

How Christians Should React to Bill Maher's Shocking Statements

Every time comedian and talk show host Bill Maher blasts Christianity, calls Christians idiots or describes God as a "psychopathic mass murderer" the web lights up.

Religious news sites like Christian Post, Charisma News or the Christian section of Huffington Post carry the story with headlines expressing shock, and their readers dutifully respond with hysterical blog posts by the thousands. Maher's abrasive comments become the big subject on Christian radio and TV programs, and callers express outrage. All of which is exactly what Maher wants.

In a media-driven culture, it doesn't take insightful questions, great talent or intellectual depth to get on the radar. All it takes is shock. Shock built careers for people like Howard Stern, Russell Brand and Madonna.

It's surprising to me that it still works, but the shock train rolls on. Based on his media persona, Bill Maher appears to be an incompetent theologian, a fairly hateful person and an average comedian. But he's a master communicator. He understands how to push buttons and get a response—and he does it with regularity. Ratings of his show low? *Nail Christians*. Viewers tired of watching him? *Say something shocking about God*.

In a digital age, visibility is just as important as ability, and when it comes to getting noticed, Maher's a master.

So how should the Christian community respond the next time Maher says something shockingly inappropriate or over the top?

Don't. That's right, don't respond at all. It's the pushback that keeps him in the public eye. It's the angry blog posts, outraged responses and talk show fodder that keep him on life support. Certainly his loyal cult following will keep watching, but they don't get outraged by his statements because they already agree with him.

Stop the response. Let the crickets chirp. You can't keep offending people who refuse to be offended. After all, we have bigger fish to fry than being upset by a cable talk-show host. As the old saying goes, "The dog barks, but the train keeps on rolling."

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