

Why We Love Celebrity

(April 26, 2011) So I guess there's going to be a royal wedding "across the pond" on Saturday. Just like when the groom's mum and dad got married, there will be pre-dawn wedding watching parties over here in the States (since for some reason, the Brits couldn't be talked into waiting for American prime time, I suppose).

The royal festivities have put Kate Middleton, about to become "Princess Catherine," in the celebrity spotlight. And oh, how we love our celebrities! Celebrities are people who are famous, sometimes simply because they are celebrities and not because they've done anything especially noteworthy.

Technology makes it possible to feed our insatiable hunger for "celebrity news." 24/7 news channels have to fill their time somehow when there isn't any *real* news, so they create news by reporting on people's divorces and pregnancies, what's happening in the entertainment world, and show pictures of unrealistically and artificially beautiful women strutting and posing in their gowns on a red carpet somewhere.

Why are people so taken with celebrity, anyway?

I think it is yet another reflection of the brokenness of our fallen world. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

I believe God hard-wired us to worship Him because He is the source of life and all that is good, beautiful, and true. I think He created us as worshiping creatures because He knew it would "fill our tanks" and deeply bless and nurture our souls to pour out adoration and worship on One so infinitely worthy of praise. In the same way that we love to see great beauty in spectacular sunsets and want to share it with someone else, in the same way that we love falling in love, in the same way that we love being part of a crowd when our team is winning—we were created to long for a connection to the transcendent,

especially the transcendent God.

God creates us for Himself; He creates us to love us and draw us into intimate fellowship with Father, Son and Spirit. Our natural response to that kind of unimaginably huge and powerful love is worship.

But then sin entered the world, and the Fall distorted and messed up everything. Instead of relating rightly to our Creator and the Lover of our souls, upright with faces upturned in love and adoration, we were bent and twisted. After the fall, when we reach out, we are no longer reaching up—because of our “bentness,” we reach out to other parts of the creation. (See also: idolatry) Yet we are still hard-wired to worship.

So we worship each other.

And celebrities, distant and unattainable, function well as objects of worship since we usually don't see how they are flawed and fallen just like everyone else. Like us.

Cue hordes of screaming, worshiping fans at rock concerts and movie premieres.

Cue tears of loss and sorrow when a movie star gets married and takes himself out of the pool of eligible bachelors that fuel girls' fantasies of marrying “Prince Charming.”

Cue “entertainment news” anchors reporting breathlessly about the latest Hollywood gossip and speculations as if TV, movie and music stars were more important than other people.

Celebrity, I submit, is broken, misdirected worship of the creature instead of the Creator. It is yet another way in which we see the brokenness of a fallen world.

But there will come a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:11). There will come a day when Jesus will come with the clouds,

and every eye will see Him (Revelation 1:7). And we will worship rightly.

Because Jesus is the *ultimate* rock star.

This blog post originally appeared at
blogs.bible.org/engage/sue_bohlin/why_we_love_celebrity
on April 26, 2011.