

Christian Rap/ HipHop music- a critique

Some of the proponents of, what has been termed, 'Christian Rap' justify the legitimacy of it with such arguments as; The arts are relative and we are all culturally conditioned; What is good to one is bad to another; The fundamentalists don't like it because of their cultural preference; Any music genre can be given back to God for His glory; We can use our 'gifts' for His glory after conversion; Hip hop is included in the 'all' for God's glory in 1 Cor 31; No music in and of itself is wrong.

Shai Linne (One of it's main proponents, of a reformed persuasion) said during a recorded interview with Mark Dever(1) (of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, DC) that rap is an unusually good way to get over Biblical truth, hip hop culture can influence the way you think, it can influence your world view (it's certainly influenced him, referencing the seminal secular rap group RUN DMC as a pre-conversion love). He speaks of how, before he became a Christian, hip-hop strongly influenced him in his actions and life choices. This is telling, considering what he is now attempting to do. His stated aim is to express God's glory through hip-hop culture, to spread the gospel and build up the church. Lampmode (His record label) say their aim is to teach, edify and build up the church. A track, it is said, is like a mini sermon artfully given with clever phrases and a support to preaching. We are assured it does not lend itself to congregational corporate worship but then he says he's working on some that could be. Worldliness to Shai is the lust of the flesh the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Shai reasons that this can be true of anyone and anything therefore anything can be 'redeemed' as it were. Anything can be used for evil, therefore anything can be 'sanctified' or Christianised and made clean. This neatly allows anything to be engaged in to a certain extent.

This loose treatment of worldliness lies at the heart of the problem. Is not the Bible speaking about something more specific that we should have no part of, and come out of, and be unspotted by, when it mentions the world? Is it not linked to the carnal mind and the empty, fleshly living of people who indulge the purely sensual and material? Those that have all their hopes and pleasures merely 'under the sun' as Solomon terms it. Is the idea that you can redeem things rather than people Biblical either? I read about redeeming the time but nowhere about redeeming the culture.

At that risk of polarizing the argument or being divisive, I would like to state what I see as some objections.

We are told not to be spotted by the world James 1.27, and in another place 'hating even the garment spotted by the flesh' Jude 1.23 (a second degree of separation from the unclean). That is a guiding principle. Throughout the OT there are things clean and unclean and the picture still remains in the NT. The list was not arbitrary then and is not now. We are clearly meant to be guided by principals for each age. The list may change but the principles do not. For example, the Bible doesn't explicitly say do not smoke or do not gamble, but we can find guiding principles which prohibit these things. No direct scriptural teaching will cover every problem we face. As in so many areas of Christian thought and life, we must determine our practice by the application of doctrines, principles, and emphases that are found in the Bible.

Some of the texts and passages containing these principles, that have challenged and guided believer's throughout history, are as follows; Eph 5.8,11 Rom12.9 1Thess 5.22 1Cor 6.12 & 10.23 Gal 5.26 Phil 4.8 Jude 23 (drawn from such as Haggai 2.11-13) 1Peter 2.9 James 1.27 Daniel's test Daniel 1 The Nicolatans deeds and doctrine Rev 2.6 Ecc 11.10 The picture of Babylon in Revelation.

God will not share His glory with the world. That's why he has ordained 'the foolishness' of preaching as the prescribed way in which to teach the church and proclaim the gospel. When man invents an entertainment form designed for self glorification and unwitting, but well meaning, Christians wrap up the message in it, it robs God of the glory due Him and portrays Christians as those who love rap culture but feel the need to sanitize it. Using Christian rap to proclaim the gospel is like spraying a flower with non-toxic paint in order to beautify it! It needn't be done. Doing this runs the sure risk of tainting and diminishing the message and confusing the hearer. The message in turn becomes- "change your mind but not your ways, leave Egypt and Babylon but take their ways". Quite apart from Christ being rather irreverently linked to slang, being called 'dope' and the Father 'papa' to stretch a rhyme.

The advocates of Christian rap say it is the content that is the issue not the style, genre or the medium. But Hip-hop culture has always been about more than just music (affecting attitude, influencing clothing and speech, linked with night clubs and dancing etc). This argument opens the door to everything regardless of its corrupted associations. Thus Christians can use the arts wholesale as ministry and feel justified in using movie culture, theatre, skateboarding, fashion, modelling, skydiving, clubbing etc- all in the name of Christ. Bikers for Christ, skaters for Christ etc. All allowing the Christian to remain in a world enjoyed as a non-believer. But weren't the kings of Canaan supposed to be driven out? Weren't the Israelites charged not to adopt the ways of the nations around them? Modern Christianity is jettisoning such pictures today. Artistic expression is indeed a reflection of God but we are clearly taught not to worship by art, and there is no biblical case of it being used as ministry. We have no business doing anything to do with ministry that we can't clearly see an example of some kind being done in the Bible.

The attraction of hip hop is that it's entertaining and gets the head nodding, it makes a man feel 'cool' when he's listening to it. Like all music, it appeals to the affections predominantly. The rapper feels 'cool' doing it, it is an impressive skill and looks and sounds good to some. This isn't fitting for the setting forth of Christian standards that are against the vaunting of oneself Gal 5.26. Pride, ego and hubris, things very opposite to a humble Christian instinct, characterize the whole genre. If a preacher decided to put on a performance any discerning believer would think it inappropriate and see through it to his motives. But all of a sudden when a rapper does the same some believers are struck blind! Here is the essential reason why performance cannot go hand in hand with proclamation of the gospel. The essence of the human performance is that man does something other men will find impressive and entertaining and he is applauded for it. At it's most extreme he is worshipped for it. Imagine, if you will, a juggler or a plate spinner. Then imagine this man (who is essentially 'setting traps for claps' as Spurgeon once put it) trying to teach Christian theology at the same time! I wonder if Shai Linne accepts applause at the end of his performances? It would be hard to imagine the most humble apostle Paul endorsing such activity.

Rap is absolutely fitting for the glorifying of man, that is why it's had such longevity and transcends national borders, it feeds men's pride. However Christians do not make good worldlings, they are usually at least 10yrs behind an ever-changing music scene that is pandering to the tastes and fashions of the world. Even if we ape the latest music styles or trends of the world, what are we doing? We're taking our cue from the secular world and being led by it. This is something alien to scripture and indeed church history. Bunyan's picture of Vanity Fair is changed in this new thinking to a picture of the two believers trying to fit in and saying, "look, we're just like you."

Some people use Martin Luther to justify the position, saying he would condone this as he apparently used secular tunes for his hymns. But would he condone the use of rap if he were around today? He actually changed a hymn tune due to a worldly association. The one secular

song Luther ever used as a tune was from a popular pre-Reformation (not a drinking tune!) secular song, "I Arrived from an Alien Country," and was used as the melody for the Christmas hymn, "From Heaven on High I Come to You", the first stanza Luther patterned after the folk song. (Source: Robert D. Harrell, *Martin Luther, His Music, His Message*, p. 18) And here's an interesting FACT — not only that, because of it's worldly association, Luther later changed the tune!

According to historian Paul Nettl, Luther changed the tune because:

"Luther was embarrassed to hear the tune of his Christmas hymn sung in inns and dance halls." (Paul Nettl, *Luther and Music*, p. 48)

Ultimately the apostle Paul tells us that he is to be used as an 'ensample' or pattern. Did he do anything remotely like this? Our use of the regularative principle also gives no help to the use of rap. The closest thing is on Mars hill when he quotes some of 'your own poets' in a *sermon*! He did go to an amphitheatre in Ephesus, but not to put on a performance, but to preach! What was his attitude to the world? Demas is said to have forsaken him because he loved something specific called 'this present world'.

Some use the argument that it is a vocation. But being a Rapper is a vocation for a Christian where you have to Christianise it in order to legitimise it. Therefore it is not a neutral vocation like being a milkman, lawyer, doctor, carpenter or tentmaker. You therefore have to put the term 'Christian' in front of the vocation. Instead of being a 'rapper' who is a Christian, your 'vocation' has to become 'Christian rap'. This isn't done with Biblical vocations. Paul didn't do 'Christian tent making'; he was a tent maker who was a Christian. Over the centuries there hasn't been Christian bakeries, Christian dentistry etc. Acts 18.3. Paul's vocation at first was a tent maker. Did Lydia do 'Christian selling of purple cloth'? There is a difference between a picture framing Christian and 'Christian framing', between a 'Christian rapper' and a rapping Christian. The difference is he is using it as a 'ministry' not a 'vocation'. There are legitimate vocations and there are others Christians would do well to steer clear from. Why? Because the form is too associated with corruption- 'hate even the garments spotted by the flesh'. Is the modern entertainment industry a legitimate vocation? Can we try to Christianise a modern youth culture that since the 50's been advocating the opposite of Christianity, sex, drugs and rock'n'roll.

Believers, at the birth of 'Rock n roll', seem to have initially had more discernment. Terry Stewart, president of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, says: "These songs were filled with double entendres. Many of the churchgoing black families were just as upset as the white families with this music being played for their children." However, when Leo Mintz - owner of a music store on the fringes of Cleveland's black community - listened to this raucous sound - with its thumping back beat, locomotive rhythm, and infectious 12-bar blues melodies - he heard the future. Mintz convinced Alan Freed - a friend and onetime radio broadcaster from orchestral dances in Akron, Ohio - that the obscure tracks deserved some airtime. His son, Stuart Mintz, says his father told Freed the "kids are rocking and rolling in the aisles to these records, but they won't buy them". Mintz helped Freed, then a humble sportscaster, secure a new show on the city's WJW radio in 1951, devoted to playing this underground music. Freed would coin the term rock'n'roll - an old blues euphemism for sex - to describe the tracks.

Since the 50's, and well before, the creation of the pop star music artist has occurred in the music industry. It markets a person as a product and sets him on a pedestal to be idolized. His name is raised up, his image becomes important, and celebrity money and fame follow sometimes (which is a disaster for that person, claiming many a casualty in terms of troubled lives, addictions and even suicide).

We must weigh our motives carefully. Is it wise to try and engage with it, all under the banner of using my 'gifts' for the Lord, or must these be mortified and sacrificed so the Lord may lead us into a 'clean' way, instead of us trying to lead Him? What if Shai Linne's insistence on being a rapper is hamstringing what the Lord could do with him? People who like rap are relatively few enough in the world, let alone in the Church. He'd be far more effective by being in the ministry as a preacher full time under scripture mandate and promises of blessing from the Holy Spirit, not just a fleshly hope that rap will appeal more. He'd be making a clear stand; his trumpet would not give an uncertain sound. No doubt Cliff Richard would say he's influenced a lot of people, but who could think of a more compromised Christian celeb!



A newspaper clipping. – This is what the 'world' thinks of Christians adopting pop culture.

What happens when rap goes out of fashion? Is there a mandate or principle in the Bible which tells us to edify the church by using the fashions of the world, music or otherwise? I think the old and New Testament show the opposite to 'cheerleaders for Jesus' and 'Bikers for Christ'. In any case, we've had this all before with Christian heavy metal, and it didn't work then, it just served to shame the cause. The idea was to be sufficiently like the world to please and reach the non-Christian (the preached gospel, incidentally, is long enough to reach!) and sufficiently different

from it to satisfy the Christian. But you can't serve two masters. It's like trying to chase two rabbits at the same time and catching neither of them. Shai and his friend say it's largely for Christians. But what would we counsel Christians who have left that lifestyle behind because they found it a snare- return to it again or even listen to it for the first time? How dangerous for them. It is possible they may enjoy the form so much they may be ensnared again by the secular form too. Do we really want this on our conscience? The last thing I would encourage a humble new born convert fresh with Christian instinct to do is listen to Christian rap, no matter what the lyrics. I think their own discernment and new tastes would likely frown on it anyway. The believer that counsels a younger new convert in this way has become so wise in his mind he runs the risk of graduating into a counselling fool!

Is rap a good medium to teach theology? Learning doctrine and theology from hip hop lyrics causes you to link the two in your memory. When you think of these things, the melody/ beat etc pops into your head, and Christ is united with entertainment and sensual pleasure; otherwise known in the Bible as 'the flesh'. We could, if we wanted, attempt to teach simple theology by pasting it on the inside walls of pubs and clubs alongside the graffiti and posters, but would this be wise? I don't think I can think of a music genre more associated with ungodly things than rap music, often linked to misogyny, sexually explicit videos, crime, aggression, violence, explicit lyrics (the warning label often used as a badge of honour) peppered with swearing, brazen covetousness, materialism and vanity, in short, the 'pride of life'. It could, without doubt, be said that these rap MC's (a term for the rap performer – 'master of ceremonies') glory in their shame. However, it is therefore very alluring to the sinful human heart. Christian's, of all people, should not be naïve about secular culture and the heart of man, but sadly often are, not seeing enemy territory for what it is. Satan has always used subtle means, and drawing unsuspecting believers into dubious cultural associations is one of them. What is sad about Christian rap is that the danger, of being linked to a corrupt association (in it's present day context) in order to discredit the gospel, isn't even that subtle.

It is clear what the Christian rapper has done, he's said in his heart, "I love rap music as a genre, but I can't engage in it as a Christian, what can I do? I know, I'll make a Christian form and I can still have my love", and those who buy into it have done the same. We must ask when seeking to justify things; "Is it because I want it to be allowed because I love it?" If we find ourselves going against the practice of the overwhelming majority of godly men down the centuries we must surely wonder at the wisdom of a new position. Is it not likely a wrong turn, a subtlety of the enemy of souls?

Some may protest at all this and say "How can it be wrong when I personally benefit and learn from it? It has brought me closer to God". Be careful this is deceptive, there are processes which work within a person undetected, at the same time you may have been slowly de-sensitised to the world. You may feel you've guarded your mind but what about your affections? An overemphasis on music listening stops us doing other things and majors on what you feel- like mood music during a sermon. This is emotionally manipulative.

Is Christian rap appealing to people because rap was trendy and popular in the world when they were young? Was this a snare pre-conversion? Shimei in the end had to be killed even though he had previously appeared redeemed and sanctified after passing over Jordan 1 Kings 2.44-46. In the same way we must mortify and put off our old ways, not just sanitise them Eph 4.21-24.

I too was drawn into rap music when I was younger (so my objection isn't preferential), and I know, regardless of the lyrics and melody, why I liked it. It is my testimony that there was nothing noble in my attraction.

Finally look at Revelation's picture of Babylon as a clear picture of the world. It contains lots of 'things' not just internal sin and false ideology (false Religion and Government are the two beasts)

Rev 18. 2And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

4And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues....**

11And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

12The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

13And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and **souls of men.**

14And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

15The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

16And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

17For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

18And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!

19And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

20Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

21And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

22And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

23And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

From this I merely draw attention to the fact that music is present in the picture of Babylon, in Revelation, a symbolic city that will one day fall and be gone. This is seen as a symbol of this present world and it's great industries and all the things man revels in, glorifies himself with and lusts after- the picture of a prostitute is perfect as a corrupt profession. The nations of the world will mourn all the things they loved when these industries collapse (I'm not making a blanket condemnation of music, movies, marriages or merchants, just the sinful types this world tries to sell us.) See Vanity Fair further down.

Here is what Matthew Henry says about Paul forgoing a liberty in order not to cause others to stumble in another place. He certainly didn't seek to justify his freedom in this.

He waved this part of his Christian freedom, for the good of others.

It is the glory of a minister to deny himself, that he may serve Christ and save souls. But when a minister gives up his right for the sake of the gospel, he does more than his charge and office demands. By preaching the gospel, freely, the apostle showed that he acted from principles of zeal and love, and thus enjoyed much comfort and hope in his soul. And though he looked on the ceremonial law as a yoke taken off by Christ, yet he submitted to it, that he might work upon the Jews,

do away their prejudices, prevail with them to hear the gospel, and win them over to Christ. Though he would transgress no laws of Christ, to please any man, yet he would accommodate himself to all men, where he might do it lawfully, to gain some. Doing good was the study and business of his life; and, that he might reach this end, he did not stand on privileges. We must carefully watch against extremes, and against relying on any thing but trust in Christ alone. We must not allow errors or faults, so as to hurt others, or disgrace the gospel. (1Co 9:24-27)

The truth is that many cultural forms can be traced back to immorality in the past. That's why we have to examine what they are *in the present*, not just allow it all because some things become acceptable because their links become less associated with corruption. The use of *principles, doctrines and emphases* that are found in the Bible is therefore essential. The 'list' of prohibition may therefore change over centuries but the principles do not. I'm the last person to say all culture is to be steered clear of. My contention is that, when we look at rap and wider hip hop culture as a whole, it is intrinsically linked to the corruption of the world *now* and we should leave this specific form well alone. The advocates of 'reformed Christian rap' say "Some rap exalts Christ and glorifies God", but does it really? Does it not rather contravene those challenging passages listed at the start of this paper? It's very form exalts man and robs God of glory. To say it can be included in the 'all' for God's glory in 1 Cor 31.10 is to misunderstand that Paul is talking about all 'neutral' things and goes on to say that nothing should be done that would give cultural offence to the Jews, Gentiles or the Church. If Christian people adopt what they see as a benign form of a present sinful cultural form then sadly these things tend to descend, not ascend, and abuses and slippages occur resulting in a Christian world that legitimises the worst sort of worldly excess, if that day is not already with us. It seems clear, therefore, in this case, is it is best to leave it well alone.

With regard to the often asked question of 'What is worldliness', I couldn't put it better than our good friend Bishop Ryle, so I point anyone to his writing on the subject entitled 'THE WORLD' J. C. Ryle(1816-1900)

The Jude 1.23 garment principle is drawn from such lessons as Haggai 2.11-13 11 *'Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean.'* The simple inference is that it is easier to make something clean, unclean, than it is to make something unclean, clean or holy.

The principle is more explicitly commanded in 1 Thess 5.22. 'Abstain from all *appearance* of evil.'

Maybe some Puritan voices from the past can help us out here- men of renown who we can trust to give a fairly safe Christian view.

Matthew Henry

Rom 12.1-3 The great enemy to this renewal is, conformity to this world. Take heed of forming plans for happiness, as though it lay in the things of this world, which soon pass away. Do not fall in with the customs of those who walk in the lusts of the flesh, and mind earthly things.

1 Cor 7.31 As to worldly enjoyments; here is not their rest. As to worldly employment; those that prosper in trade, and increase in wealth, should hold their possessions as though they held them not. As to all worldly concerns; they must keep the world out of their hearts, that they may not

abuse it when they have it in their hands. All worldly things are show; nothing solid. All will be quickly gone.

1 John 2.15 The pride of life: a vain man craves the grandeur and pomp of a vain-glorious life; this includes thirst after honour and applause. The things of the world quickly fade and die away; desire itself will ere long fail and cease.

Many vain efforts have been made to evade the force of this passage by limitations, distinctions, or exceptions. Many have tried to show how far we may be carnally-minded, and love the world; but the plain meaning of these verses cannot easily be mistaken. Unless this victory over the world is begun in the heart, a man has no root in himself, but will fall away, or at most remain an unfruitful professor. Yet these vanities are so alluring to the corruption in our hearts, that without constant watching and prayer, we cannot escape the world, or obtain victory over the god and prince of it. (1Jn 2:18-23)

John Bunyan's picture of Vanity fair (His description is meant to draw a parallel with the description of Babylon in our Revelation passage)

Then I saw in my dream, that when they were got out of the wilderness, they presently saw a town before them, and the name of that town is Vanity; and at the town there is a fair kept, called Vanity Fair. It is kept all the year long. It beareth the name of Vanity Fair, because the town where it is kept is lighter than vanity, Psa. 62:9; and also because all that is there sold, or that cometh thither, is vanity; as is the saying of the wise, "All that cometh is vanity." Eccl. 11:8; see also 1:2-14; 2:11-17; Isa. 40:17.

This fair is no new-erected business but a thing of ancient standing. I will show you the original of it.

Almost five thousand years ago there were pilgrims walking to the Celestial City, as these two honest persons are: and Beelzebub, Apollyon, and Legion, with their companions, perceiving by the path that the pilgrims made, that their way to the city lay through this town of Vanity, they contrived here to set up a fair; a fair wherein should be sold all sorts of vanity, and that it should last all the year long. Therefore, at this fair are all such merchandise sold as houses, lands, trades, places, honors, preferments, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures; and delights of all sorts, as harlots, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and what not.

And moreover, at this fair there is at all times to be seen jugglings, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues, and that of every kind. Here are to be seen, too, and that for nothing, thefts, murders, adulteries, false-swearers, and that of a blood-red color.

And, as in other fairs of less moment, there are the several rows and streets under their proper names, where such and such wares are vended; so here, likewise, you have the proper places, rows, streets, (namely, countries and kingdoms,) where the wares of this fair are soonest to be found. Here is the Britain Row, the French Row, the Italian Row, the Spanish Row, the German Row, where several sorts of vanities are to be sold. But, as in other fairs, some one commodity is as the chief of all the fair; so the ware of Rome and her merchandise is greatly promoted in this fair; only our English nation, with some others, have taken a dislike thereat.

Now, as I said, the way to the Celestial City lies just through this town, where this lusty fair is kept; and he that will go to the city, and yet not go through this town, "must needs go out of the world." 1 Cor. 4:10. The Prince of princes himself, when here, went through this town to his own country, and that upon a fair-day too; yea, and, as I think, it was Beelzebub, the chief lord of this fair, that invited him to buy of his vanities, yea, would have made him lord of the fair, would he but have done him reverence as he went through the town. Yea, because he was such a person of honor, Beelzebub had him from street to street, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a little time, that he might, if possible, allure that blessed One to cheapen and buy some of his vanities; but he had no mind to the merchandise, and therefore left the town, without laying out so much as one farthing upon these vanities. Matt. 4:8,9; Luke 4:5-7. This fair, therefore, is an ancient thing, of long standing, and a very great fair.

Now, these pilgrims, as I said, must needs go through this fair. Well, so they did; but behold, even as they entered into the fair, all the people in the fair were moved; and the town itself, as it were, in a hubbub about them, and that for several reasons: for,

First, The Pilgrims were clothed with such kind of raiment as was diverse from the raiment of any that traded in that fair. The people, therefore, of the fair made a great gazing upon them: some said they were fools; 1 Cor. 4:9,10; some, they were bedlams; and some, they were outlandish men.

Secondly, And as they wondered at their apparel, so they did likewise at their speech; for few could understand what they said. They naturally spoke the language of Canaan; but they that kept the fair were the men of this world: so that from one end of the fair to the other, they seemed barbarians each to the other. 1 Cor. 2:7,8.

Thirdly, But that which did not a little amuse the merchandisers was, that these pilgrims set very light by all their wares. They cared not so much as to look upon them; and if they called upon them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears, and cry, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," Psa. 119:37, and look upward, signifying that their trade and traffic was in heaven. Phil. 3: 20,21.

One chanced, mockingly, beholding the carriage of the men, to say unto them, "What will ye buy?" But they, looking gravely upon him, said, "We buy the truth." Prov. 23:23

The Biblical view of 'common grace' should give us a clear view of the good things all around us, but should not give us carte blanche in all areas of culture without weighing their place, impact, associations, nature etc first, by the use of Biblical principles to gauge our conduct in whatever age the believer lives.

Stuart Lawrence

Hymn 440 v4 (Met tab Psalms and Hymns of reformed worship)

1 Cor 7.31 ³¹And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

Esther 3.8 ^s..There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people

Ref.

1 <http://media.9marks.org/2009/10/01/christian-rap-with-shai-linne-and-voice>

by Stuart Lawrence