



GODS
OF
GEEKDOM

PREACHER MAN

If you recognize Preacher from the crew of *Serenity*, that really isn't all that impressive. Maybe that gives you a geek factor of 3. The fate of the show, *Firefly*, is one of the better-known geek tragedies, and the feature film adaptation was pretty popular. I'll bump it up to geek factor 4 if you know that the actor's name is Ron Glass.

Oh, and just a word of warning, you might want to get used to getting your geek on, because science fiction provides some of the best pop culture examples of political ideals being pushed to their extremes and exposing the underlying political and social dynamics.

Anyway, starting you off with a nice and easy first foray into the bowels of geekdom, Preacher is an intriguing character to examine in terms of ideals, reality, and utopian thought. In the series, we quickly learn that he intentionally put himself in a place where his ideals would be subjected to the most extreme tests and challenges. He wanted to be

caught in the clash between the ideal and the real because he felt that was the moment when people would have the greatest need for an idealist, spiritual influence. He becomes even more interesting when, later in the series, we learn that his idealism and commitment to the spiritual is recent. He appears to have a very dark past, and this gives him a unique perspective when it comes to engaging and counseling the rest of *Serenity's* crew.

In the feature film that was used to wrap up some of the story lines from the cruelly truncated series, this flexible and adaptable representation of idealism he presents is contrasted against a government operative who is so extremely, heartlessly pragmatic that he can only be called an idealist of a pragmatist. Largely because of the inclusion of the Preacher, both the feature film finale and the series itself provide countless opportunities to examine the clash between ideals and reality as well as utopia and compromise.