

CPYU 3(D) REVIEW

Song/Video: "Raise Your Glass" - Pink

By Walt Mueller

Background/summary: Released in October 2010 as the lead single off Pink's first compilation album – *Greatest Hits. . . So Far!!!* (November 15, 2010) – this catchy and danceable pop/rock tune has charted globally, peaking at #2 on the *Billboard* Hot 100. It's already one of the most successful songs of her ten-year musical career. With "Raise Your Glass," Alecia Moore (a.k.a. Pink) continues to pump out some of the most thoughtful and discuss-able mainstream pop music reflecting the times.

Discover: What is the message/worldview?:

- The song and video serve as a celebratory rallying cry for those who have been labeled as freaks, geeks, and outcasts by mainstream society. Pink invites the excluded to a party she's throwing in their honor, a party she has described as "a celebration for people who feel left out from the popular crowd," imploring them lyrically to "raise your glass if you are wrong/In all the right ways/All my underdogs."
- Like Madonna before her, Pink serves as the mother-figure for the disenfranchised. Her own real-life story includes a childhood marred by divorce and family-breakdown, and an adolescence where she never fit in and was consistently ostracized by her peers. Out of that ability to identify with her listeners she sings, "So if you're too school for cool/And you're treated like a fool/You can choose to let it go/We can always/We can always party on our own."
- The video captures images of a variety of cast-offs, including an overweight girl who is the target of judgmental looks from peers sitting at her high school cafeteria table, gangstas who find a place and safe community in the company of each other, and groups of skaters, geeks, and nerds. Never one to avoid taking on the establishment, Pink also appears as the wedding singer at a same-sex marriage reception, an editorial nod to her support of gay-marriage. She includes those who she believes have been ostracized by long-held societal values and marriage laws in the category of "cast-offs."
- Pink extends the invitation to join the party beyond humankind in a nod to her commitment to animal rights. The video includes images of Pink intervening at the end of a bullfight to interrupt the traditional slaughter of the bull. Instead, Pink turns the tables and readies herself to behead the bull-fighter. In addition, a scene in the milking parlor of a dairy farm features de-humanized nursing mothers lined up and attached to a milking machine. Their human milk is funneled to a bottle Pink is using to feed a little bovine calf.
- Religious equality is promoted as Pink shares her bed and sexuality with religious leaders from a variety of faiths including a Rabbi, a Catholic Priest, an Orthodox Priest, and a nun.

Discern: How does it stand in light of the biblical message/worldview?

- As with most music in popular culture, "Raise Your Glass" offers a combination of truth and error. There are messages that can be celebrated and affirmed, and messages that must be challenged in light of the Scriptures.
- On the positive side, Pink's own life-experience has made her sensitive to those who are victims of bigotry, bullying, and exclusion. Pink truly cares, a reality that will continue to grow her fan base. . . a fan base that includes listeners attracted as much to her sympathy and empathy as they are to her music. The Scriptures from start to finish call God's people to spurn stereotyping, bigotry, and the



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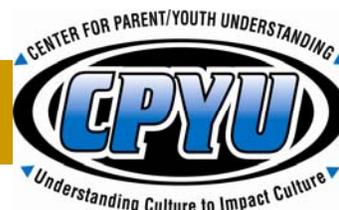
haughty self-righteousness that marked the Pharisees in Jesus' time. Jesus calls us to love our enemies (Luke 6:21-36), to avoid judgment (Luke 6:37&38), and to be a neighbor to anyone in need (Luke 10:25-37). In addition, Pink sees the strength that lies in community.

- On the negative side, Pink crosses the line, extending her love and acceptance of the sinner, to sometimes include acceptance or promotion of that which the Scriptures define as sin. She does that in relation to homosexuality and the growing societal acceptance of all kinds of sexual immorality, including same-sex marriage. While many in the church would disagree (another sign of the times), the Scriptures are clear on God's design and order for His wonderful gift of human sexuality, including parameters that prohibit among other things, homosexuality (1 Corinthians 6:9-20; Romans 1:24-26).
- Pink also turns God's created order on its head by promoting the equality of humanity with other species. In Genesis, human beings are the crowning point of the created order, created in the image of God to serve as His vice-regents exercising responsible dominion and stewardship over all creation, including the animals. While God declared all creation as "good," there is a graduated order to that which He created (Psalm 8). Certainly a biblical case must be made for responsible dominion that eliminates much of the animal-cruelty we've come to accept as justified and normal. But to equate animals with humans - or to justify the violent elimination of a human life based on such cruelty - is a sinful distortion of a properly balanced view of life (Genesis 1).
- Ultimately, Pink and her followers will only find release from oppression and hope for life in and through a relationship with the Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Coming to a party - even if that party lasts a lifetime - won't fix things.

Decide: What do I do with it?

- "Raise Your Glass" is a lyrical and visual mirror of the values and attitudes beneath many of the evolving behaviors that we see in today's culture regarding matters of identity, authority, and ethics. Pink has done us a favor by packaging an honest portrait of herself and our world in a less-than-four-minute musical package. This is a cultural expression that should be watched, dissected, and discussed by those who care to bring the truths of the Gospel to bear on the emerging realities of today's contemporary culture. It's a way to get to not only know our kids, but to get to know what to say and how to say it in response to the realities that exist.
- The song and video also serve as a map for Pink's very impressionable young audience. As a pop icon, she holds an authoritative and influential place as she guides young hearts and minds through the confusion of adolescence and into adulthood. Those who care for, love, and minister to kids must know Pink and her message if they are going to both affirm that message where it is right, and correct the message with the truth where that message is in error.
- Youth workers and parents should use "Raise Your Glass" as a discussion prompt on a variety of issues, including sexuality, ethics, morals, authority, compassion, justice, love, body image, identity, animal rights, peer pressure, etc. Begin by showing the video then asking students about the song's message, points of agreement/disagreement, and how God calls us to live as His people in His world.
- If for no other reason, the message of "Raise Your Glass" should be evaluated and discussed because this is a song that's here to stay. You can be sure that its catchy sound will combine with its party-theme in a timely mix that will make it an anthem heard at dances, in stadiums, and at wedding receptions for years to come.

Dr. Walt Mueller is the president of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding.



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