

FROM CRIME **TO CHRIST:** AN EVENING WITH

MICHAEL FRANZESE

FORMER MOB BOSS FOR THE COLOMBO CRIME FAMILY IN NEW YORK

SAT, AUG 10 @ 6-8P

HOUSTON'S FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

THE LOOP CAMPUS

FOR MEN OF ALL AGES | COST: \$15-\$40

BAND OF
BROTHERS
MEN'S MINISTRY

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT HOUSTONSFIRST.ORG



M



Week 4: The Nature of God's Kingdom, Culture, & Evaluating Different Approaches

Review:

Ephesians 6:10-12 ¹⁰ Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by His vast strength. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the tactics of the Devil. ¹² For our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens.

Proverbs 5:1-6 ¹ My son, pay attention to my wisdom; listen closely to my understanding ² so that you may maintain discretion and your lips safeguard knowledge. ³ Though the lips of the forbidden woman drip honey and her words are smoother than oil, ⁴ in the end she's as bitter as wormwood and as sharp as a double-edged sword. ⁵ Her feet go down to death; her steps head straight for Sheol. ⁶ She doesn't consider the path of life; she doesn't know that her ways are unstable.

John 18:36: "My kingdom is not of this world," said Jesus. "If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I wouldn't be handed over to the Jews. As it is, My kingdom does not have its origin here."

2 Corinthians 10:3-5: For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Discussion:

1. How does the passage in Ephesians 6:10-13 about the spiritual battle against rulers and authorities, rather than flesh and blood, inform our approach to cultural engagement as ambassadors of the Kingdom of God?
2. In what ways does the story of the adulterous woman in Proverbs 5-7 illustrate the importance of recognizing that people are not the enemy but the mission in our cultural interactions? How should this understanding influence our engagement with those around us?
3. What are the implications of Jesus' statement in John 18:36 that His kingdom is not of this world for our understanding of God's Kingdom and its relationship to earthly cultures? How should this impact our approach to cultural engagement as Christians?
4. How does the proposed definition of culture as a dynamic set of shared beliefs, values, customs, and behaviors shape our understanding of its influence on individuals and society? What role does culture play in shaping identities, worldviews, and interactions within a community?
5. Considering the various approaches to transforming cultural values discussed, such as top-down policies, grassroots endeavors, and a "super spiritual" withdrawal, what are the strengths and limitations of each approach in promoting the values of the Kingdom of God within a society? How might a "Hybrid Model" combining influence in positions of power with grassroots mobilization offer a balanced approach to cultural transformation?



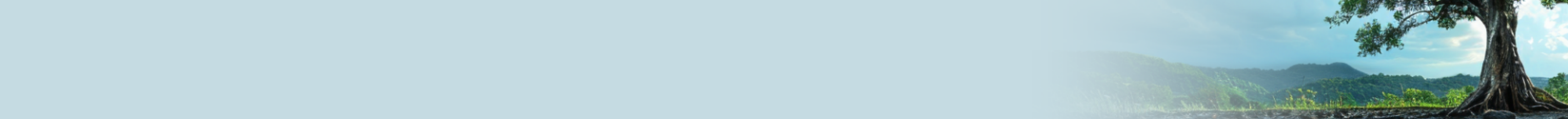
WARRIOR'S HEART

BUILDING GOD'S KINGDOM ONE MAN AT A TIME

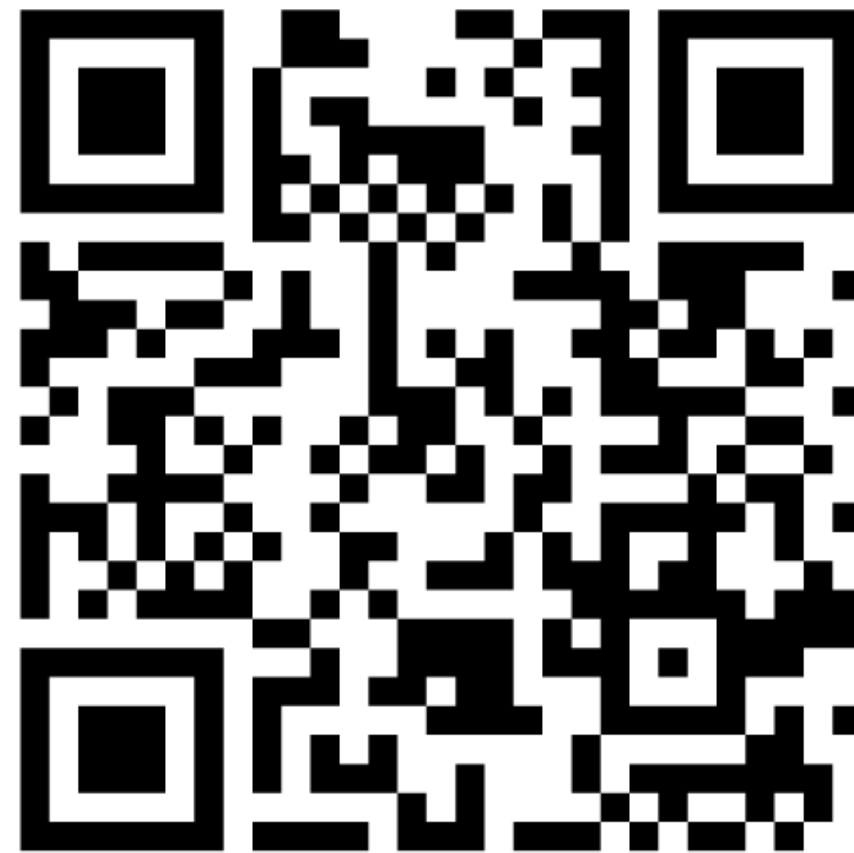
BAND OF
BROTHERS
MEN'S MINISTRY

A CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE TO

cultural engagement



Let us Know Your Questions



BAND OF
BROTHERS
MEN'S MINISTRY



WARRIOR'S HEART
BUILDING GOD'S KINGDOM ONE MAN AT A TIME

Previously on?



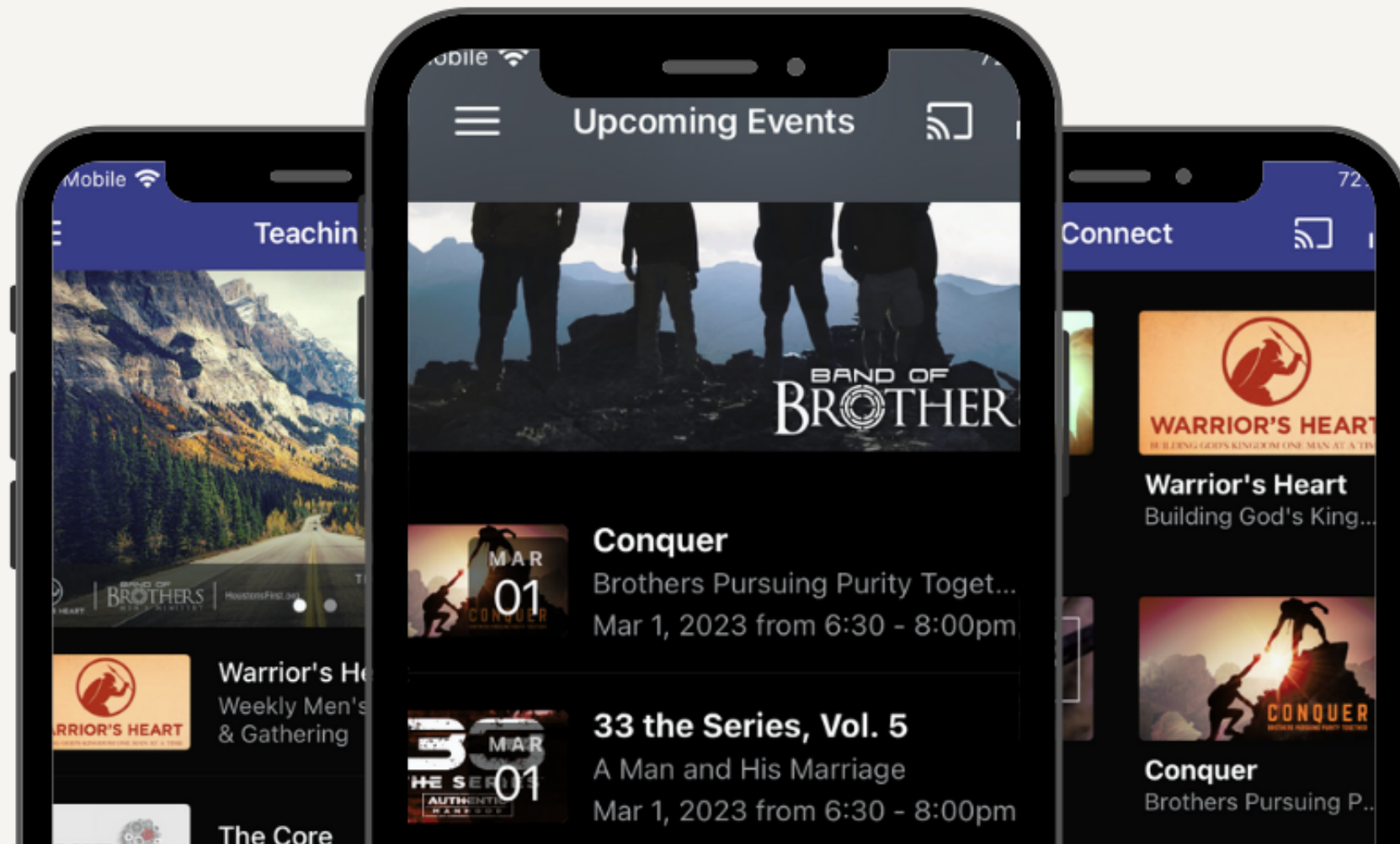
Download Our App

Search: Band of Brothers | HFBC



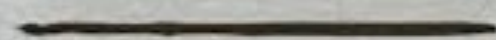
Text "MEN" to
44322

Or Scan the QR code





IMAGO

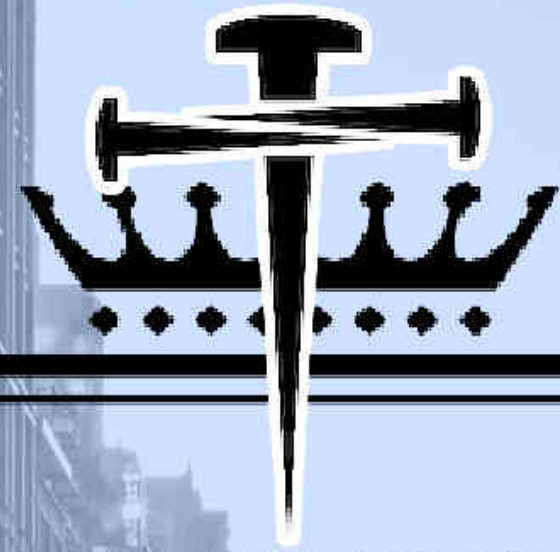


DEI

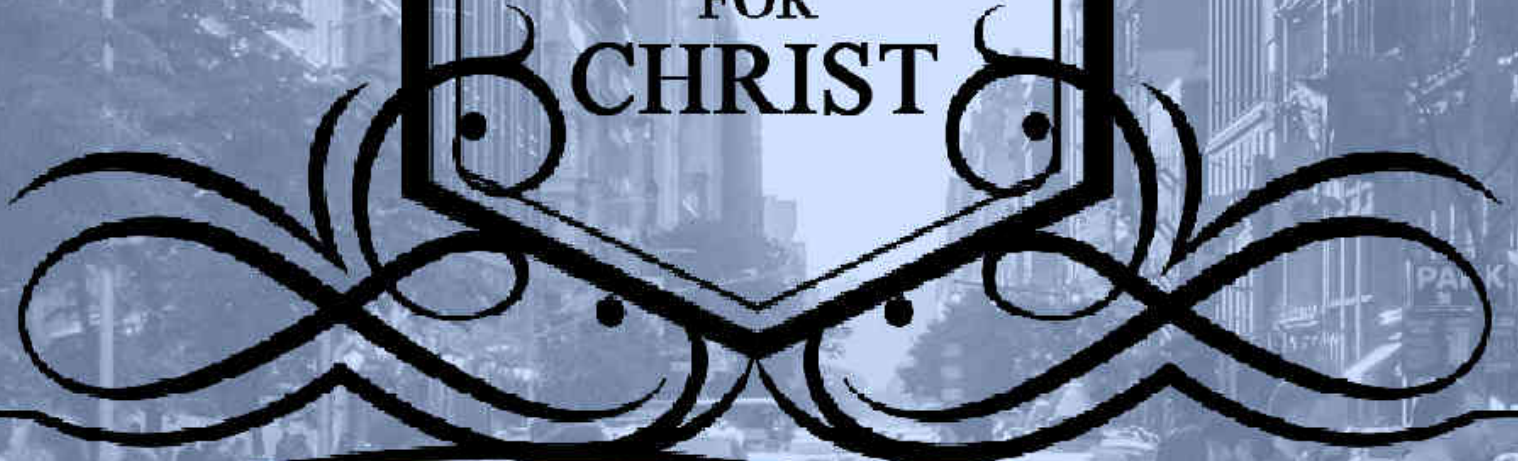


The background features a vast, layered mountain range under a sky filled with soft, glowing clouds. The sun is positioned on the right side, creating a warm, golden light that permeates the scene. The overall color palette is dominated by deep blues, greys, and oranges, giving it a serene yet powerful atmosphere.

CITIZENS OF HEAVEN



AMBASSADOR
FOR
CHRIST



BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD
2COR5.17-21 (KJV)



— LOSING FOCUS — — — — —

CONFORMING TO CULTURE
COLLIDING WITH CULTURE



WARRIOR'S HEART

BUILDING GOD'S KINGDOM ONE MAN AT A TIME

BAND OF
BROTHERS
MEN'S MINISTRY

A CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE TO

cultural engagement

The Journey Ahead

- 1. Revisit the Nature of God's Kingdom.**
- 2. Define Culture and the scope of its influence.**
- 3. Evaluate the Different Approaches to Cultural Engagement.**

Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by His vast strength. Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the tactics of the Devil. For our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens. This is why you must take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having prepared everything, to take your stand.

Ephesians 6:10-13

Ephesians 6:12

For our battle is not against flesh and blood,
but against the rulers, against the authorities,
against the world powers of this darkness,
against the spiritual forces of evil in the
heavens..

A large, diverse crowd of people walking in a city street, with two text overlays. The crowd is dense and includes people of various ages and ethnicities. The text overlays are semi-transparent blue boxes with white text.

People are NOT the Enemy

People are the mission!

When people become
the enemy, we have lost
the mission!!!



Proverbs 5-7: The Unknown Woman



My son, be attentive to my wisdom; incline your ear to my understanding, that you may keep discretion, and your lips may guard knowledge. For the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil, but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps follow the path to Sheol; she does not ponder the path of life; her ways wander, and she does not know it.

Proverbs 5:1-6

...she does not know it?

Proverbs 5:6

“My kingdom is not of this world,” said Jesus. “If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I wouldn’t be handed over to the Jews. As it is, My kingdom does not have its origin here.”

John 18:36

Not of this world?

For though we live in the body, we do not wage war in an unspiritual way, since the weapons of our warfare are not worldly, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments and every high-minded thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, taking every thought captive to obey Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5

Culture Defined?

"A culture is an ecosystem of institutions, practices, artifacts, and beliefs, all interacting and mutually reinforcing. Cultures are rarely entirely homogenous or consistent, but generalizations about specific cultures are nonetheless possible. Despite their complexity, cultures can have an overriding ethos."
Ken Myers, *All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1989), xi.

"Culture" Definitions

Culture is a "historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life."

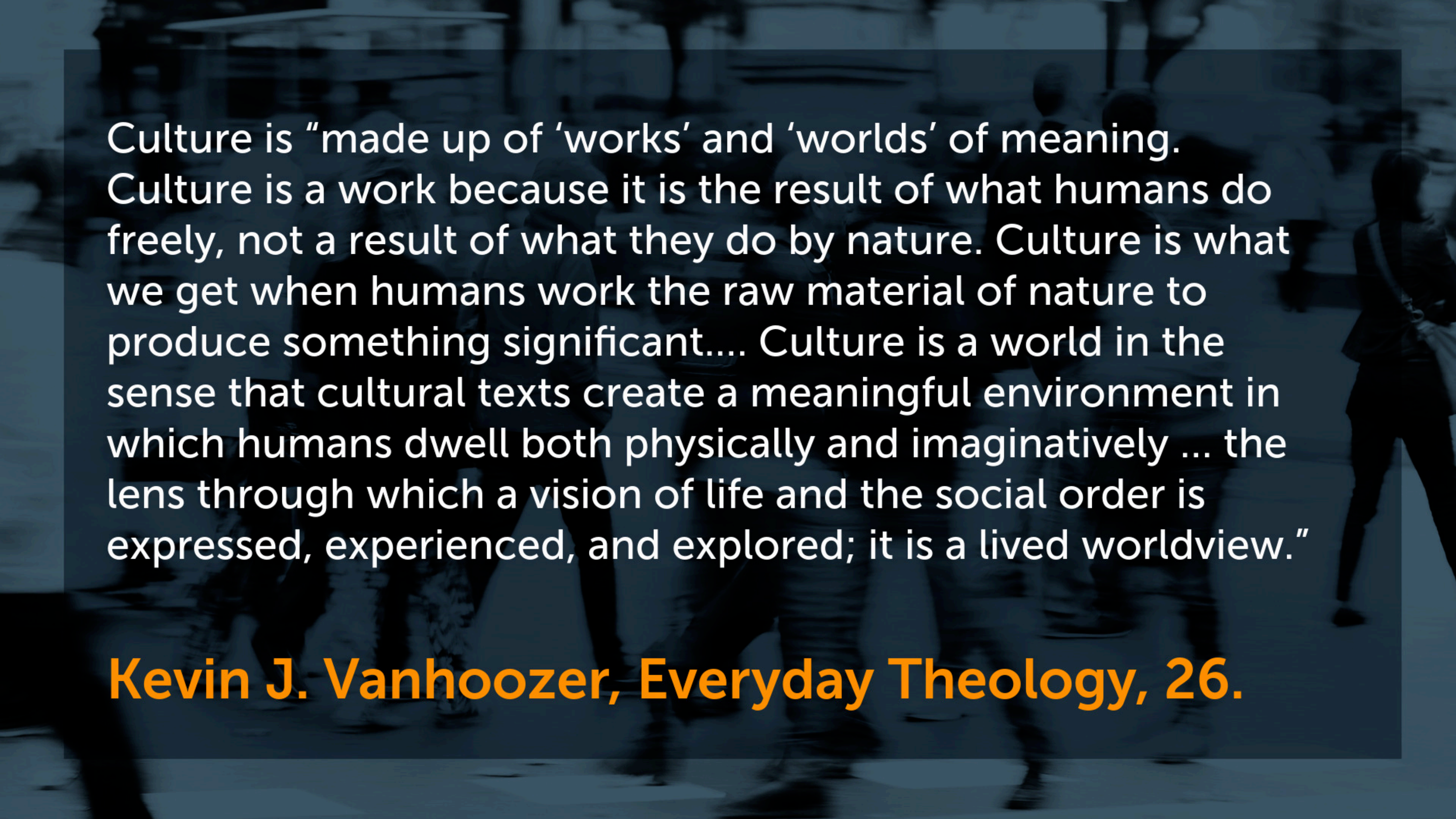
Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 89.

"Culture" Definitions

Culture is “the complex of values, customs, beliefs, and practices which constitute the way of life of a specific group.”

Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 34.

“Culture” Definitions



Culture is “made up of ‘works’ and ‘worlds’ of meaning. Culture is a work because it is the result of what humans do freely, not a result of what they do by nature. Culture is what we get when humans work the raw material of nature to produce something significant.... Culture is a world in the sense that cultural texts create a meaningful environment in which humans dwell both physically and imaginatively ... the lens through which a vision of life and the social order is expressed, experienced, and explored; it is a lived worldview.”

Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Everyday Theology*, 26.

Culture Defined in 4D

- **Describes:**
 - the set of shared beliefs, values, customs, traditions, behaviors, and artifacts that characterize a particular group of people, society, or organization.
- **Dimension:**
 - encompasses both tangible and intangible aspects of human society, including language, religion, cuisine, art, music, literature, social norms, rituals, and symbols.

Culture Defined in 4D

- **Defines:**

- **shapes individuals' identities**, influences their worldview, guides their interactions with others, and **informs their understanding of the world** around them.

- **Dynamic:**

- **dynamic and constantly evolving**, influenced by historical events, social changes, technological advancements, and interactions with other cultures.



We are affected by the culture
around us, and we also affect
the culture around us.