they were (verses 22-23).*
3. *He was positive about the truth he found (verse 22).*
4. *He knew and quoted their sources (verses 23 and 28).*
5. *He communicated the Gospel (verses 18, 30-31).*

Go back to the learning activity and see if they can answer the question of how to “Build the Bridge”. The key is that they can accurately identify the starting point (issue) and that they know how to build the bridge to Christ.

Encourage them that they’ve come a long way and learned a lot of new information over the last 13 weeks. Remind them that they’ve learned about culture, the ultimate questions, worldviews (Naturalism, Transcendentalism, and Theism), and now how to engage culture.

At this point you can close in one of three ways (or maybe you use all of them).

- 1) You can offer your own challenge, appropriate for your group about all that has been learned.
- 2) The group (as either small groups or as a whole) could pray for how to use this for specific situations and unsaved friends.
- 3) Your students could strategize about how to build bridges together using popular culture.

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