

Lesson 6

WHAT ABOUT TV?

The greatest force for indoctrination in any society today is TV. Mind benders to manipulate people's thinking so as to control society use this media source. Unfortunately TV is primarily in the hands of unbelievers and liberal thinkers; therefore, there is a brain washing against Christianity and for humanism and materialism. Much of the TV watched in third world countries is produced in America or England.

Because the Bible does not say, "You shall not watch TV", the use of this media becomes a questionable practice. Christians will disagree on the use of this modern media form. Therefore, if we watch and what we watch must be determined by Biblical principles.

We know that whatever we watch is to be consistent with the moral law of God and in accordance with God's standard of holiness. ***But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16). I will set before my eyes no vile thing (Psa. 101:3).***

ADVANTAGES OF TV

There are many good programs on TV such as live broadcasts of space activities, news programs, educational programs, sporting events, etc.

TV is a very effective means of keeping up with world events, and the actual seeing of the events makes it far more effective.

TV is not like movies in that it can be controlled and one can watch only the good things and turn off the bad things. There is a choice in what we see.

TV is inexpensive recreation and a form of relaxation.

TV keeps the family together in the evenings.

DISADVANTAGES OF TV

Time Consuming. Television can be a thief of precious time. Often people are not consciously aware of the time they spend watching TV. For every person who has control over TV, there are ten persons who are controlled by it. ***Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity (redeeming the time - KJV), because the days are evil (Eph. 5:15-16). Everything is permissible for me—but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me—but I will not be mastered (brought under the power) by anything (1 Cor. 6:12).***

Makes Lazy Minds. People often substitute TV for reading or creativity. Instead of reading the facts about something, a person takes the words of a news commentator as absolute truth. For many people reading has gone out of style with the coming of TV. ***We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5).***

Destroys the Family. Often TV robs the family of a spirit of oneness. Much of the families' activities are spent around a TV set. There are few times when the family communicates with one another any more. Mealtime used to be the time for family communication but many families eat their meal while watching TV.

Distorts Values. **TV often takes many of the basic values of life and treats them in a comical or unrealistic way, which gnaws away at basic Christian truths that are foundational to a nation's survival.**

In situation comedies, the father is often pictured as sort of a "dummy" Usually the mother is the disciplinarian and solves the problems and the children out-smart their dad. The father image is greatly distorted.

Often women are presented as famous doctors, business executives, or as the heroine of a particular soap opera. She is the woman who can do anything a man can do and can always out-think him. The poor housewife who watches TV (especially the soap operas) is transported out of the kitchen into a real dream world of fantasy, and is, therefore, relieved of her moral responsibilities as wife and mother, rationalizing away the problems that she herself causes in life.

Many programs show families with problems but they are always solved in one or two hours, and everybody lives happily ever after. Life isn't like that, but TV is geared to make people slip into a life of fantasy, which makes them forget they have problems in everyday life. TV has people thinking that problems are not normal, or if they are normal, they can be solved in one or two episodes. Therefore, people run away from their responsibilities.

Twists Facts. TV has a way of making the world look the way a particular news commentator or news network wants us to look at it. This distorts what the real world is like because we think it is the way we have been shown.

TV has a way of emphasizing or de-emphasizing subjects or important issues so as to determine what we think of the world situations. This, for instance, may be seen in the way the media projects the racial situation in South Africa or the political situation in India. We see and hear only what they want us to see and hear.

At election time, news commentators have their favorite candidates and make statements in such a way to throw light on their candidate and mud on others. They don't come out and say it, but by special wording, tonal inflection and facial expressions, they make people read between the lines and believe things, which really aren't stated.

Manipulation of Facts. TV manipulates rather than gives facts. Advertising agencies create what isn't there (images, perceptions) but what we would like to be there. They find out what people want (appeal to the flesh) and change the image of man to suit the people's likes and dislikes.

Corruption of Morals. TV corrupts the minds of people, especially children, as to what the world is really like, affecting how they view morals. ***Avoid every kind (every***

appearance) of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). Much of what the world is suffering today is due to the fact that people are the product of the first TV generation.

Modern TV makes crime and violence an accepted way of life. Many villains become TV heroes. Repeated watching of TV causes the human heart and conscience to become calloused to suffering and sin. Murder, crime and violence are justified. Lying is portrayed as a good thing under certain conditions. TV appeals to the sensational because it draws viewers.

TV teaches a false concept of love. Boy meets girl and in one hour they court, have sex, may get married, have a child and live happily ever after. Marriage is played down. Traditional values are scoffed at. Love is presented as physical rather than spiritual. Immorality, premarital sex (fornication) and extra-marital sex (adultery) are acceptable and even preferred practices. Divorce is encouraged. Homosexuality and lesbianism are presented as being acceptable alternative lifestyles. With the video recorder now licentious movies can be brought right into the home.

Christianity is perverted by TV. Almost always when a Bible-believing Christian is portrayed on the TV screen, he is invariably a crazy person who is half out of his mind, quoting the Bible, who hates drinking, dancing and smoking and who is against everything the world considers fun. He or she is often presented as a villain or a sexual pervert. But when TV portrays the good, kind, religious person, it is usually the nun or the priest or the protestant with his collar turned around who has liberal views on sex and politics and who understands all the world's problems. Never is the gospel of sin and grace in Christ presented correctly.

TV often misrepresents a true concept of God as set forth in the Scriptures. In one TV show, a man went to another planet and found a tiny race of people. These people worshipped him as God. He set himself up as Supreme and made people make an image of him. Soon this man-god became power hungry and killed these little people by crushing them to death and laughing about it. He kept this tiny race of people in constant fear. This TV program presented God as a monster of anger and wrath. These concepts stick in the minds of people. On the other hand, when God is presented in most cases, He is presented as a God of love alone, who will take all men to heaven.

TV is dominated by the profit motive. It is controlled by advertising, which has only the profit motive as its sole purpose for existence. Therefore, the networks are going to show the things, which will get people to watch so they can keep the big money flowing in.

Advertising appeals are made to the base nature of man not the product. It is one thing to advertise a car but to advertise it with a woman with a bikini or slink, sexy dress is quite another. Facts again are made to be misleading. An airline advertised that they were "number one". What did this mean? First in flights, first in capital or first in wrecks?

TV AND RELIGIOUS PROGRAMMING

TV has done much to help "gospelize" various countries. There is some very good religious programming but also much poor quality. TV programs are good for the sick or elderly that cannot get to church.

However, there are some drawbacks to religious TV programming that often set forth a very negative image of true Christianity.

Appeals for Money. Constant appeals for money are made which project a bad image to the non-Christian. The modern “Health and Wealth” gospel has been successful due to TV.

One Sided. TV religion must project the good, happy, joyful, wonderful side of Christianity or people will not watch. The result is that the truth about the Christian life being a battle, struggle and fight is minimized.

Substitute Church. People often stay home from church and watch a church service at home. This is bad because there is no fellowship, no discipline, no caring. Only information can be gathered in a TV religious service. Watching TV cannot attain the sense of communing with the Body of Christ and corporate worship.

Perverting Image. Usually the churches that can afford to go on TV are the mega-churches with outstanding preachers, choirs and orchestras. It is Christian entertainment at its best. It also makes it very difficult for pastors in small churches, who are not superstars but are faithful to Christ.

Passivity. TV religion is probably the number one cause of apathy among Christians. They want exciting, entertaining services where they can watch, feel good but not roll up their sleeves and work for Christ.

CONCLUSIONS ON TV

TV is a questionable practice. It may be right for one Christian to watch TV and not right for another. Each Christian must get his own convictions on this matter. However, it is never right for a Christian to watch things that are contrary to the moral law of God. Satan has used TV to capture the thinking of the nations of the world.

The real danger of TV is that it can become an addiction for people, even Christian people. Many Christians will not honestly face up to the fact they may be “hooked” on TV. ***Everything is permissible for me—but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me—but I will not be mastered by anything (1 Cor. 6:12).*** An addicted Christian to TV may have to give up watching TV permanently or until he can master TV.

Often Christians say they do not have time for prayer, teaching, serving, visiting, personal Bible study and witnessing because they give so many hours to watching TV each week. TV can destroy one’s spiritual life.

Christians should meditate on the following verses so as to determine what they will watch.

Everything is permissible for me—but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me—but I will not be mastered by anything (1 Cor. 6:12).

I will set before my eyes no vile thing (Psa. 101:3).

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things (Phil. 4:8).

Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word (Psa. 119:37).

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things (Col. 3:1-2).

The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God (Rom. 8:6-8).

Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded (James 4:8).

Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way (Prov. 4:14-15).

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night (Psa. 1:1-2).

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other (Matt. 5:26).