

Redeeming Culture's Guide to:

Deadpool



Dinner Parties

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“Here there be
spoilers...”

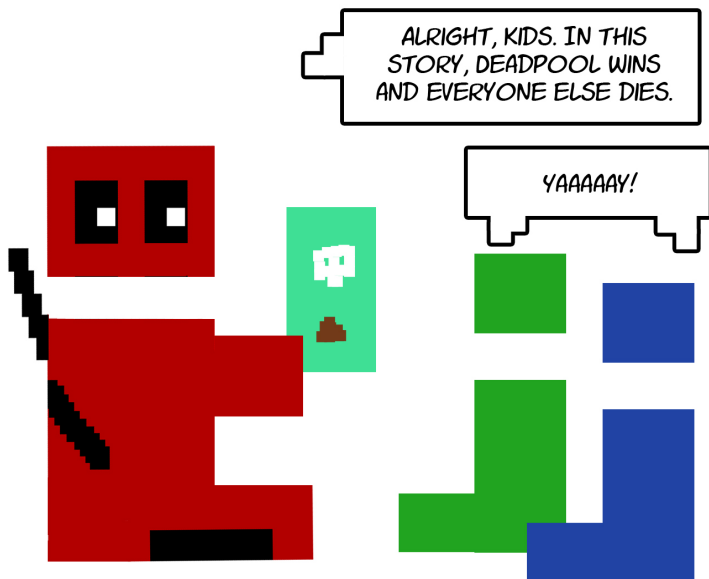
A Deadpool in the Wind

With two self-titled movies and a plethora of popular comics under his belt, Deadpool has crazied his way into pop-culture and our hearts. Whether you have seen the movies or not, Deadpool went from a cult favorite to a pop culture icon seemingly overnight. It is easy to take a look at his character and disregard the notion that this irreverent, sociopathic, merc with a mouth bears any connection to God. At all. And you would be very wrong. Throughout this book we are going to take a look at the character Deadpool as he exists within one of his most highly acclaimed comic series, *The Deadpool Killology*, in which our favorite anti-hero embarks on a mission to kill the Marvel Universe, the literary universe, and—ultimately—himself. Throughout the story you will see underlying themes and repeating elements that not only illustrate Deadpool’s connectedness to God, but underline why—at Redeeming Culutre—we believe that all culture is redeemable; even the parts of culture that try the hardest to

escape redemption. Though some prove not to be worth the effort, Deadpool does not fall into that category. So we've done some of the heavy lifting for you. At some point the people you meet are likely to make a Deadpool reference or want to discuss the character with you to some degree, so let this book act as a crash course to steer the conversation towards biblical truth. And in case you are ever invited to a Deadpool dinner party you will be super ready. As a general warning; here there be spoilers. It is recommended that you

read the comics before continuing on with this book in order to avoid learning any twists in the plot.

If you've picked up this book with no prior Deadpool experience, there are a few basic things you should know about the character. Deadpool is a very talkative anti-hero created by Marvel. His name is Wade Wilson and he is an ex-American Army Special Forces soldier who grew up in Saskatchewan. He was an average man who was enlisted into the Weapon X program—the



same experimental program that granted Wolverine his super cool knife bones—and gained a healing factor through experimentation with some of Wolverine's DNA. Unfortunately, when the regenerative abilities were activated Wade had some form of cancer in his body. As a result, Wade's cancer is also in a constant state of regeneration which leaves him with a scarred appearance that he hides under his suit.

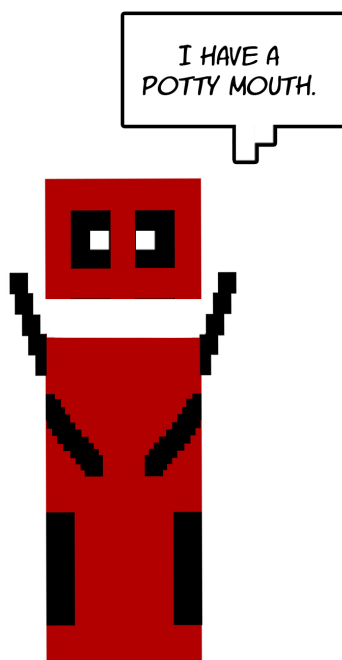
When his ridiculously powerful health regeneration kicked in, Wade no longer had to worry about dying from cancer—or anything. In fact, Deadpool has been dismembered and reassembled so many times that there is no real way to keep count. Because he has temporarily died so frequently, Deadpool has completely lost any sense of self-preservation—and more than a few of his marbles. Deadpool as a character is widely known as the craziest hero in existence. Does this mean that Deadpool doesn't have a full grasp on what's

going on around him? It depends on who you ask. For the most part, he is a snarky, chimichanga chugging vigilante with loose morals and an even looser grip on reality. With his break from reality comes one of the most intriguing aspects of Deadpool's character; that is, his ability to constantly and unflinchingly break the fourth wall to speak and interact with readers and writers alike.

With his scarred appearance, erratic behavior, and the absolute understanding that he is actually a comic book character, it is nearly impossible for Deadpool to fit in anywhere. You might wonder what actually motivates him to do anything at all. That, as a matter of fact, is a leading theme in the Deadpool Killology. Throughout each story and iteration of Deadpool, his motivations fluctuate. Each time he is brought back into the limelight there is always some specific goal he is out to accomplish, tainted by the fact that he is easily distracted and usually the thing he wants is in direct opposition

to what all of the major heroes and villains want. But in the Deadpool Killogy there is only one motivation driving him, giving him a purpose that he has never before experienced. That motivation is why we're focusing on the Deadpool Killogy throughout this book, though there are certainly many other stories we could use to demonstrate Deadpool's relationship to culture and how God is able to redeem an otherwise irredeemable character.

The Deadpool Killogy consists of three stories; *Deadpool Kills the Marvel Universe*, *Deadpool Killustrated*, and *Deadpool Kills Deadpool*. These can be found at your local comic shop, as a Kindle ebook, or you can check your local library for copies. I recommend finding some version of it to follow along, because things are going to get crazy. Just so you know, as I've previously mentioned and as is obvious by the titles of the series, the Deadpool Killogy contains violence and usually censored language.

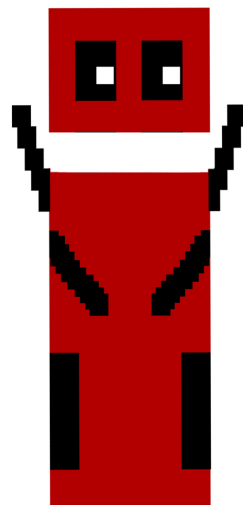


Before we move too far into the *Deadpool Killogy*, it is important to gauge Deadpool's impact on current society. One of the more popular headline topics concerning Deadpool is in relation to the first movie making record-breaking money for an R-rated film; especially an R-rated film based on a comic book property. When the test footage for the first movie leaked, people went crazy over it. For ten years Ryan Reynolds worked to get a Deadpool movie and to get it made in a way that

was true to the source material—which, for Deadpool, means violence, foul language, irreverent humor, and chimichangas. At last, the dreams of fan-boys and -girls everywhere were coming true. The outcry of fans was so loud, in fact, that the studio had little choice but to listen to what the people wanted; and they were greatly rewarded. Deadpool was met with overwhelming success and a second movie was immediately green-lit.

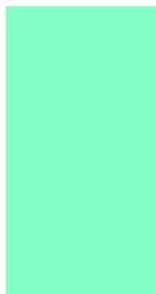
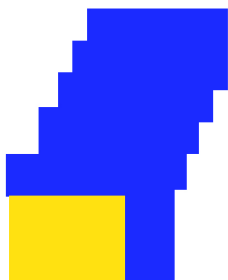
Why were people so eager to experience a Deadpool movie that they would bully a studio into making it happen? It comes down to a few cultural factors. First—ly was the extremely poorly received first cinematic version of Deadpool, also played by Ryan Reynolds, in which we were able to experience the briefest glory of a Ryan Reynolds portrayal of the Merc with a Mouth—before they promptly sewed that mouth shut and never brought him back in any following productions. The disappointment of fans was so loud and vehement that

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S YOUR SUPPLE
GEOMETRIC FORM OR YOUR POORLY
DEPICTED CAMEO, BUT I'VE NEVER
BEEN MORE ATTRACTED TO ANYONE
IN MY ENTIRE LIFE.



it drew a great deal of attention to who the character was supposed to be. Many people who knew very little of the comic properties were intrigued by tales of the taco-swizzling nair-do-well, creating a plethora of newly indoctrinated fans.

In addition to the lashout of angry fans, there is also an underlying cultural draw to the irreverent that has been maturing over the past two decades that began to fight its way into pop culture with the airing of shows like The



Simpsons in December 1989, developed throughout the nineties with cartoons such as *Daria*, *Ren and Stimpy*, and *South Park*, and rounded out in January of 1999 with the first airing of *Family Guy*. As the 2000's rolled in, we began seeing live action movies enter the arena that celebrated the irreverent just as fiercely; movies like *Scary Movie*, *Zoolander*, and *Superbad*.

Nowadays it's normal to see comedians break away from normal social conventions

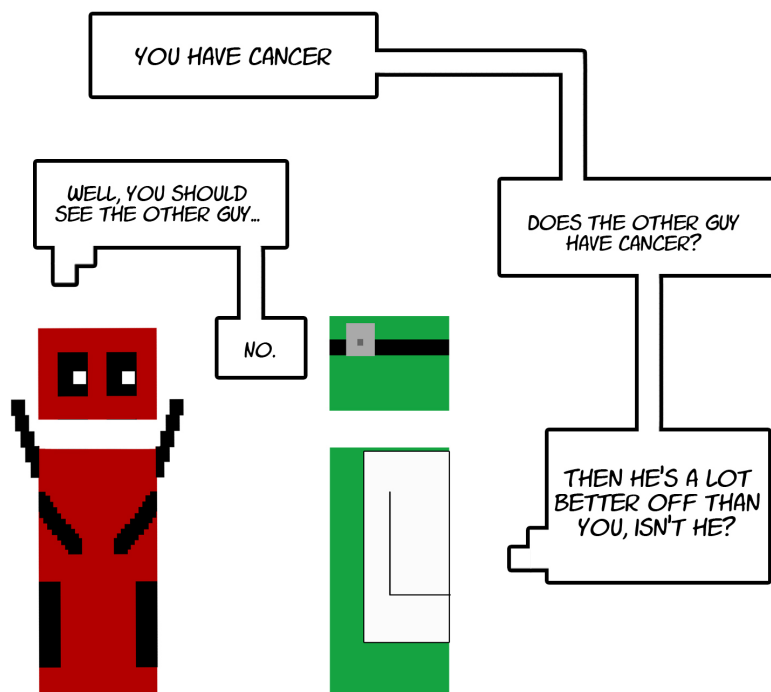
and poke fun at subjects meant to make us uncomfortable. We see potty humor every day on YouTube, and who doesn't get a good laugh at someone falling in a viral video? Our culture as a whole has come to accept irreverence not only as a decent form of comedy, but also as a reflection of our own mystification that the world exists in a constant state of hypocrisy and paradox. We gladly accept those who subvert culture as the rebels and heroes of modern society. When you take all of the political frustration that is felt by many, mix in our cultural love for disregarding the rules of propriety, and toss in the cinematic climate in which *Deadpool*—a veritable icon of societal disdain—takes his first steps onto the silver screen in all of his foul-mouthed glory; you get a perfect storm in which to cultivate R-rated success.

Deadpool is not only a culturally successful character due to his foul mouth and zany behavior; we like him because he is inherently re-

latable. We connect with Wade Wilson on the fundamental basis that we are all scared of death, but we are also conversely apathetic to life just like Deadpool. Deadpool's entire backstory revolves around the fact that he was dying and desperate to escape death. His fear drove him to attempt extreme treatments, a reaction that many cancer patients have when faced with their hastened mortality. At the same time, Deadpool also shows us the dark parts of our own minds when we struggle with life; depres-

sion, a desire to fit in, self-destructiveness. Half the time Deadpool doesn't die because some opponent obliterates him; he often takes his own life. A sad fact of human nature is that even when we have all that we want, there is always something intangible missing. Deadpool is a sinner, like all of us, seeking satisfaction and never truly receiving it.

Satisfaction can never be had without God. Literally the one thing we lack is closeness with God, and that key element is what drives us to fill



our lives with the temporary and extravagant. The high we get from driving a nice new car and going on ridiculous shopping sprees will never be enough to replace God, and that feeling of being alone and empty is what causes Deadpool to seek a death he will never be able hold onto. In the Bible, Hell is literally described as permanent separation from God. Heaven is the place where we are permanently affixed to God for all of eternity and never have to be alone and empty again. By seeking everlasting life on this Earth without God to fill in the empty places in his soul, Deadpool literally resigned himself to a permanent Hell, and it shows in his actions.

Deadpool is also a relatable character due to the voices he hears. I'm not saying we all hear voices and follow their advice to the death and destruction of our enemies; what I'm saying is that all of us have crazy thoughts and inner demons that affect the way we perceive and react to the world. Sometimes those voices can be tame, influenc-

ing you to press the gas a little harder to get where you need to go. Sometimes the inner impulses we have are scary, like, "What if I poured this acid on my lab partner?" Even if the impulse is something you would never do in a million years, the reality is that we all have sin harbored in our souls, waiting to come out. Deadpool is the personification of someone who has those voices and says yes to them more often than no.

What this means from a Christian perspective is that Deadpool is all of us. He's the hidden part, the emptiness and the desire to do things just because we can and who cares? We would all like to think of ourselves as above and beyond the sin because we've been saved through Christ, but that does not make us exempt from the spiritual warfare being waged all around us, and it does not make us exempt from sinning again; this world is broken and we as people are broken or we would not have dark impulses within us to begin with. But God forgives even

though we're broken, and He forgives no matter how terrifyingly broken we are. As Christians, we are Deadpool. And as Christians we are also free from Deadpool's situation.

Like Deadpool, we recognize our own emptiness and our own inability to fill the void. Also like Deadpool, we are aware of an outside force looking in on us—an otherness that controls as well as watches. We sense the existence of God much the same way that Deadpool senses the fourth wall. As people, we struggle with the otherness as Deadpool does in the Deadpool Killogy. We try to find meaning in it, try to bend it to our will, but the otherness that we sense is indomitable, constant, and beyond the reason of humanity.

• • •
**“We struggle to
make God more
like us...”**
• • •

Here's why that's a great

thing; if God were governed by people, it would mean that God is like people in the basest sense. People are terrible. People are consumed by killing and possessing. God, as he is described from beginning to end, wants love. He doesn't ask for our things, He asks for us to show Him how much we love Him. He doesn't kill us in big, Godly tantrums; He protects us from His overwhelming power as much as He can by creating ways for us to approach Him when we would otherwise be obliterated because of how unworthy we are in comparison. We struggle to make God more like us so we can understand Him better, but the reality is that we're safer with God being not of this world. And we're better off by following his example by making ourselves not of this world.

And since God is not of this world, unchanging, indomitable, and constant, there is one absolutely glorious thing left to us as Christians that Deadpool lacks because of his eternal separation from God; for us, the battle with

our inner crazy—with our sin—is already over. Sure, we fight our battles for God on a daily basis, but the result is the same even in the low moments when we succumb. God already saved us. God already fought the big battle and overcame it with ease. We don't have to despair over the fact that we're not perfect and never will be, because God overcame the need for perfection on our behalf.

Deadpool as a character reflects all of the negative points of the human experience masked over with temporary joy that soon disappears. In the Killogy he also happens to experience and understand something greater than the temporary joy—a fact that makes this story perfect for redeeming.

“They could get away with anything”

Neither a Borrower Nor a Deadpool Be

Deadpool is, of course, more than his backstory. His development from a standard bad guy character into the well-loved Merc with a Mouth is almost as interesting as the character himself. Rob Liefeld and Fabian Nicieza created Deadpool.

Liefeld claims he was always competing against Spider-man and Wolverine so he made Deadpool from those characters as inspiration. After drawing up the character with notes that Deadpool would be an agile killer, Nicieza said that it was

pretty much his villain from Teen Titans—Deathstroke—whose real name was Slade Wilson. So Liefeld made his Deadpool character’s real name Wade Wilson as an inside joke that Deadpool and Deathstroke were related.

As a foil and straight man to Deadpool, Liefeld also created Cable, the son of the X-man Cyclops. Wade Wilson started off as a mercenary hired to attack Cable and his team, the New Mutants. But throughout his many appearances and iterations he began

to become less a villain and more an anti-hero. Though he gained some popularity, it was never to the point of guaranteed sales. One of the writers mentioned that they thought Deadpool would get canceled at any minute, so they could get away with anything. This led to the character breaking the fourth wall and talking directly to the audience, a characteristic that is largely one of the most beloved powers in Deadpool's arsenal.

Wade Wilson's main super power is that he can heal and regenerate cells very quickly. He has been decapitated and completely incinerated many times and lived to talk about it. He is invulnerable to disease, and highly resistant to drugs and toxins, though he can be tranquilized in high enough doses. Overtime this regeneration has been used as a way to explain Deadpool's increasingly silly and erratic behavior; the neurons in his brain are being remade so quickly that psychoses affect his mind and make it unstable. These psychoses are now often represented by

different colored dialogue boxes displaying two opposing voices in his head that he talks to directly; the yellow voice bubble and the white box.

Deadpool's zaniness is also to his advantage because his enemies can never predict his next move. As fans and creators of Deadpool became fond of his penchant for breaking the fourth wall and being aware that he was a comic book character, it also became a pseudo-power of his. He may read comics of other characters to find their secret lair for example. He has acquired many different teleportation devices throughout his comic runs so he can figuratively and literally pop in and out of other character's stories. He also carries a magic satchel that has an unlimited number of weapons and ammunition. Also, due to his training as an assassin and mercenary, he is multilingual and adept at martial arts including sword fighting and marksmanship. All of this developed over time due to the chaotic start of Deadpool's life as a comic

book character, and eventual acceptance as a dumping ground for insane antics that no other hero could possibly get away with.

Let's talk retcons. In the comic industry, retcon is a term used to describe what happens when a comic writer picks up a character someone else left off and they want the past to be different for the story they want to tell

out of hand. The multiverse is a series of interconnected realities within the Marvel universe, each one different from the last. Before the Killogy there were so many stories and retcons that saturated the landscape—not just of Deadpool's story, but of every other character in the Marvel Universe—that the creators decided it was time for a cataclysmic event to usher in a clean slate. And who better



“A nuclear multiverse warhead...”



now. Obviously, the madhouse that is the existence of Deadpool has undergone a plethora of retcons as a result of many writers and his comic's tumultuous history. This can make it a little difficult to give a full idea of which version of Deadpool is going into the story we're looking at today.

To get us started, this particular version of Deadpool came about as a one-shot character in a time period when the Marvel multiverse was starting to get a little

to hop on the back of a nuclear multiverse warhead than our beloved Deadpool? Well, sort of. As I said, this Deadpool's existence was a one-shot character from a never previously used universe within the Marvel multiverse. As such, this Deadpool—or Dreadpool, as we will call him—has a significant and unique quality that makes him vastly different from Deadpools of the past; the Red Box—a brand new voice inside Deadpool's head that has never been seen previously.

Before we delve into the Red Box and what it means to Dreadpool, we should first talk about how the Red Box came into existence within Dreadpool's psyche. Deadpool's guiltiest pleasure is in seeking out the X-Men to cause general mayhem and occasionally try to join the team, despite Scott Summers' fierce reservations. The X-Men in Dreadpool's universe track him down and Professor Xavier decides to send him to a mental institution to cure his insanity.

If you wonder why the world's most powerful psychic would send Dreadpool to a psychiatrist when he's perfectly capable of entering people's minds and changing things at will, the answer is inherently Deadpool. You know how someone does or says something that floors you and makes you question humanity? You ask yourself, "How could a person ever do something like that?" Imagine entering someone's head and knowing how they could do something like that. Then imagine you're not just en-

tering one person's mind—you're entering the mind of three people who all think they're the same person. Then imagine those three people are all completely bonkers, and also murderers, and so erratic that even they don't know what they're planning to do. If Xavier tried to enter Dreadpool's head to sort out the crazy, Xavier would be the one driven insane. So Dreadpool is forced to go to a psychiatrist.

Now here's where things get a bit complicated. The psychiatrist that Dreadpool gets sent to is actually a villain named Psycho-Man who attempts to brainwash Dreadpool and rid him of his inner voices, the yellow bubble and the white box, in order to better control him. In a way, Psycho-Man succeeds. For Dreadpool, the white box and yellow bubble disappear. Without the two goofy inner voices driving Dreadpool's wacky antics, it leaves room for something far more sinister to take shape; for the first time, the Red Box makes an appear-

ance in Wade Wilson's psyche. The Red Box is not distracting. The Red Box does not ask for chimichangas and tacos. The Red Box is as fully aware of Deadpool's existence inside a comic book as Deadpool himself; and the Red Box does not want any part of it.

Deadpool comes about because Deadpool lost the inner voices of joy and contentment with his existence and only knows sorrow and the suffering of what feels like a meaningless existence. The only way to end that meaninglessness that overwhelms him is to destroy the Universe and everyone who lives in it so that he no longer has to continue on inside the gerbil wheel of puppet shows that is the Marvel Universe where characters must suffer endlessly in order to be considered entertaining.

“God is so much more good than Deadpool is evil....”

Dirty Old Egg Sucking Deadpool

So that got dark. It would be reasonable to ask why we're looking into this particular—exceptionally messed up—version of Deadpool instead of just the popular movie that got a lot more people talking about him than ever before. We are literally going over a story where the main hero of the story commits mass genocide against not just one universe, but all of them. The answer is to see God greater than before. The darker, the more egregious and evil, the more irredeemable the story is the more amazing God re-

veals Himself to be when he eventually redeems it. Put simply, Deadpool is an absolute black hole of evil, but God is so much more good than Deadpool is evil that his goodness overwhelms that black hole.

There is also a secondary reason for writing about this trilogy of comics; as I write this we have a political climate that is split and volatile. There are genocides going on in the world right this minute that would make any decent person's



YOU'RE TERRIBLE
AND LIFE
IS MEANINGLESS.

IF YOU SAY SO,
OMINOUS DEATH BOX.

stomach turn. Even in our own country children starve and the voiceless masses are left without homes or hope. People are suffering. It feels like the world is dying. With all of the terrible happening in the world it is so important to understand that there is something that exists outside of the terribleness. Transcendent and good and capable of making all the bad go away, God exists and waits patiently with open arms for us to reach out and accept his grace.

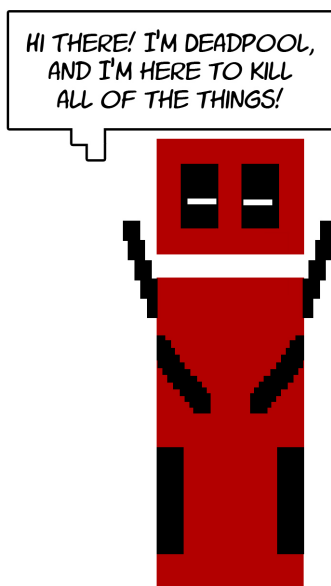
As Christians, we get to see the terrible as well as the hope. Sometimes even for us it is too easy to lose sight of God and only see the evil

that rampages through the world. In this sense, Deadpool is very much like a Christian who lost sight of God. He has always been fully aware of the otherness that exists in the multiverse; he talks to the otherness and for the most part does what he can to please the otherness in his own quirky way. Then one day he loses his joy and only sees the bad things about his existence. Suddenly the otherness isn't something to please; it is the enemy. Deadpool is still a believer, but no longer is he a follower.

How many Christians lose their way after going through a traumatic experience? They lose a family member and

blame God for taking that person away when the truth is that the brokenness of our reality took that person away. Some of us don't even need such a heart-wrenching excuse to fall away from God. I've seen people lose faith because someone was mean to them in church, or because most of the people in another religion are usually rich and they want to be rich, too. If you are a follower of Christ, the most important thing to remember is that even in the darkest times God wants what is best for you. Maybe he won't prevent a family member from dying or make you filthy rich just because you want to be; those things should not be more important to you than God, no matter how much you love them. It's a difficult path to walk, one that does not get easier over time. If you hold on with all your strength and continue to embrace the hope that God provides, even the brokenness of the world cannot overtake you completely.

As I said before, the series we're reading is known as the *Deadpool Killogy*



and consists of three titles; *Deadpool Kills the Marvel Universe*, *Deadpool Killustrated*, and *Deadpool Kills Deadpool*. In the first title Dreadpool gets his Red Box and embarks on a journey to kill the Marvel Universe to free himself from the strings of the readers because he believes that with no Marvel Characters left, people will stop reading and he will no longer have to live for them. In *Killustrated* Dreadpool has realized that he cannot murder all the heroes in all the multiverse, so instead he will go after the characters throughout literature that inspired those characters. Finally, in *Deadpool Kills Deadpool* we are switched to the perspective of a new Deadpool who is unaware of the crimes of Dreadpool. Several Deadpools from alternate realities come and sweep him away to save him from Dreadpool, who has now turned his attention to the legion of Deadpools that exist throughout the multiverse. Now that all the heroes are gone, it only leaves Deadpool himself as the single source of inspiration for writers. If Dreadpool is able to eliminate all versions of Deadpool then his task will be complete and he will be free of the readers forever.

We will take these stories one by one, analyzing each one based off of its individual components. *Deadpool Killustrated* will be a little different from the others because there are so many individual stories within it that influence the plot, we decided the best way to overview it was to actually take all of the literary heroes that Deadpool eliminates and show how all of those relate to God. Finally, once the entire story is complete we will look at how the Deadpool Killogy as a whole relates to God and what you can get out of it as a Christian.

“He no longer wants to be a comic book character...”

To Deadpool or Not to Deadpool

Deadpool Kills the Marvel Universe begins with Deadpool doing some very un-Deadpool things; namely, killing the Fantastic Four. He has never been adverse to dispatching people—especially bad guys and henchmen—but he has never actively hunted and killed the heroes without some joke or gag involving money or chimichangas. So there is a mystery throughout the series about what is driving Deadpool to do these things.

We’ve already gone over the

Red Box and how Deadpool received it, but his motivation at the start of the story is somewhat fuzzy. Slowly throughout the story hints are dropped about what is driving him and his new voice bubble to massacre anyone and everyone systematically. He starts to mention puppets and an other-worldly “they”.

Deadpool quickly makes his way through the major and minor heroes, dispatching each of them in a new and different way. He lures

the X-Men into a death trap designed to account for each of their special abilities individually. Professor Xavier is a special case. He simply has the psychic enter his mind to see what Deadpool knows. In doing so, he renders the world's most powerful psychic completely catatonic. But all of this mayhem is not enough. There is still more that Deadpool wants to do, which leads him to his eventual goal—a point in the world where he will be able to enter the multiverse and rain down destruction on all worlds. This portal is guarded by one of the few heroes left in Deadpool's universe; Taskmaster. Taskmaster is considered the greatest assassin within the Marvel Universe because of his ability to mimic and eventually predict all the movements of his opponents. Except Deadpool is crazy. His movements are unpredictable. So Taskmaster has his work cut out for him.

In his fight with Taskmaster we finally see his motivation; Deadpool wants to be forgotten. He no longer

wants to be a comic book character who suffers for the amusement of the readers. Deadpool decides—with assistance from the new black and red voice in his head—the only recourse is to kill all the characters with whom he could interact within these comics. But the voice in his head knows he has to go even further. He has to kill the ones writing and drawing these stories, which leads to one of the best twist endings of any comic ever. After finally defeating Taskmaster, Deadpool travels through the multiverse and finds the writers who pen his comics and murders them all. Afterward, he turns to break the fourth wall and promise the readers that he isn't finished; he's coming for them, next.

So what can we learn from all this violence and silliness about a comic book character trying to free himself from the confines of the page gutters? First is the real possibility that we have at one time or another looked completely crazy, or thought someone else was crazy, on account of the knowledge of

an outsider's perspective on reality. There is more to this world and this universe than meets the eye. There is an all-powerful entity watching us as we suffer, as we revel, as we experience all manner of things in life. That can sound insane to an unbeliever, and we were all in that same boat at one point. Stories of a man long ago who lived a perfect life and performed miraculous signs may as well have come from a comic book, which is probably where the writers get the root of their inspiration. There is a nagging voice in our heads that keeps telling us we aren't there yet; there is more to the truth. Even when we were not yet believers there is eternity written on our hearts. Deadpool was experiencing something very similar. He knew there was more beyond the pages of the comics he inhabited and that what really mattered was outside those pages. Just like anyone pursuing truth, he kept searching—with his swords and guns and bombs—until he got to the truth he knew was there.

The weirdest part about this story is how silly and meta it is, but it really has a strong parallel to the gospel message. In the end, the creators see this character they've created. He has this gift for Fourth Wall breaking written into his list of powers. They see his suffering and write out a story leading him to kill his creators for his own happiness and freedom, much the same way that God came down to Earth having written a scenario where we would kill Him for our own happiness and freedom. Deadpool may be a silly, vulgar character but there is plenty to chew on biblically in his stories.

The moral of the story is not to kill everyone until a portal opens up to God so you can kill Him. In fact, He already opened up a portal to us and came down to be killed long ago, so that part of our story is complete. Whether you believe that already or it sounds like nonsense to you, rest assured; it is true. If you are a believer, don't let the bad guys or the good guys stop you in the

pursuit of absolute truth or the sharing of that truth. Many will not accept it and that is unfortunate; even our own real-life versions of Professor Xavier would probably have a mental breakdown if they were to see the truth. Stand firm until the end. Then we will get to meet our own creator who wants nothing more than to release us from the confines of this world and accept us into the next; to revel in His glory, free from suffering for eternity.



**“Don’t let the bad guys stop you
in pursuit of the truth...”**



“God is the source
of everything...”

Moby Deadpool

At the end of the previous comic Deadpool killed his own writers and was going to come for the readers next, so that must be the end, right? Apparently not. The comic book industry is always reinventing its characters, which is why we have things like retcons and multiple versions of Batman or Spiderman or Nick Fury. So Deadpool finds out that even though he killed everyone in the Marvel Universe, new versions keep popping up as fast as he can kill them. So he, or maybe the voice in

his head, devises a plan to kill the inspiration for all the different characters and stories in the Marvel Universe so writers won't think to come up with the same stories over and over again.

Here's the really interesting thing about Deadpool's plan; he is correct that all stories are connected, just not in the way that believes. Killing literary heroes won't kill the source of stories, because God is the source everything. Before our literary heroes came into be-

ing there was God. Before the first man set foot on the land, there was God. All creation points to God because God is the source of all creation. Even human creation. After all, as humans we only write things that we know. Even the most fantastic of human creations—the most



**“Before the first
man set foot on the
land, there was God”**



exotic and astounding—is only a cobbled together facsimile of the things we have already known to exist. It is true that all stories are connected; they all connect to God.

With that in mind, as we review *Deadpool Killustrated* we will go through it in a slightly different manner; we will connect every story that *Dreadpool* encounters with God, who is the source of all creation. It’s hard to believe that the writers didn’t have Redeeming Culture in mind

when they penned these stories. The whole basis for this second *Deadpool Kills* series is that all stories have come before and resonate deep within us to create new stories. Pinocchio inspired *Vision*. The three musketeers inspired team based stories. The little mermaid inspired *Namor*. And—as you are about to see—the Bible inspires them all. It doesn’t go that far in the comic, but that’s what Redeeming Culture is all about. *Deadpool Killustrated* tied Marvel characters back to classic story roots. I’ll tie all those classics back to roots in the Bible. I am going to go through all twenty-five references in the comics, and I am going to explain how they were inspired by biblical characters and stories. I won’t be diving into each one about why it’s a classic or why those stories resonate with us or what truths we can find in them. If I did that, this would be even longer than it already is, and we might run out of stuff to say on Redeeming Culture.

Let’s begin with Moby Dick. Check out 1 Samuel Chap-

ter 16-31 for the life of King Saul; a man bent on revenge against someone that could be seen as a symbol of purity and holiness. Saul and Captain Ahab both receive prophecies about the circumstances of their deaths that relates directly to the source of their obsessions.

Don Quixote, on the other hand, relates to a Pharisee name Saul who later becomes known as Paul, in the New Testament book of Acts. Saul is fighting for an old set of beliefs upheld by the Jewish Pharisees, his intellectual compatriots. He sets about killing monsters that are not monsters at all, until a moment of clarity reveals the truth. Both Don Quixote and Paul are also beaten very often. And they both collect a side kick; Sancho Panza for Don Quixote and Timothy for Paul. Pinocchio was a puppet, lovingly crafted by a man who wished with all his heart that his creation could come to life and love him back. The creation of man in Genesis seems a likely inspiration for a story about a creator who wants to

love and be loved by his creation, turning an inanimate object—wood or clay—to life, and seeing if the object will be good or bad and become even more alive—in Pinocchio's case, becoming a real boy, and in the case of God's creation to be caught up into heaven for eternity.

Tom Sawyer is a familiar tale as well. Check out the story of Jacob in Genesis 25, 27, 29, and 35. He also is a character that tricks someone out of something valuable for something ordinary. He has trouble with the woman



“A creator who wants to love and be loved by his creation...”



he wants to marry because he gets caught up with another one.

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea resembles the story of Jonah. Jonah is another man who ran away from something by way of the sea, and was very concerned for his

crew mates that he was willing to be thrown overboard for them. Jonah and Captain Nemo both spend time inside the bellies of their respective sea monsters; for Nemo it was the Nautilus which was mistaken for a narwhal and for Jonah it was literally a giant sea-dwelling creature.

As far as Dracula is concerned there may not be a particular person that went around biting people to get their blood and hated garlic and crucifixes, but look at Leviticus 17:10-14 and tell me if you see some inspirational content there. It talks about the life of each creature being in its blood and how the Lord will set His face against anyone who consumes the blood. You can also look to the last supper in any of the gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Jesus tells his disciples to drink His blood so they can have everlasting life. Putting those two sections together gives us enmity with God and an unending life that can be passed through the devouring of blood. In Dracula the sym-

bols of the Christian faith are substituted for God Himself, but the rest seems to be used the same as the text it was inspired by.

Sleepy Hollow is a classic love triangle where the rowdy guy in town scares off the outsider so he can get the girl. 2 Samuel 11 paints a very similar picture. David, known for actions that some would call rowdy, sees Bathsheba and decides he must have her even though he learns she is unfortunately already married to Uriah the Hittite. Uriah descended from one of the nations Israel was supposed to wipe out in Joshua's day so you could say he's a little bit of an outsider. This information doesn't stop David from getting Bathsheba pregnant and he even starts to try and cover it up with trickery to make it look like Bathsheba is carrying Uriah's child. When that doesn't work he makes it so Uriah gets killed in battle and he can have Bathsheba for himself.

As generic as the comic makes it look, Little Women really is a book about differ-

ent women that are trying to be the best they can and who are all strong in their own ways. Some hone their skills to become a successful writer or to pursue a desire to be a married woman all the while trying to take care of each other and the less fortunate. There are many amazing women in the bible. Deborah in Judges 4-5 becomes a judge for the people in a time of need. Esther, in the book of Esther, saves the Israelites from a plot against them that would result in their genocide by risking her own life and posh position in life. Ruth and Naomi, in the book of Ruth, even stick together though they are not related by blood and get Ruth a husband who will care for them both.

In A Christmas Carol Ebenezer Scrooge is a shrewd and cruel business man who will do anything to make more money and spend as little as possible. He is visited by the dead that warn him money is best spent on charity and making friends because otherwise your death will lead to a tormented af-

terlife. In Luke 16 there are two parables that look like they may have been the last things Dickens saw before he started writing his classic novel. The first is called the Shrewd Manager where someone hurriedly uses money to get into the good graces of others before what he sees as his impending unemployment. The second is of Lazarus and the rich man. The rich man is stingy and

● ● ●
**“to be the best
they can”**

● ● ●
doesn't even offer his table scraps to Lazarus who begs at his door. Then in the afterlife Lazarus is comforted in Heaven and the rich man is in torment, begging for relief. Not only that, but he asks Abraham to go back and warn his family who don't believe. He thinks seeing the dead rise would convince them.

Frankenstein is pretty straightforward. Victor Frankenstein brings an inanimate creation to life and is horrified by it. This crea-

ture escapes and is cast out of society for its appearance. It learns language and sees its own reflection as hideous. After failed attempts at kinship it goes into a rage and burns down a cabin and murders someone close to his creator as revenge for making him in the first place. Next it demands a female version be made so it can experience some sort of relationship, but Victor is fearful of the female being evil too and what horrible things they might have as offspring that could threaten humanity.

In the book, the monster actually talks about reading *Paradise Lost* and how he related to Adam—from the Bible—right away, but later said he related more to Satan. There is definitely inspiration from the book of Genesis in here, if only through another book based on Genesis. The description of Satan and his tactics match well with the methods of the creature. Satan, upon analyzing his appearance in Ezekiel 28, actually sees himself as beautiful

instead of hideous but still seeks to strike out against his creator, God. Both decide to attack not their creator, but the one's that their creator loves.

The *Jungle Book* is a fun comparison to make. To see some talking animals in the Bible look up the story of Balak in Numbers 22. And if you want a word picture that could almost be the cover of an edition of the *Jungle Book*, see Isaiah 11:6 where it describes different types of animals living together and being led by a little child.

The *Little Mermaid* was a tale by Hans Christian Andersen and is a little different than what Disney made it out to be. The sea witch is still there but she gives Ariel a potion to drink. Ariel not only has her voice taken from her in exchange for legs, but she is told by the witch that each step will be like being stabbed with a knife. She also is told she can gain an eternal soul—something merfolk do not have—if the prince falls in love with her. But if he marries someone else then

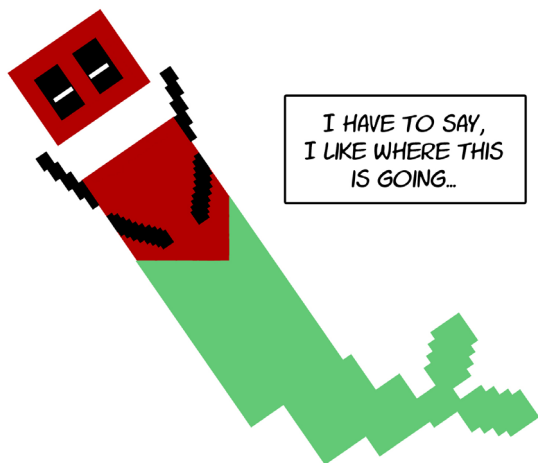
she will die without a soul and turn to sea foam—the typical mermaid death—the very next day.

The Prince indeed marries someone else at the prodding of his family, even though he is taken with Ariel who has gained his affection through painful dancing. The night before Ariel is to die soulless, her sisters give her a knife that she can kill the prince with to drip his blood on her feet to turn back into a mermaid and at least live out a full life, but still without a soul when she will eventually die. She can't bring herself to do it, and chooses to turn to sea foam. But as she dies, Ariel starts to feel warm and meets up with “daughters of the air” and is told she can now serve mankind for 300 years, the typical lifespan of a mermaid, to gain her immortal soul.

There may be no particular instance of a half fish, half human in the bible, though there are many instances of creatures and humans with the head of another in visions and prophecies. There

is some connection between a biblical era god that was at times in art depicted as half-man and half-fish associated with Phoenicia, but no direct description is found in the biblical account. The story, however, strikingly resembles the early parts of Genesis. There Eve is in the garden in a world separated from another. She is told by a sinister character that if she ingests something she will get what she wants. Afterwards she is cursed with pain. Then she is told she will return to the dust she was made from, like Ariel will return to sea foam.

That would seem where the equivalencies end, but many literary so-and-sos have noted that the ending of Anderson's story does not meet the natural conclusion of Ariel becoming sea foam with no soul as if it is disjointed and taken from some other story. If we do the same, we could see some resemblances in the New Testament where sacrifices were common until after Jesus. So Ariel is about to experience the consequences of her de-



cision to be human, but then is saved by someone else in the “air”, much like we are saved by the sacrifice Jesus made on our behalf when we otherwise would have died as a result of our own sins. Unlike the Bible, Ariel is still required to work for her soul, but there is still a good amount there to inspire Hans Christian Anderson to his own version.

In *The Odyssey*, Odysseus went on a twenty year journey wandering throughout the Mediterranean and encountering enemies on all sides and overcoming them by performing great feats—such as putting out the eye of a cyclops; shooting an arrow

through ten ax heads; and sailing to and returning from the underworld—before he was finally able to return to the place he belonged—only to find his bride wooed by other suitors forcing him to fight to get her back. Moses, a prophet of God, was on his own journey, wandering through the desert for forty years in an attempt to enter the land where he belonged. Along the way he was attacked by enemies on all sides and performed great feats to overcome them, such as parting the Red Sea; inflicting plagues on Egypt; and causing a battle to turn in the favor of the Israelites by raising his arms. The Israelites were often swayed

by the worship of other gods such as when his own brother, Aaron, forged a calf out of gold for them to worship. Moses had to intervene with God on their behalf on multiple occasions in order to prevent them from being destroyed due to their fickle hearts. Unlike the Israelites, Odysseus' wife Penelope was faithful, but the simile stands nevertheless.

The story of Macbeth follows a friend of the king who is told by witches that he will be king himself one day. This leads him to kill the king, and then become more insane and murderous as time goes on to try and cover up his actions and keep his new throne. This seems to be inspired by two biblical accounts. The first is the story of Eden and the second the rule of King Saul.

Adam and Eve are told that they too can be equal to their ruler. After they sin and gain knowledge, Adam and Eve make clothes for themselves to hide their shame and even hide in the bushes to try to keep God from seeing what

they've done. Both Macbeth and his wife are afraid of what they've done and change clothes immediately after the murder of their king. Adam and Eve are no longer in the comfort of the garden and Macbeth can no longer sleep. Both sets receive unexpected consequences for their sins. The rest seems more akin to Saul. Saul was already king, but he was worried that David would take his throne so he sought to kill him. Macbeth, too, was worried others would take his place and killed them. Both stories end in tragedy.

Edgar Allen Poe's poem by the name of The Raven is little more than a man sitting exhausted from the grief of his love dying. Abraham, Jacob, and Naomi all lost their spouses. All were distraught for a number of years, Naomi even asks people to call her by a different name because of the bitterness she felt. This coupled with 2 Corinthians 7:10 which talks about how worldly sorrow leads to death become a strong foundation for the

tone and topic of the poem.

In *The Metamorphosis* Gregor Samza wakes up one morning in bed to find himself transformed into a disgusting creature. His finances and family life suffer as he can no longer work being some sort of giant cockroach until he dies in his bedroom and his family can finally move on. In *Daniel* chapter 4 we find King Nebuchadnezzar being shown in a dream on his bed that he will turn into a beast that will be driven away from people for a long period of time. Only the biblical story is more kind to the one being transformed. The king repents of his sin and transformed back to his old self again.

The Picture of Dorian Grey shows a man granted the ability to maintain his youth in his physical body as he lets a portrait age and show decay instead. He is encouraged to live a life of excess, and does. This leads to the portrait getting so ugly he cannot be recognized in it any longer. After remorse over a string of murders and

deaths that he caused, Dorian decides to change his ways and start to live a morally upright life. But the picture does not change, it continues to get uglier. He realizes this morality is just a facade covering the real intention of his change; to revel in knowing that he was a “better” person. Looking in the bible we see a main character or characters accused by Christ himself of the same problem. In *Matthew* 23:27 he calls the pharisees, the religious leaders of the day, whitewashed tombs that look beautiful on the outside but are full of all sorts of unclean things on the inside. Jesus can see their ugliness without a magic picture. In both cases the sin is right in front of everyone’s faces but not everyone can see the significance of it.

The Island of Dr. Moreau depicts a man who is shipwrecked and ends up on an island where a disgraced doctor is conducting vivisection style experiments on animals to make them into humans. So the narrator encounters all manner of half-man, half-beast creatures.

The creatures recite law and practice avoiding habits that will revert them to their animal form. Daniel 7:4 has a beast being turned into a more human like creature. It describes a lion with eagle wings having its wings torn off and then standing like a man and thinking like one. It may start with a mythical creature of some sort, but it ends with it being more human after a rather barbaric kind of surgery. The second part is very much like the Jewish nation in the Old Testament. They would recite the law and abstain from certain activities to remain holy and set apart to God, so they would not revert back to their sinful ways. It is of note that neither the animal creatures nor the Israelites were good at keeping themselves from reverting.

There are many images in Gulliver's Travels that stand-out: the warring countries of little people, such as Lilliput; the giants he encounters on his next journey—those were the ones I knew best; the next two journeys where he encounters a flying

city involved in science but with ridiculous intents and means—for instance, trying to soften marble so it can better be used as a pillow; and the last journey in which he meets a group of horse creatures that look down on humans for their uncivilized and foolish ways, going so far as to call humans Yahoos. By the time he is forced back home he is no longer comfortable around all the humans he now sees as Yahoos like the horse people he has come to appreciate.

Joshua in the Old Testament went on many journeys outside the camp of Israel and the city of Jericho into hostile territory. One of his first missions involved scouting out Jericho where the people were revealed to be like giants next to the Israelites with produce to match—giant grapes. Later he goes on multiple campaigns to wipe out the people groups surrounding Israel. Those cultures did things that were intolerable to God and unthinkable to His chosen people. Sacrificing your own children to a statue with fire

could seem just about as weird as talking horses. And that's not including the fantastical things that God did for Joshua in some of these battles like stopping the sun in the sky so he didn't lose the enemy in the dark. You can also just imagine how uncomfortable Joshua and all of Israel felt when they settled in their new home surrounded by all those Ya-hoos.

Julius Caesar comes into town victorious and with adoration and celebration and is warned of his death to come. Then his friend Brutus is convinced that Caesar should be killed for the greater good of all Romans. He participates in the assassination. Afterwards he is driven from Rome and must wage war against Anthony and Octavius. Brutus is visited by Caesar's ghost and warned that he will die in Phillipi. During the first day of battle Brutus is victorious, but during the second day he commits suicide.

It sounds a lot like the story of Judas Iscariot. Let's

look at Matthew 21:1-11, and chapter 26 and chapter 27:1-5. In Matthew 21 we see Jesus enter Jerusalem as a triumphant king. Then by chapter 26 Judas is scheming with the chief priests to kill Jesus for the sake of their control over the people. After Judas sees that he has condemned Jesus he goes out and hangs himself. The only key differences here are that Jesus has been foretelling his own death instead of a "soothsayer". And finally there is no account of Jesus appearing to Judas as a spirit before his suicide, but Jesus does appear to many disciples after his own death in his resurrected body.

One of the oldest epics, Beowulf is a story where a monster named Grendel has been killing men at a distant hall and Beowulf goes to stop this menace. He fights it bare-handed and tears off its arm, which leads to its death. Beowulf then tracks down the cave that Grendel's mother lives in and fights her. Finding a giant sword in the cave, he kills her. Beowulf retires home for 50 years. He gets into a fight with a dragon and

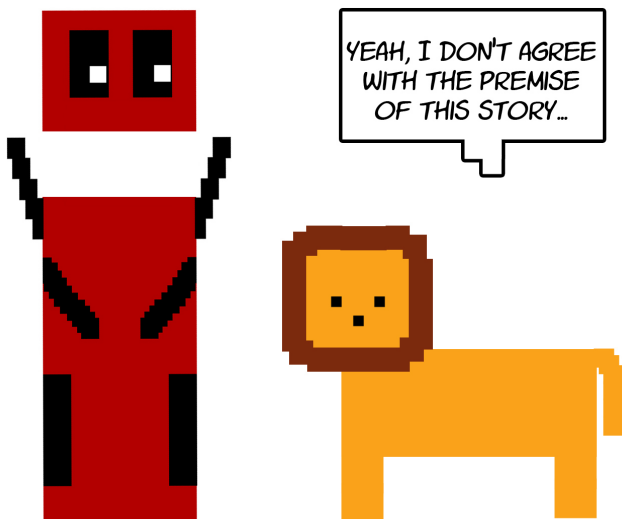
wins, but is mortally wounded in the process and he is cremated and a memorial is set up in his honor.

There are many direct references in the text to the bible.

Grendel is described as a descendant of Cain who was cursed for killing, which is what Grendel is doing over and over again at the start of the story. The text also describes the flood and how the giants were wiped out during it, which is where it proposes the giant sword came from in the cave. There are many instances where Beowulf

gives God credit for his good fortune, too. Then his final foe is a dragon, the same way Satan is described in the book of Revelation that will be defeated and thrown into the lake of fire.

All of these are good and easy to see but I feel that the structure is most reminiscent of the story of Samson in Judges 13-16. He begins his feats of strength by ripping a lion apart with his bare hands. Next he hides in a cave until the Philistine army comes to kill him. He grabs another uncommon



weapon, a donkey's jaw bone, to fight off the army. Finally after he is captured and blinded and used up with his strength gone he is brought before many Philistines to entertain them. He asks God for help so he can kill them all, but also kills himself in the process. The Israelites then set up a tomb for him.

Hua Mulan is a young woman in China who is worried for her father's life when the army comes to enlist the able men of the house. In some versions she disguises herself as a man and in others she volunteers in his stead, taking his armor and weapons. She is proficient in battle and wages war for 10-12 years, after which she is offered a government position and riches. She refuses it all and asks to go home.

There may not be a hero that cross dresses in the bible, but Hua Mulan sounds like a familiar male character in the Bible. 1 Samuel 17 and 18 tell the story of David and Goliath and the aftermath with Saul. David took

the place of Saul and many other men in the army to fight Goliath. Saul offers for David to wear his armor, but in this case it does not fit and David refuses the offer. After Goliath is slain, David goes back to playing music for the king. Many times Saul will offer a daughter or some other gift and David will decline saying that he is just a poor man who doesn't deserve such stately presents and positions. David never does get to go back home where he feels like he belongs because he eventually becomes king himself, but the same spirit is there in both Hua Mulan and David after their victories in battle.

Natty Bumppo is in a series of five novels that record his involvement in the early settlement of the United States as a frontiersman. Natty Bumppo was in many battles and known for being proficient with many types of weapons. He was also friendly with Native Americans, having been raised by one tribe. Little else stands out in his story or his character other than he appreciated the outdoors and

wilderness. The story seems more like an action movie script of modern times than anything else. The character brings to mind Nimrod in Genesis 10. He was simply known as a mighty warrior and hunter for the Lord. Both share this defining characteristic, but if we look closer we can see possibly a little more inspiration. In Genesis 10:10 it talks about the start of Nimrod's kingdoms including Babylon. In the next chapter we see that same kingdom building a tower to the heavens. God sees what they are doing and strikes them with an inability to all communicate the same language. This has led many to associate Nimrod with orchestrating the building of this tower himself. It may be a small detail but seeing Nimrod among people of different tongues and tribes looks similar to seeing Natty Bumppo alongside Native Americans and various European military factions acting as an interpreter.

The biblical inspiration for The Three Musketeers even has a similar name, if some-

what shorter; The Three. 2 Samuel 23:8-19 is where the exploits of the Three are described and we find out that they, like the three musketeers, are made up of actually 4 heroes with one being their leader and just as famous as the others put together.

Sherlock Holmes saves the day, or literature, at the end of the Illustrated comic. Even he isn't sure why he must remember during the events he encounters, but he knows he must. He is the most discerning and wise character in all of literature, or at least the inspiration for all others. In Sherlock's own stories he is very interested on basic sciences and insightful observations. He is famous for being able to figure out things no one else can. The bible has just such a character who is famous for solving a mystery of his own.

King Solomon in 1 Kings 3:16-27 has two prostitutes brought before him to settle a dispute. Both claim that one living child is their

own. They both claim the other accidentally killed her own baby by rolling on top of it while they were asleep. Once the unfortunate mother woke up to find her own child dead, she stole the still living baby from the other mother. After presenting their case Solomon orders that the baby be cut in half and each mother will get one piece. One woman agrees and says it is the right thing to do, but the other panics and asks that the other woman be given the baby. Solomon grants the baby to the worried mother, seeing her care more that the child lives than raise it herself. Solomon was also interested in basic sciences of his day like Sherlock. 1 Kings 4:33 talks about how Solomon would impart wisdom about all manner of plant and animal life. Solomon is also famous for being sought after for his wisdom. The Queen of Sheba comes to ask him everything on her mind and he is able answer it in 1 Kings 10:1-13; and then in verse 23 and 24 it says the whole world sought to do the same.

Well, there you have it. All 25 stories and how they relate to God. There are, of course, many other ways that these stories are able to relate to God, but for the sake of time we will leave it here. From here, we turn to the final installment in the Deadpool Killogy. As if there hasn't been enough killing going on in these stories, we now enter the part of the tale where Deadpool seeks to kill himself.

“Deadpool is faced
with himself...”

A Tale of Two Deadpools

In the previous chapters we discussed Dreadpool killing everyone in the Marvel Universe including the writers, and then Dreadpool killing literary icons to eliminate other writers from getting similar ideas to the, now presumed dead, originals. Now Dreadpool is faced with himself. As discussed in the chapter where we overview his backstory, Deadpool has always skirted the line between bad guy and good guy, but always eventually teetering into redeemable—no pun intended—territory.

Now he is faced with versions of himself from other one-off comics and tangent series that may or may not have ever been canon material. In fact, we find out that the Deadpool we’ve been looking at for the past two comics is not the real Deadpool at all. Dreadpool killed the Marvel Universe and the literary classics that inspired it, now he seeks to eliminate all incarnations that Deadpool has ever taken. And to join us in taking in the spectacle is a Watcher. He seems to be a big fan of the merc-

with-a-mouth; so much so that he can't even pick a side to root for—good Deadpool or bad Dreadpool—until the very end.

We see a lot of different Deadpools in this story. From Headpool, the zombie head of Deadpool; to Beard of Beespool; to one of my personal favorites, Pandapool—the species that endangers you. And some versions are ready and willing to help Deadpool while others are immediately loyal to Dreadpool. Talk about literally arguing with yourself. So let's look at both sides of this war against self.

Dreadpool has been on a quest to end his life of eternal torment as a fictional character. He has finally come to the conclusion that he must be the one creating his own torment. He's already killed all the main characters present and past that he should be able to interact with and he's still kicking. So he must be the progenitor of all things in this universe; if he dreams it, it becomes reality. The only problem is

that there are many versions of himself out there in the multiverse, so he shares his vision with...himselves...and they band together to eliminate every last remnant of Deadpool that could dream them all back up again. This is no vendetta, but now a holy crusade that he admits to being distracted from achieving at times and losing track of what really matters.

“Real” Deadpool starts off doing what Deadpool does best; he's fighting some giant evil entity, throwing out quips and stalling for the other heroes to show up. Even when he hears that someone out there is killing Deadpools he jokes that he's only comedic relief, so why would anyone want to kill all the Deadpools? He does make some wavering statements like, “That does sound like me” and “I can understand that. I feel that way every time I look in the mirror.” But there is something inherently different between Deadpool and Dreadpool. Deadpool accepts and even enjoys his existence, where Dreadpool finds it all torture.

Deadpool even confronts the Watcher for not choosing sides right away. He says that he's the one trying to save the Multiverse, so the decision should be pretty easy.

In *Deadpool versus Dreadpool* we see two distinct reactions that people can have to the realization that there is an otherness in the universe—that there is God. *Dreadpool* sees it as being constantly tortured for the amusement of the otherness, while *Deadpool* accepts the otherness and finds joy in it. These are very natural reactions to have when you come to understand the reality that God exists and we are all actors in His grand plan. It can be overwhelming knowing that everything we do, our joy and our suffering, has been plotted out ahead of time.

So what can we learn from *Dreadpool* nearly wiping all the incarnations of *Deadpool* off the Multiversal map? There are actually some very heavy topics in here that would be pretty easy to not bring up because of the co-

medic tone of the material; but just because something is serious or difficult doesn't mean we should avoid it. Be forewarned, I'll start off with some of the lighter topics, but we will cover the toughest one at the end.

First we can reiterate *Dreadpool's* situation. He seems to be the only one seeing this world beyond himself and it tortures him deeply. He wants to end this cycle of punishment for a cause he doesn't believe in. He wants to be free and will do anything he can think of to live out his life in a way that reflects what he knows about the world outside the one where he lives. It's a very Christian situation, knowing what is outside our current reality and we are called to live differently than everyone else in light of that knowledge. We don't try and kill everyone because we do not believe we are created to entertain God with our suffering, but we could see *Dreadpool's* point if that were the case.

Second, we can see how

Deadpool fights back against this other version of himself that is suffering from a delusion of grandeur. Deadpool is really a great picture of a cult leader; someone who knows some truth but takes it to the wrong conclusion and countless people are hurt in the process. Deadpool is our picture of the born again believer who knows what he is doing is right. He may suffer like the rest of them, but he

ten on the hearts of all men (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Even though Deadpool killed all the classics, they are in the hearts of people anyway; so they would eventually be re-written in some form. In the same way, if all Christians were to be wiped out by Satan, our version of Deadpool, God's story would still be told. There's just no way stop it. Luke 19:37-40 and Romans 1:20 tell us this. So



“He is fulfilling his purpose...”



is fulfilling his purpose. He's comedic relief; we're spiritual relief. We are to be examples to the world about how to act in light of the knowledge of God and what His Son did for us, because they won't get that anywhere else. Deadpool is that to the other superheroes. They don't understand they are just in a comic, but he does and he lets it slip all the time. It is also our job to let the truth of the universe slip out often.

I've said it before and I'll say again that eternity is writ-

ten on the hearts of all men (Ecclesiastes 3:13-15). And that is what our crimson comedian has gotten right, and earns him the title of “good guy”.

Finally for the toughest topic to cover in this jovial, violent, silly affair—Suicide. I said we wouldn't side-step it, and I meant it. This is a touchy topic because even Christians have a hard time talking about it and con-

soling those that have had a loved one take their own life. The bible does have examples of suicide in it. Samson even asks God to help give him the strength he needs to kill not only the Philistines, but himself in the process. Judas hangs himself after coming to grips with what a horrible thing he has done by giving over the living God and Savior to be beaten, tortured, and killed. King Saul of the Old Testament falls on his own sword when his shield bearer won't kill him before the Philistines can do it.

Some would say that suicide is committing murder and breaking one of the ten commandments; it is just self-murder, which you could say Deadpool does in excess, or just say that is what Dreadpool plans to do after all the other Deadpools are dead. It is of note that in context I can find nowhere in the Bible that specifically speaks to whether any of these people were prevented from entering Heaven after taking their own lives, which is what some would have you believe. Their argument is

that you can not repent of the sin once you have committed it, so you enter the afterlife with a final sin blemishing you that you have no chance to ask forgiveness. To this it seems logical that any sin you were unaware of would also follow you and we would all be in very shaky territory if we could not review constant video streams of the time before we started storing long-term memories. I would also say that God loves and wants to comfort the lowly, broken-hearted, humble, and meek. And by cutting your life short, you have taken away a chance to experience His good works in your life.

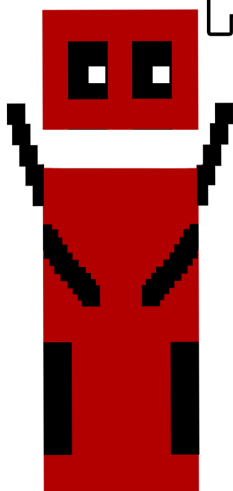
God wants to give each and every one of us hope and life more abundant, but if someone uses their freewill to kill themselves, they are expressing a doubt in that hope. They are feeling a life of little more than sadness and are unable to see past it. We all have moments where things seem insurmountable and no help seems to be coming our way. For the Christian, we always have God and by

extension the body of believers. He does not require us to gather in worship and fellowship for His own good, but ours. For the unbeliever it is much more bleak and their worldview can easily look more like Deadpool's; incessant suffering for no purpose worth enduring.

We all sin, intentionally or otherwise. But we can receive a spirit that continually works within us to make us more like the greatest hero ever, Christ Jesus, who saw our suffering as we try and fail to be one of the good

guys. He came and died, on purpose—a sort of suicide mission—so that way we could have the hope to which we did not yet have access. He had himself killed so we wouldn't have to bear the weight of all the guilt that comes with not being good enough. He died so we would be able to feel His presence when we are down and out so far we see no end to our agony and our only recourse looks like death. The apostle Paul even spoke of a desire to die quickly and be united with God in Heaven. What held him back was God's

SERIOUSLY, PAUL,
HAVE YOU EVER HEARD
OF XANAX?



I HAD A ROUGH LIFE.



work of encouraging others and sharing joy with them (Philippians 1:21-26).

All this to say that if you have a loved one who left you early on their own terms, that does not necessarily mean they were not allowed into Heaven. It was selfish and showed a lack of faith on their part—believer or not, we all express lack of faith. They could have shared more joy with you. They could have seen more of God's work done through them and to them. There is no medical science and no method dictated in scripture to bring them back to life after they've removed themselves from it, and that hurts. It hurts a lot. But our emotions can either control us or spur us to action. I would encourage you to use these emotions to encourage everyone you meet. Share your joy with them and your love for them. Remind them of the hope they can cling to in their darkest hours so in the end less people will have to suffer through what you have.

Deadpool tells Dreadpool at

the end that given time he can make up for his misgivings. He can change his ways, and makes a funny enough reference to a pro wrestler turned preacher; but it is quickly followed up by Deadpool refusing to forgive Dreadpool. It is true that sometimes there will be people who won't or can't forgive us for what we've done, but that doesn't mean God won't. We also see that in the end troubles never really go away. Evil-Deadpool is still running around and will likely cause suffering in Deadpool's life, but Deadpool has hope and a comfortable grasp on his role in the universe as a good guy. So I'm sure he'll persevere again just like we all can after climbing or being dragged out of our pits of depression.

If you or someone you know is suffering from suicidal thoughts, the National Suicide Hotline is 1-800-273-8255. If it is someone you know I suggest a hug, prayers, encouragement, support, tearful talks filled with empathy, and sharing any and all joy and hope in

the future of you and your loved one that you can. Enjoy what time you have left with them because we will all die eventually, whether self-inflicted, semi-self-inflicted, inflicted by others, happen stance, or old age. Whether they come out of their depression or not, at least you were there for them and spent more time sharing your love for them. Don't be fooled. People will still commit suicide even with everything to live for, even with everyone around them giving them support. Celebrities are the easiest to point to as people who seem to have their whole lives together with people who love them and show it, but still hide what they are dealing with and cut themselves short. So never guilt yourself into believing you should have seen it coming or there was something you could have done to change their mind. Some people will not be swayed; they have their own freewill and will do with it what they want regardless of what others say or do.

“To embrace the beautiful works...”

It's the End of the Deadpool as We Know It (And I feel Fine)

Here at Redeeming Culture our mission is to embrace the beautiful works of art created by mankind and show how those elements of culture relate to God and can be redeemed by God. It is our greatest joy to review the stories we love and show people how all of these elements can be used as a way to show God as more powerful and to provide a way for you to use the culture people love as a way to share the Gospel message.

Redeeming Culture start-

ed as a challenge between friends to use movies and videogames as a way to witness to people. Eventually it grew into a bible study where we would watch movies and practice finding the Godly themes within the stories. After much hard work, we turned it into a beloved podcast and blog site where many people contributed their reviews of the elements of culture that they loved and displayed how those elements derive from God.

Now, after several years of this work, we are entering into a new phase where we are entering into a network of like-minded individuals at Reel World Theology. Together we will push forward and share the gospel with everyone we can through the movies, books, and video games that we love so much.

That is, of course, where Deadpool comes into the picture. One of our greatest challenges and deepest joys is taking characters and stories that people wholeheartedly believe have nothing to do with God—or even polite culture—and showing how God is still great enough to overcome the sin that runs rampant within those tales. It has been fun going through what is one of my favorite Deadpool series to show how God is a major theme within even this story.

Redemption is especially important to us because it isn't just stories like Deadpool that need redeemed. We as people need to accept the redemption that comes through Christ alone. We

are all sinners. None of us stack up to the perfect life that Jesus showed us how to live in order to reach God. The greatest suffering in this world often comes from the feeling of being too far off from God. If even a little bit of sin separates us from God for all eternity, how miserable must that existence be? That is why redemption is so important to us as Christians. We need God more than we need food to eat and air to breathe. It is thought that God's name, Yaweh, is literally a word that mimics the sound of breathing. Throughout the bible he is known as the breath of life. He didn't just give life to Adam in the garden of Eden, God breathed life into him. Being separated from God is literally being separated from the life giving oxygen that our bodies consume. Without Him, we will spiritually asphyxiate.

So where do you go from here, with your newfound knowledge of how Deadpool is a Godly character? That is up to you. Our mission as Christians is to go out and

share the gospel with all we meet. You could head to the latest Deadpool movie and talk about all of the themes Deadpool has in common with the bible. You could go to the comic store and pick up an Avengers comic to discuss how vision's inspiration, Pinocchio, is actually a reference to the creation of man. You could even challenge yourself to view other stories and figure out how God ultimately redeems them. The path is up to you, and wherever you go, I pray that you go with God; because His way is the only way.

