

3 Things God Would Tell Someone Who Watches 'Game of Thrones'

The recent premiere of HBO's *Game of Thrones* drew a record-setting 10.1 million viewers. Coupled with digital viewers, the show averaged 25.1 million viewers last year. It was by far the most-watched show on television, nearly double the viewers of the second-place show.

Why is *Game of Thrones* so astoundingly popular? What does its popularity say about us?

I must begin with a disclaimer: I have never seen *Game of Thrones*, for reasons I'll explain in today's article. But internet reviews are so abundant that it's not hard to identify reasons for the show's enormous popularity. Each of them says something frightening about our culture today.

One: The plots are unpredictably complex. As Forbes notes, "Central characters are killed, psychopaths claim power, weddings become bloodbaths and bad guys develop consciences as time passes." The show is built on the premise that there is no logic to life, that we live in a chaotic world with no central purpose or direction.

Two: The show embraces amorality. "Good" characters make horrific mistakes, while "bad" characters act redemptively. One psychologist lauds the "progressive tolerance" the show legitimizes. In a postmodern culture that views all truth as personal and subjective, the characters legitimize our rejection of right and wrong.

Three: All sexuality is endorsed. Rape, lesbianism, sex between siblings, prostitution and other acts so despicable I won't mention them here—all are regular fare. As millions of

people watch such perversion, they are desensitized and far more likely to embrace the “sexual liberation” the show articulates.

Four: Violence is normalized. Heads are crushed, people are stabbed through the eye, victims are burned alive, mass murder is depicted graphically. Why is this a problem? Exposure to media violence is clearly linked to violent acts as watching violence changes brain patterns and alters behavior.

What would God say to Christians tempted to watch such ungodliness?

One: Guard your heart. Scripture teaches us to “Keep your heart with all vigilance, for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23). We are commanded to “think on” whatever is “pure” (Phil. 4:8). Our thoughts determine our actions, which determine our lives (Prov. 23:7).

Two: Guard your witness. Our skeptical culture looks for reasons to reject our faith. If we are ungodly, how can we call others to be godly? “A truthful witness saves lives” (Prov. 14:25, ESV).

Three: Guard your relationship with God. Would you want your parents to watch you as you watch the nudity and violence depicted on *Game of Thrones*? Your heavenly Father sees all that you see. His Spirit lives in you and is subjected to whatever your experience. “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit” (Eph. 4:30, MEV).

Jesus taught us, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8). Thus, we can see *Game of Thrones*, or we can see God, but we cannot see both. {eoa}

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