

## ***The Culturally Savvy Christian***

By Dick Staub

Jossey-Bass Publisher, 2007

Book Review by Cindy Buntin

*The Culturally Savvy Christian* takes a look at our American culture today and how Christians relate to it. The author says that we choose one of three ways to deal with our culture: 1) we withdraw from it, 2) do combat with it, or 3) or build an imitative parallel culture.

The author believes that the church in America today, instead of changing our culture, has created a parallel culture that mimics it with a Christian version of everything that already exists in pop culture - Christian music, Christian movies, Christian schools, Christian artists, Christian books, etc.

As a follower of Christ, does your lifestyle look any different than those who do not know Christ? Or do you embrace the popular culture in America? Do you feel like something is missing in your spiritual walk with God? Do you long for more than just attending church each week? Or are you content with your life the way it is?

Dick Staub's *The Culturally Savvy Christian* addresses these questions. The author shows how our American culture today has become consumed with mindless entertainment. Its main goal is to get us focused on ourselves so we will spend money. I love the definition he gives for "amusement." The letter "a" means *not*, and "muse" means *to think*, which gives us the definition "to be absent in mind."

The author says that in the Church's desire to attract people to Christianity, the Church in America has become "Christianity-Lite." The focus has turned from teaching people about God's truths and how to grow deeper in their relationship with Christ to entertaining people and telling them what they want to hear. Staub believes this is the reason the Church has been ineffective in changing our culture today.

Staub suggests "Christianity-Lite" has caused the majority of the Church to be Bible illiterate. He quotes some statistics I find very disturbing: "Only four percent of Americans hold to the Biblical worldview," which is "believing that absolute moral truth exists; that such truth is defined by the Bible; and firm belief in six specific religious views. Those views were that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life; God is the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe and He still rules today; salvation is a gift from God and cannot be earned; Satan is real; a Christian has a responsibility to share his faith in Christ with other people; and the Bible is accurate in all its teachings." (*A Biblical Worldview Has a Radical Effect on a Person's Life* - Barna Update, December 1, 2003)

Staub asks the question "Where are all the great Christian writers, artists, composers, and inventors today?" He notes that people like C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien influenced our

culture through their great works, and are still influencing our culture even after their deaths.

Staub believes Christians have ceased to change our culture today because we are not living our lives as God intended us to. Because we aren't pursuing God, we don't know what God has prepared for us to do. He goes on to say "Knowing God and being known by God are the very reason we exist. If we fail to fulfill our reason for existence, we will not be well." When we aren't well, we cannot make an impact on our culture. He encourages the reader to pursue God and "allow God's transforming presence to make us deeply well." Then "God's imprint on us will be seen in the culture we make." We will be able to make a difference in our neighborhoods, our cities, and our culture through a life that displays Christ's love to those around us.

Dick Staub's *The Culturally Savvy Christian* is a great book that gives the reader an accurate picture of our culture today. It shows us what we can do to impact our culture instead of running away from it, immersing ourselves in it, or fighting it. I highly recommend this book to those who want to gain a clear understanding of our American culture today and to those who want to change it for the better.

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