



WEEK 2: "A BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR THE CULTURE CONVERSATION"

BY SCOT MCKNIGHT

WATCH OR LISTEN TO THE SESSION: [BIT.LY/2JMQTLY](https://bit.ly/2JMQTLY)

SYNOPSIS: Scot McKnight defines a Christian culture as one that strives toward Christoformity (being formed by the life, teachings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ) in all ways. This subversive Christoformity is vital in regard to the church's engagement with culture, because it distinguishes Christian culture from the "world"—a culture that is often in contradiction to the redemptive ways of Christ. Christoformity will never perfectly align with North American culture because Christoformity has different aims. It is a culture made possible only by the Spirit and those open to the Spirit. And it can only be partly achieved in this world as we await full redemption and restoration in the coming kingdom of God.

McKnight highlighted 8 distinctives of a Christoform culture of the Church and its leaders:

1. **A Culture of People** - The focus is not on ideas and sermons, but on the people who come in our doors, and who we meet in our neighborhoods (2 Cor. 11:28, 1 Thess. 2:7).
2. **A Culture of Spiritual Formation** - We must be committed to nourishing and cultivating character and wisdom through spiritual formation (Phil. 4:9, 1 Cor. 11:1).
3. **A Culture of Listening** - We must be listeners of Scripture and of people (specifically, those in our lives).
4. **A Culture of Prophetic Witness** - God has given us a revelation, and we must speak it subversively in our culture.
5. **A Culture of Presence** - God is always present and at work, and we are called to bring this presence to the people we encounter daily.
6. **A Culture of "Priesting"** - We are called to mediate God's redemption, wisdom, and presence to those around us – through our speaking, intercession and worship.
7. **A Culture of Servanthood** - We are called serve others before all else (Mark 10:42-45, Phil. 2).
8. **A Culture of (Subversive) Leaders** - We must avoid the temptations of celebrity and power, and be willing to subvert these influences to draw others into a Christoform life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Scot McKnight says the true mark of a Christian culture is Christoformity in all ways, and then highlighted 8 distinctives of a Christoform culture. Do you agree with his list? Would you add any distinctives to the list?
2. Which of the 8 distinctives are strengths for you? Which are weaknesses?
3. Which of the 8 distinctives are strengths in your church/leadership? Which are weaknesses?
4. If we measured American culture by the standard of Christoformity, what would it tell us? How can we identify what is "worldly" in our culture?
5. For the Apostle Paul, radical Christoformity meant avoiding the ideals of eloquence, titles and images that the Corinthians valued. What would radical Christoformity look like in today's culture? What would be the result?
6. Scot quoted Eugene Peterson as saying: "I am undermining the kingdom of self and establishing the kingdom of God, helping people become who God wants them to be, using the methods of subversion." What do you think it means to subvert worldliness? What might subversive leadership look like?
7. Paul was persecuted for his Christoform life. What might persecution for living a Christoform life look like today in North America?
8. What practices could you adopt in your church(es) to further cultivate a Christoform culture?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

A blog article by Scot McKnight, "What Makes a Culture Christian?" (teloscollective.com/what-makes-a-culture-christian/)

WEEKLY PRACTICE:

Choose one way to demonstrate/pursue Christoformity this week in your sphere of influence. Some ideas:

- Be the presence of God in a difficult situation.
- Intercede for someone in need.
- Serve someone without expecting anything in return.
- Practice active listening and engaging a spouse, child, co-worker, or neighbor in a deeper way.
- Go out of your way to speak encouraging words to someone.