

## Shall I Pray or Watch TV?



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Published by Vic Zarley at Smashwords

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## Introduction

My hope is that this book will create interest, not so much for the purpose of changing television, but more in changing our hearts. When our hearts are changed, the outer world begins to reflect that change in the choices we all make, regarding what we choose to watch on TV (or whatever else we choose to do). Our lives can become true and living examples of the teachings of Christ or they can become mere reflections of the world and its carnal ways. For those of us sincerely into God's truth and Jesus' Way, we would never want our minds and hearts to be

dwelling on untruths, so often portrayed on TV. We would simply not be tempted, IF our hearts were truly changed by Christ, first. That truth is the foundation of this book. We must get right and honest with God first. We must take the beam out of our own eyes first... Truthfully, if we didn't clamor for more, more, more of the anti-manna found on the tube, we would not be served the indelicacies that TV offers.

**Mat 7:3 And why do you look on the splinter that is in your brother's eye, but do not consider the beam that is in your own eye? (MKJV)**

## Chapter 1. A Vast Wasteland?

Before I became a serious disciple of Jesus Christ, I watched TV and movies a lot. I, along with millions of other folks, grew up with television and movies and found them both absolutely enthralling, even addicting. I loved a good story, in fact I still do. We all love a good story. God must have known this as He loaded the Bible with stories. TV was rich with stories, and as I grew up, I would sit and watch it for hours, completely entranced by it.

Paul has asked us, who are of the Christian faith to "think on the good things." Does TV encourage thinking of the good things? Does TV give us a sense of hope or a sense that we are loved by God? Does the title of this book, "Shall We pray or Watch TV?" imply that we have to choose between the two? Yes, it might be necessary. What does your heart say about the amount of TV you watch? Do you find your life a bit on the boring side? Are you stuck in a routine at work, have the blahs at home, with not much of a social life? Maybe TV offers a wonderful cure by way of escape, for this problem. Sit down, grab the remote and watch the hours roll away until sleepiness overtakes you.

**"When television is good, nothing -- not the theater, not the magazines or newspapers -- nothing is better.**

**"But when television is bad, nothing is worse. I invite you to sit down in front of your television set when your station goes on the air and stay there without a book, magazine, newspaper, profit and loss sheet or rating book to distract you -- and keep your eyes glued to that set until the station signs off. I can assure you that you will observe a vast wasteland.**

**"You will see a procession of game shows, violence, audience participation shows, formula comedies about totally unbelievable families, blood and thunder, mayhem, violence, sadism, murder, western bad men, western good men, private eyes, gangsters, more violence, and cartoons. And, endlessly, commercials -- many screaming, cajoling, and offending. And most of all, boredom. True, you will see a few things you will enjoy. But they will be very, very few. And if you think I exaggerate, try it."**

**FCC Chairman, Newton N. Minow, 1961**

A few times in my childhood, usually when I was sick and didn't go to school, I actually did sit in front of my TV from sign-on until sign-off. I was not perceptive enough to objectively observe what was going on. I just spent the entire day and evening watching TV, mindlessly. By my personal experience, I can attest that there is a numbness that comes over you, along with a fatigue that begins in the mind and works outward until all the muscles of the body kind of ache. Regretfully, I can't relive those days and make them more productive. They're gone to wherever our days and minutes and hours go.

Now I see these times, in my past, as succumbing to a kind of fatalism. I got into a sense of, "What difference does a day make?" We're all going nowhere so why not try this, since our days aren't amounting to much anyway.

If TV is being used to avoid thinking about the drudgery and/or sense of hopelessness one might have, it is time to consider prayer instead. For, you see, prayer removes all sense of drudgery and all hopelessness, if it is done correctly. God's Holy Spirit will give you a desire to pray as well as the ability to pray effectively, if you earnestly ask for it. Later, we'll have suggestions from God's Word as to how to pray more effectively, so that we don't just wallow before God in a spirit of complaint and self-pity. Jesus said the truth will set us free. He also said not to judge by appearances. So we need to pray in such a way that appearances are not given any credence and God's sovereignty and creative ability IS. But, more on that throughout this book.

I have used movies and videos in an attempt to escape from a sense of drudgery and hopelessness, also. I remember, many years ago, occasionally (if my wife was busy on another project), I would make a movie weekend by renting movies to watch at home, in between scheduled current movie showings. I was definitely overdoing it, but here is what I'd do: I'd sit down and watch one of my rented movies (which I often chose, not on its awards won, or its artistic merit, but on length alone: the longer it was, the better it was in my book—because it meant my head would be buried in its escape, not having to think about life as I was living it) then I'd leap into the car, based on the schedule I'd worked out, and go see a first run movie. At its end, I'd hurry home to watch another rented movie. I did this the entire weekend!

I am living proof that TV/movies/videos can be addictive.

The article in Scientific American, February 2002 issue, "Television Addiction is No Mere Metaphor" by Robert Kubey and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, is one of countless articles in many publications devoted to the subject of TV addiction. From this article, we can see that the definition of substance abuse can be applied to TV watching. "Psychologists and psychiatrists formally define substance dependence as a disorder characterized by criteria that include spending a great deal of time using the substance; using it more often than one intends; thinking about reducing use or making repeated unsuccessful efforts to reduce use; giving up important social, family or occupational activities to use it; and reporting withdrawal symptoms when one stops using it."

I look back and think, "What was I running from?" Is life really this mundane? This dull? This drab? It isn't, but it is possible to believe it is and, therefore, create conditions (by our

belief) which make us think that life is a complete bore. The attitude that is taken is that we're born, we live some, and then we die. That's all she wrote. It's from dust we came and it's to dust we return. We all ride off into the sunset, rearing our horses up one last time, before the credits roll. Yet, few of us find the thrills of life that TV portrays. Perhaps that contrast between TV or movie lives and our own mundane ones, creates the very futility that causes us to justify wasting our lives staring at a box.

Now, many years later, God has taken me into a different realm of thinking and living. I'm trying to help you think along with me (should you still be in the thinking-that- life-isn't-really-of-much-value mode). God has, over the years, helped me to see that, though prayer seems to do nothing at first, it is actually an incredible catalyst toward an abundant life, promised by God for all of His children. What do I mean by this?

When we close our eyes and pray (not publicly, but in our private prayer closets— wherever they may be), we enter into a world that is not ruled by the world's thoughts. Even when our eyes are open, we are not ruled by the world's thoughts, unless we choose to be. But, when our eyes are closed and we are recognizing the truth (as stated in God's word), we are elevated above the world's games of survival, its games of glittery, unfulfilling "fun," and its games of mere existence. Effective prayer does not take you down into the world of appearances where Satan claims "it's kill or be killed, you have to claw your way up to the top, it's every man for himself, and the one with the most toys, wins" attitude. Prayer cannot take on the same attributes as the world does and be effective. Please read that sentence again. So, it is not only important to pray regularly, so that God can help you become aware of your latent talents that He wants you to use for Him, it is important to know how to pray, what to say, what to believe about yourself and others. The Holy Spirit is the great teacher for us. He actually prays for us (if we allow Him to). Just ask.

## Chapter 2. A Reality TV Show

There is an awakening that happens when you choose to pray more often, rather than watch television. You won't recognize it for a while. It takes time. It takes persistence, and it takes correct prayer (prayer that does not give credence to appearances). But it is of tremendous value, excitement far better than the best action show on TV or in the movies. This prayer stuff does not leave you numb and aching like too much TV or movies do, after vegetating for hours.

All your thoughts carry weight and most certainly will affect your prayers. I hope to convince you that God's immense creativity has not been tapped by you yet. When it is, you will be very pleasantly surprised. TV and movies will not hold a candle to your new life, in the Lord, because He will be taking you on the most exciting REAL journey you've ever been on.

We have a whole world filled with diverse and unusual things going on that attract us. The world draws our attention and influences our minds, (therefore the world affects our thoughts and prayers) and it won't let go. First one thing attracts us, then another, in a never-ending array of sparkling and fascinating things. We are dazzled and deceived, as make-believe and fantasy become fact in our minds. Then we can become disillusioned with it all.

Did you know we can convince ourselves that something is true (even if it isn't)? Our attention and belief is a nebulous thing. It bends like light through a prism, and focuses only on one thing at a time. Strangely, we can believe contradictory things at different times. We can believe, on Sunday that we must love our neighbors, but on Monday, we might gossip about them, curse them, or shun them. How can we let our **whole mind** in on the truth that Jesus' commands are what we want to do? We are creatures who are easily swayed and influenced. Therefore we should consider what we allow to persuade us. Is it worthwhile? Does it focus on mammon or God? If our mind is affected by the things we feed it, what should we feed it? Our government is conceding that trans fats are hazardous to our physical health, to the point that they are taking extreme measures to see that we don't eat it. Shouldn't we consider that there are things we feed our minds that are hazardous to our spiritual, mental and emotional health?

I was a fan of quiz shows. Quiz shows test our knowledge in earthly things. All wisdom is not found in earthly things, though. True wisdom is that which comes from God and His word. That is the wisdom that will truly benefit us all. Few of us can even appear on, much less win a quiz show. But God's wisdom will bless all of our lives. God is more than willing to give you direction, thereby fulfilling your deepest heart's desire to follow His will and not your own. The world is confusing with its messages and prods you to reach for the first thing that's shiny for you. But that isn't what you REALLY want, is it? You really want to do God's will for you. Your life can have a significant purpose. Is there something God wants you to do that might not be on your list of things that seem to matter more to you right now? How can you know God's will for you?

How about this for a reality TV show? Let's call it "Knowing God's Will." The audience would be ushered to their seats as the contestant sat in his prayer chair, eyes closed, asking God with all of his heart, what might be God's will for his life. Can you see the audience now, as the camera pans from side to side? There they are, sitting on their chairs in the auditorium, leaning forward, slightly, in anticipation of what will be revealed.

One or two hours a day, a contestant sits on the prayer couch in front of this vast studio and television audience, eyes closed, praying fervently to the Lord, asking what His will is for his life. As the worldly muck and mire is slowly moved over by the contestant's determined focus on the Lord's promises, found in the Word, a door opens slightly in his mind. This particular contestant has been back every day for a few weeks. Something is starting to happen in his mind and heart. He feels the comforting love of the Holy Spirit come over him as he recognizes his God is all he wants, all he needs, all he seeks. He is reminded that he must:

**Mat 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. (MKJV)**

He remembers, too, that the kingdom of God is within him. The audience, which has been so patient (for patience is required to those who write in for tickets to THIS show), is suddenly moved by the tears they see flowing down the cheeks of this contestant. They know he is receiving his answer from God, he is receiving his purpose, God's will for him, and they can see he has successfully allowed God's Spirit to move the mountains of garbage that has occupied his mind and heart for so long—since he was born, actually.

After weeks, maybe months of constant daily prayer, seeking first the kingdom, a shaft of God's light has broken through the refuse in his mind and heart, revealing to him, his purpose.

The audience gasps as this person's eyes flash open. His smile reveals that the Lord has answered his prayer. The audience applauds, and then gives the Lord a standing ovation as the camera pans back. Shouts of, "Praise the Lord" and "What a mighty and awesome God we have" are heard behind the theme music playing as a credit begins to roll on the screen that says, "We thank our wonderful God for this program."

Well, this probably wouldn't make it as a reality show of much interest, would it? It lacks the glamour, it lacks the excitement, and it lacks the worldly goals which the world imparts to all of its children: The world says, "Find out more about me, Me, ME!" With this show, however, the focus is inner, not outer. Unfortunately, no camera can pan the mind and heart, allowing everyone to share in the excitement of God's movement within a contrite and humble spirit. Though it is the most exciting thing happening on this planet, no news organization can share it—God's magnitude and glory cannot be photographed as He is moving in someone's contrite heart and mind. The difference between the Before-Prayer times and After-Prayer times is not recognizable by any of the media today. But, in your own heart and spirit, when you take regular time to pray, you are tapping into God's storehouse, you are reaching up to God and, glory of glories, He is reaching down to you—giving you all the wisdom, care and guidance you need—right now! Isn't that incredible! And yet, you'll never see this on TV—not on the news, not on Reality TV, and, sadly, there will not be a question asked about it on any quiz show.

The time spent bringing the mind into a focus on the Lord and building a desire to know Him IS valuable. It is time spent the way it is supposed to be spent. It is time spent that leads OUT of this world, rather than allowing us to be sucked more deeply into it. We should be curious about God. Enough so that the time spent in effective prayer, is allowed to have its fruition.

There is dullness, an extreme denseness, which covers the earth. This denseness blankets the earth imparting to everyone a desire to know the world, instead of God. But God calls each of us from this giant television, that we sit and stare at all day (known as the world). For the world IS a huge television screen, beckoning us to buy cold medicines, new cars, soft drinks, cleaning products, deodorant and beer. Is there something more for we children of our most high God? Can we spend our time in more fruitful ways?

In this world, it is not possible to have a reality TV show, because only God's truth is Reality and God's truth is not welcome in this world. This world is in its last days.

It is merely an illusion conjured up by Satan, the chief magician and organizer for this planet, since the fall. This world is nothing but a temporal and fleeting place in which we come for some testing, before we scatter to our eternal homes in heaven or hell. I implore you, Do Not turn on the TV for Reality Shows because they aren't there. The truth is they are "appearances" shows. Instead, go to Jesus and spend that time in prayer so you might get free of the grip this

world has on you, and receive an inspiring, uplifting dose of God's Reality, which is the only Reality there is.

Once this is done, you'll never desire the world's version of a Reality TV show again.

### Chapter 3. The Purpose of Television

The word "television" comes from the mixed Latin and Greek roots meaning "far sight." True prayer leads us into realms, through Christ, that gives us God's wisdom and wonderful "in sight." Since TV means "far sight" and prayer leads to "in sight," we can see that there may be some trouble reconciling the two words.

Television was gradually developed from scientific work begun in 1873 when Willoughby Smith discovered that selenium had photoconductivity properties. Then, according to an article on television in the Wikipedia, Paul Nipkow developed a scanning disk in 1884.

This eventually led to the ability to scan an image, turn it into an electrical current and send it over the wires to a receiver (the TV) at one's home. The receiver takes those electrical currents and reforms them into lines that show up on the TV screen. Our eyes, then, make these static images, quickly reproduced on the TV screen as fast as 30 times a second, appear to emulate moving, talking people or events in which you feel as if you are actually there. From that point on, many different scientific minds began to put the concept of TV together.

It was quickly discovered this medium could create interest for products that manufacturers made, and more sales could be generated. Not only could this new invention, the TV, be sold to make money, but, with interesting programming, ads could be sold that ran on it, and they could make money—and then, the products themselves, which were advertised, could be sold, making more money for more people. What a wonderful concept! It was truly an idea sent from economic heaven. And its only purpose was making money, money, money for the many involved, on many different levels of this product. Money for the ones who made the product, money for those who sold advertising (and for those who made the ads), and money for those who sold their products that were advertised on the TV. The purpose of TV is to fulfill people's desire for and love of, money.

Although there are some exceptions, such as many satellite, over the air and cable broadcasting stations that have Christianity as their foundation, nevertheless, most still fill the airwaves with comedy reruns, sports and other mammon (or worldly interests). secular TV generally does not have a purpose to lift people up to an awareness of Christ, to how much God loves them, nor does it encourage people to trust God and pray to Him, so that they might discover what God's will is for them and truly find their purpose in life and fulfill it. In addition, TV, by its very nature, provides only one-way information (no matter how holy it is). It can never take the place of our time spent in a two-way communication with God through prayer. Since it is necessary to find God for ourselves, the TV must be turned off as we retreat to our prayer closets more often. The world makes us chase after materialism, it makes us fearful, it fans the fires of anger in us, including anger that life isn't better than it is. But the world, Satan's playground, is deceitful.

**1Ti 6:9** But they who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts which plunge men into destruction and perdition.

**1Ti 6:10** For the love of money is a root of all evils, of which some having lusted after, they were seduced from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

**1Ti 6:11** But you, O man of God, flee these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. (MKJV)

**Heb 13:5** *Let your way of life be without the love of money, and be content with such things as you have, for He has said, "Not at all will I leave you, not at all will I forsake you, never!"* (MKJV)

This book is not so much about how TV works, as it is a book on the relationship between Christianity and TV, as well as a consideration of what TV has to offer, versus what prayer has to offer. Although I have watched a lot of TV in my day, I truthfully cannot say it offers much. Now prayer is another matter. As we learn to pray rightly from God's word and the Holy Spirit residing in us, prayer offers the abundant life that God promises we can have.

Over time, TV began to take on a popularity that no one could possibly have imagined back in Willoughby and Paul's day. In the 1930s, people began moving their furniture around to make room for these monstrous pieces of furniture they would place strategically at one end of the room. Each of these early TVs had a tiny screen just a few inches in diameter.

## **The purpose of television**

There are really many purposes to television. The primary purpose of television is, as I said before, to make money for all involved in the hierarchy from product maker who has a product to sell, to the advertising company (who makes the ads to run on TV), to the production company which makes the programming on which the ads run and, of course, the TV stations (local, regional, and national) that run the programming on which the ads run that sell the products. Early TV was "free" and was only supported by advertising which would interrupt the program you were watching every 15 minutes or so. These days we can purchase satellite TV or cable TV and not have to watch very many advertisements. But still, advertisements on "free" TV successfully sell many products we don't need. The "consumer" is often being manipulated by those who want to sell their products to them as they find new angles to make people want their products.

Did you know that television shows are written with cliffhangers designed to keep you tuned in so that you don't turn the channel during the commercial? Doesn't that knowledge sort of feel yucky? Lots of studies have been made to determine what it takes to make us buy something that we've seen on TV. Humor, it turns out, is very helpful in the selling process. That's funny! In addition, over the years, TV commercials take up more time (although they are shorter in length, there's just more of them). According to a Wikipedia article, found when you look up the phrase, "Television Advertisement," the time allotted to commercials has increased

remarkably from the 1960s. Re-runs of the shows produced back in the 60s have to be cut by as much as 9 minutes to make room for the commercials slotted today.

The agenda for TV producers is selling products. The watchers of the TV, we "consumers" if you will, have an agenda also. It is to be informed or to be entertained. Do these separate agendas work with or against each other? For those in the world it appears to be a symbiotic relationship that gives each party what they want.

But for the Christian, this whole process has gotten out of hand. Because this is a fallen world, and people who are unable to grasp the significance of Jesus Christ to the world and in our hearts, are making decisions on programming for us. They aren't interested in Christ or Christian values, they want to give us entertainment in the news and programming. They want to feed us mental junk food so we'll watch more advertising. They have no desire or inclination to feed us God's truth as found in the Bible, nor to help us grow and mature in Christ. What would that have to do with selling their products? So we watch the drivel they are serving us because it is mind candy, fun to watch, fun to laugh at, though the programming is completely void of eternal substance. Sometimes the intellectual mind is stimulated by "worldly substance" but, for the most part, spiritual truth is not being shared.

In this fallen world, mankind is determined to be completely dependent upon himself, and not on God. Since Adam and Eve were ejected from the Garden of Eden, all their ancestors have had to fend for themselves, kill or be killed, fight their way to the top, paying little regard to others in their way, and strive for purpose (even as they find that nothing in this world will ever satisfy them for long.)

In this environment, then, it seems only natural that we should "take a break" from our long, unsatisfying day, and become informed of what is going on in the world or be entertained in some way. But the human mind is never really in neutral. It is constantly processing information it receives. Whether on a conscious or unconscious level, our minds do something with every depressing brutality, every injustice, every bloody scene, every terrifying bit of news and even (for many of us) every unattainable display of wealth. If we think it isn't affecting us, we might consider the fact that depression, murder, crime, mental illness, divorce rates and suicides are at an all-time high. Perhaps we should consider that the best "break" from the daily grind should be a sweet hour of prayer.

## Chapter 4. Important Dates

### Important Dates in the Development of TV With My Commentary

A lot of the information I got on television history came from a site on the Internet:  
<http://www.the-best-of-television.com>.

*In 1923 the A.C. Nielsen Company is established to provide measurements of radio audiences for advertisers.* This enabled the radio ad salesmen to say something other than, "I don't know," or "lots and lots of people," when asked about the potential impact of the ad. By the

way, God doesn't use any kind of system like the Nielsen Company does to determine how many are tuned into Him. He already knows.

***In 1934, Congress passed the Communications Act which created the Federal Communications Commission.*** It was supposed to regulate all forms of broadcasting in the United States. However, it was impossible to regulate people's interest in things and, due to the fall of mankind, programming became different from the programming that God gives us when we pray. During prayer we receive a transmission from the Lord in which He informs us that He loves us and cares for us and wants only the best for us. This rarely happens with the programming the FCC is supposed to regulate.

***In 1936, the BBC is established as they broadcast the world's first regular TV transmission for three hours a day.*** Did we have our own best interests in mind when we developed TV? This is the beginning of a kind of foggy, mental manna, which we begin to feed ourselves.

***In 1938, Orsen Welles broadcast his adaptation of H.G. Welles' War of the Worlds during his weekly Mercury Theater of the Air radio program on CBS on October 30th. Due to its realistic "news" type format, there was a nationwide panic.*** Have you noticed it is sometimes hard to distinguish between reality and fantasy when it comes to what we transmit over the airwaves? Is it any wonder that we confuse ourselves about what is truth? Is it any wonder we panic so easily when one spot in the entire world is made far more important and bigger than it really is by our attention, as it is magnified and even glorified by the media?

The problems associated with the broadcast of War of the Worlds are still going on today. We are shown fragments of the truth and expected to make the fragments cohesive in our minds, but the overall assumption that God has no active roll in our lives, makes us believe that lie until, at home, left to stare at the one-eyed mammon machine, we fall into despair and weeping. Perhaps the TV, and its gradual spread over the world, is the invasion we need to panic over. Could we gradually return to God via prayer, as the TV takes up less and less of our lives, so that rather than being a victim of TV, we'll be a conqueror of it, through the mighty power of Christ Jesus? Can we have a happy ending to all these horror shows we transmit to ourselves around the world?

***In 1948, the first network nightly newscast, CBS-TV News, debuts on CBS with Douglas Edwards.*** With the advent of "news" shows, they quickly had to find someone who could sort through all that was happening in the world and condense it into approximately ½ hour. In order to be able to fit all news comfortably into the ½ hour time slot, they had to leave out all things related to God's spirit, the power of prayer, and the miracles of God.

***Also in 1948, the earliest cable systems were established in remote areas of Pennsylvania and Oregon. This was to help bring in TV signals into communities where a simple roof antenna (or rabbit ears on the TV set itself), couldn't pick up anything of significance due to interfering mountains or distance.*** Strangely, even with the advent of cable, nothing of significance was picked up. The time allotted to prayer in these communities dropped drastically, leaving many feeling as if they were unloved by God.

*In 1949, the first continuing daytime drama show premieres on NBC. It is called These Are My Children and is a live, 15 minute show.* Soap operas later expanded to ½ hour and later still, an hour, and became very popular because people weren't getting enough of "regular life happenings" and they needed to watch more of simulated life happenings. Also, their own lives seemed somewhat boring with not enough exciting negativity sprinkled in it, as far as they were concerned. Soaps, then, became a way to escape without really escaping, live without really living, and do without really doing. Talking to God, about what His will was for them, did not enter into the minds of those wrapped up in the soaps. This trend, though amazingly widespread, was not reported on any of the news channels as significant. It is still going on today. In order for TV not to bite the hand that feeds it, they cannot report as news that Soaps are an abomination to the Lord, a serious slip deep into mammon, and a mighty temptation to cut back on the time spent in prayer.

*In 1949, U.S. Department of Commerce confirms television's selling power when it reports in May: "Television's combination of moving pictures, sound and immediacy produces an impact that extends television as an advertising medium into the realm of personal sales solicitation."* TV has been determined to have a value as a medium in which solicitors may sell products and services. It would be self-defeating of television to recommend that prayers be prayed for strength that is not our strength alone. It would not be wise of them to ask us to shut our eyes momentarily, as we recognize our Almighty God and give Him some worship time, as we humbly lay our problems before Him, knowing that He can handle them today.

What a wonderful way to start the day **that** would have been! But, if our eyes are closed, we are not watching the television and not listening to the pitch of the ad, which was produced using moving pictures with sound, to give us a sense of immediacy. It is never *what* do we need right now. It is *Who* do we need right now. We need Jesus to lead us out of our self-made prisons, our focus on the dark, cold world, our sense of inadequacy and guilt. Only Jesus can help us.

Jesus, is unquestionably most beneficial for us right now. In the long run, prayers to Him lead to far greater good than purchasing those products ever will. God wants to help we "consumers" to be consumed by Him. He knows how best He can use us for our talents. He will open doors for us, that will appear to be by "chance," He will have us meet someone who will become our mentor, teaching us what God wants us to learn. We will learn to love by loving those who are easy to love as well as, with God's help, choosing to love those who are hard to love. But He only moves upon our lives as we ask Him to. Prayer is vital to God's involvement in our lives.

*Also in 1949, Cuba became infected with TV.* No one knew that interest in TV would expand relatively rapidly around the world, as more and more people were drawn into the power of this thing of the airwaves, TV. The power of this thing of the airwaves?

**Eph 2:2 ...you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience;**

**Eph 2:3 among whom we also had our way of life in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the thoughts, and were by nature the children of wrath... (MKJV)**

Regardless of whether you think you watch programs that are "good" rather than "evil," you should know that the majority of the programs are of the world, and they encourage you to think like the god of this age, Lucifer, who disguises himself as light, that old prince of the air.

## Chapter 5. Worshipping TV

***On August 19, 1950, ABC first aired Saturday morning TV shows for children.*** With advertising directed to children, now kids could be made to desire what, in the eternal sense, is worthless. They, too, could be made to need stuff that they previously did not need. They used the always effective WT method (Whine Technique). Now kids could whine at their parents until they got the product or they could bat their cute eyes, smile and say, "Please, Daddy, could I have that?"

When I was around five years old, I saw a commercial on TV where someone wadded a piece of plastic wrap up in their hand and when they opened their hand, the plastic wrap was gone. I was absolutely dumbfounded. How did they do that? "Man," I thought, "I have to have that." (I ask myself even now, "Why I had to have that?") I used the WT method and got my mom to buy it. When I took off the plastic wrapper and wadded it up in my hand, that wrap did not disappear. I had been duped! Boy, was I embarrassed, but I also learned something. Not all television commercials tell or act out the truth. Over the years I've learned that there is only one Truth that we can count on.

***In 1950, the number of homes in the US with televisions in them, reached one million.*** Few people knew that with prayer, properly prayed prayer; prayer that did not dwell on appearances, but prayer that exalted God, through Jesus Christ, was being given the short end of the stick by this new entertainment device being allowed into the homes of everyone. Few people knew that by their increased interest in the world (through the TV) there would be less of a hunger for God and there would be fewer searching after the abundant life promised by our Lord.

The TV disease was spreading as the entertainment committees who worked for the TV stations found more creative ways and more creative talent to appease everyone's desire for more entertainment and more worldly information to occupy their minds and give them the temporary satisfaction, the temporary break from a bleak and prayerfully weak, unproductive day. To everyone's surprise, after the entertainment was over, after the laughter died down and everyone got ready for bed, the feelings that they had tried to hide, tried to cover up, remained. The next day they had to return to the same old job and do the same old thing, while working with the same old people. Their sad appearance of reality would come back and haunt them to an even greater degree.

If only they knew that if they'd spend the same amount of time in true prayer, recognizing their loving Creator, seeking first the kingdom of God, their days would be filled with creative opportunities, and important spiritual growth.

Do we worship the TV set? Pastor David Wilkerson said in one of his newsletters circa: 1983 or 1984, that we may be guilty of worshipping the TV. He said that the TV is often in the center of the room and all the furniture faces toward it, and people do stare at it, barely relating to each other, as it blares one entertaining situation or informational tid-bit after another.

**Exo 20:3 You shall have no other gods before Me.**

**Exo 20:4 You shall not make to yourselves any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.**

**Exo 20:5 You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them. For I Jehovah your God *am* a jealous God... (MKJV)**

Do our ever shifting thoughts, influenced by TV, actually influence our prayers to God? I believe they do. Are we allowing those whose purpose is to sell advertising, to control our thoughts? I believe the influence of TV can affect our faith—and the Lord said our faith can make us whole. Therefore, if our thoughts embrace godlessness due to the underlying assumptions of TV, we may find our faith is lacking, and our prayers, half-hearted.

Do we want those who desire only to sell products, to actually take control of our thoughts for so many hours a day? Paul, in the New Testament, commanded that WE are to take charge of our thoughts. He never said we were to allow others, with so many cross-purposes, to be the ones to be in control of what we think during a particular time period...

**2Co 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare *are* not fleshly, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds,**

**2Co 10:5 pulling down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ...(MKJV)**

Has someone told you the lie that true prayer does no one any good? Did you fall for it? Folks, there is a God. If you've seen Jesus (in your mind's eye), then you've seen God...

**Joh 14:9 He who has seen Me has seen the Father. (MKJV)**

He wants us to come to Him, lay down our burdens, and feel the love and warmth He has for us. God wants us to stretch in Him, allow Him to stretch in our lives, encourage us to reach for Him, as He reaches for us. If we aren't hungry for God, hungry to get to know this marvelous Creator, who was able to take a couple of loaves and fishes and feed thousands of people, even take the agonizing pain of the cross upon himself for each of us, then we will fall into the deep sleep of televisionland instead, and become entranced with entertainment/information, given solely to sell us things we don't need as well as teach us things that aren't true. Which is it going to be? God or TV?

***In 1950, Brazil has their first TV broadcast stations.*** Television's expansion is getting out of control.

***In 1951, the first nationwide coast-to-coast television program was broadcast. Edward R. Murrow hosted this show entitled, See It Now.*** Now everyone, coast to coast, could be hypnotized to a degree, together. One could wonder, have aliens landed and taken us over, forcing us to watch these large, one-eyed, grey flickering machines? No, you say? Oh, you mean we developed these things and purchased them all by ourselves ...so we could sit and stare at them for hours on end? You mean no one is making us do this? Really? We do need help, don't we? Yet TV's endless glut of mind-candy seduces us into thinking we are one with those "characters" we assume to know and identify with. Yet we really know little about the real actors who portray the characters. In reality, their personalities are often a far cry from who they appear to be. We forsake the God who loves us and wants an intimate relationship with us, and trade that for an imaginary person who doesn't even exist.

***In 1951, TV broadcasts begin in Argentina (in Buenos Aires) as well as Peru.*** The interest we have in our personal entertainment/information as well as the carrier of the advertisements we want to run, so we can try to motivate people to consume our products, increases daily. TV will be the most effective way to "westernize" the world with carnal thinking. Not only that, television networks select writers who operate in a belief system of secular humanism. They produce scripts that attempt to make Christians appear shallow, stupid, hypocritical and uncaring.

***In 1952, Jackie Gleason begins sharing his talent with the world. He would become a cultural icon.*** Jackie Gleason developed the Honeymooners. He played a bus driver, common folk, not much money in hand. His best friend worked in a sewer. There were always problems, comically portrayed, comically solved, but never-ending. Many of those problems concerned an underlying bitterness and resentment Ralph and his TV wife had for each other.

Don't think the Christian life is void of problems. Indeed, the Christian, if he is taking his calling seriously, will have problems. But the problems, he knows, are not his own, but God's. Did Jackie "Ralph Kramdon" ever stop to pray for his wife or invite Art Carney "Ed Norton" to a Bible study? The true Christian prays routinely and often, laying his burdens down before the Lord. The Lord takes on our burdens and He solves our problems by giving us inspiration or bringing people in to help. We are NOT doing this alone (as portrayed in the Honeymooners) nor would we have occasion to say to someone, while swinging our fists "Pow, right in the kisser!" when something doesn't go right. Christianity is about caring for one another, loving all the people God brings into our lives, and being humble and teachable before the Lord. It is about praying that God's will be done and about knowing the truth of Romans 8:28, that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord. For some reason, beyond all of our understanding, we have allowed a non-Christian attitude to envelope us through TV, and, consequently, walk with us through life.

We love to look at ourselves in the mirror and laugh off our flaws rather than be transformed into the image of Christ. TV reflected our own lives so much, that people everywhere rushed to turn on shows just like this one, so they could nod in approval and laugh as they witnessed their very own lives, being expressed by Jackie Gleason. No where does the Bible say we are to continually be bitter with one another, year after year.

Jackie Gleason and TV went well together. Jackie could garner very high ratings with his shows and producers could get lots of high paying advertisers since lots of people watched his creative sketches every week on TV back in the 50s through the 70s.

You might think I'm getting very picky and I should stop criticizing the medium and get a life of my own. You might think I should get off my high horse and let everyone enjoy some TV. After all, you reason, no one is making me watch TV. It's not hurting anyone, you say. And, reiterating what I said in the beginning of this book, I'm not trying to change TV at all. I'm trying to get everyone, and especially those who call themselves Christians, to stop and look at what they are doing and ask themselves if it is something they want to continue doing. It is fairly mindless, the way we have allowed this plague to come over us. It has not come over us for our good—but it has come over us for its good. It is economically driven. We feed it ourselves (sometimes with our very lives, as I did at times in my life). Do we want to continue to let it rule our lives as we spend higher and higher percentages of our day sitting in front of it? God gave us free will. Is this what He wants us to do with it? Did Christ give His life for us so that we could continue to watch TV? Maybe that puts it into the proper perspective. Why not pray, instead, as you fast from TV, and ask God to show you what He wants you to do with your life?

## Chapter 6. Changing the Television Stations

There are various groups (many of them Christian) who take a proactive stance to get the content of the TV programs changed. This is working from the top, down. There has been some success this way, in the past, but there is a far better way to deal with immorality and a negative world view (that is, a view in which it is assumed that Christ and God are not available to help us as they comprise an uncaring force—or even do not exist.) The far better way to deal with these assumed views is to quit watching them.

If you are a Christian, and you talk to God occasionally, you know you talk to Him from your mind. You generally close your eyes, take a deep breath, and talk or whisper prayers to Him (or silently pray to Him). Where do your prayerful thoughts come from? They come from your mind. This is what your mind does. Your legs walk, your hands work, create or caress, your stomach digests food, and your mind takes the thoughts of your heart and coalesces them into words. This said, do you think God quits listening to your thoughts once prayer time is over? Does "Amen" act as an on/off switch for God? When you say, "Dear God or Jesus," do His ears tune in and when you say, "Amen," do His omniscient ears tune out?

Let's get real about God. No such thing happens. God is with us at all times. No matter what garbage is going through our minds (from television or anyplace for that matter), God's Holy Spirit is there, attempting to sort it out. If you are watching something that assumes a godless world, He will try to lead you to the truth (because Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit are the mediators between God and we here in the fallen world). But if we continually dump more and more untruths into our minds, we will be setting ourselves up for belief in an untruth, a godless world filled with misfortune. You can count on these appearances we believe in, coming true for two Biblical reasons:

**Job 3:25 For the thing which I greatly feared has come upon me, and that which I was afraid of has come to me. (MKJV)**

**Mar 9:23 Jesus said to him, If you can believe, all things *are* possible to him who believes. (MKJV)**

The Job statement indicates that fear of something (which is a type of belief) can cause that something to happen. Jesus confirmed that in the New Testament by telling us that whatsoever we believe will occur.

What can television do to us, then? By its godless assumptions, by its immoral implications, it feeds untruth to us. Do these untruths just disappear into the bottomless pit of our minds? Sorry, they don't. They become embedded into our hearts, defiling them, and causing us to speak and believe untruth. Is this important enough that we should be aware of it? Is TV doing anything to us? We are not victims of TV. We are victims, however, of our willingness to allow TV to run its untruths through our minds so that the untruths become part of our belief systems, and even cause us to deny God, His Son, and His Holy Spirit. When we do this, we become subject to Satan and his deceitful ways. Make no mistake about the power of the spoken word. One well-stated comment against your faith or God, in a fictional show, can plant a seed of doubt that will cause a lifetime of spiritual warfare.

*Also in 1951, I Love Lucy debuts on CBS. This was an extremely popular ½ hour situation comedy starring Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz.* Did you see the episode where Ricky came home only to find Lucy on her knees, praying that God would order her day? That's right, nothing went wrong. In this figment of my imagination, Fred and Ethel were in their apartment, bowing before the Lord, as well. They were interceding for Lucy, asking the Lord to make her life less chaotic. This, of course, could never have been an episode of I Love Lucy because it would have been completely uninteresting. Situation comedies require chaos—but in God's world, there is no chaos. There is a lot of Roman's 8:28 (all things work together for good to those who love the Lord), but Christians who read their Bible know that God is almighty and sovereign. Nothing happens without Him knowing about it and, indeed, even ordaining it. When we pray, we are given peace in our hearts. This peace settles in throughout the day and helps calm our fears. Our day is not perfect (by our standards), things happen that are unexpected, but we are not shattered by them. In addition, we become more in tune to God's Holy Spirit who is able to nudge a little here, and whisper a little something there, that moves us more into God's will, while steering us away from our own perceptions and judgments, which do nothing but lead us further into difficulty. Lucy (and most situation comedies, like the Jackie Gleason Show mentioned earlier) thrive on self-sufficiency (not God sufficiency) and the comedy comes when things go from bad to worse.

I don't mean to be a killjoy. I have enjoyed I Love Lucy along with you. But we don't really want to have a life that is as chaotic as Lucy's was, do we? Let us be aware, then, that we are feeding untruth to our hearts when we see the incredible chaos that marks each I Love Lucy episode. Why wouldn't our lives begin to reflect the life the writers gave this popular comedienne? As we are intensely involved in any program we are watching, we are buying into the underlying assumptions—God is no help, prayer has no place in our lives (just as it has no

place in the lives of the characters). At least be conscious of this. Ask God to help you become aware of all the times the world distracts you from the truth.

***In 1952 the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters ratified a new television code, establishing guidelines for broadcasting content and addressing the concerns of social critics. Nearly half the code is devoted to advertising.*** The purpose of each of the shows on commercial television is to hawk products. Unfortunately, because of the nature of the media, advertisers need to take a buckshot approach...and we sit through them, not even flinching as each irrelevant ad goes through our minds. Is this the way we want to spend our precious time on earth? Watching a majority of irrelevant ads go by?

***In 1952, the number of households that had a television grew to 20 million. Advertisers spent \$288 million to get their products TV exposure.*** We become more and more interested in this invention of ours. The mammon machine is able to capture well those who can make us laugh by their comedy, or make us cry, by their dramatics. There is a symbiotic relationship established between the advertisers and the producers. They each feed off the other and we, the people, are happy to lend our minds, our hearts, and our souls to perpetuate their co-dependency with each other. It is not too late to ask this next question. As the Lord prepares to return, we must spend time with Him in prayer and have our oil filled for our lamps. Time is short. Do we want to continue allowing our souls to participate in the symbiotic relationship between the television producers and advertisers?

***In 1952, the first political advertisement appears on US television. Democrats buy a 30 minute slot for their candidate, Adlai Stevenson. Unfortunately, they chose one of the most popular shows of the day to pre-empt: I Love Lucy. Stevenson is bombarded with hate mail for this thoughtless act. Dwight Eisenhower buys 20 second commercial spots and wins the election.*** There is a gift of focus in us. I believe this gift was given to us by God's Holy Spirit and it can be of tremendous value in keeping our eye on the prize, and helping God bring people into His kingdom. This ability to focus in on one thing only can, however, be a detriment to all that Christianity stands for, if it is tainted with attributes of the fallen world. This, I believe, is what happened with this political incident in our history. Good, upstanding Christians were probably involved in the sending of hate mail to Adlai Stevenson's office, though I don't know that for certain. There is a behavior that Christ asks for in God's word. He asks us to love our neighbor as ourselves, do good to those who do evil to us, and do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

These are basic rules, commands, if you will, given to us by the One we call Lord and Savior. What Christian would deliberately set about to write a hate letter because a TV show was pre-empted? Were they taught lack of respect for God's rules by TV itself? Was the godlessness of the very show they were seemingly addicted to, somehow developing in its viewers, a sort of rudeness and selfish behavior that would cause some people to drop their civil attitude and instead display a raw and emotionally hateful one—because their show was taken from them? I don't have the answers to these questions, but kindness and love and charity is a trait Christians ought to have without even thinking about it. I feel that these traits ought to be at the top of the practicing Christian's "To Do" list.

Could anything like this still happen today? I believe, since we all live in a kind of moral fog, that it could. The behaviors Jesus taught us need to be practiced. He said, "If you love me, follow my commands." Do we love Him enough to do this? Personally, I want to put more emphasis on relying on Jesus and His teachings as I live my life. But first I must remember...

**Joh 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (MKJV)**

It isn't, "God so loved the world that He sent His Son so that we might have control of the remote, and freely choose whichever channel we feel drawn to watch." Jesus shed His blood for us. This is the cornerstone of Christianity. But, while we reside here, we must remember that He also very carefully taught us behaviors that we need to purposefully adapt into our lives. Unfortunately, these behaviors He taught us do not come naturally. Look around you to see what comes naturally. It is a mess. This is because the world is fallen, and our own flesh agrees with the fallen nature of this world.

We must adapt the behaviors Jesus taught us or we might as well look God straight in the eye and tell Him we have better things to do than to "pick up our crosses" and follow Him. In general, does television (and for that matter, books, movies, and videos) promote the teachings of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? Are the assumptions that each show makes, helpful, or do they hinder our ability to adapt Jesus' teachings into our lives? Is it worthwhile to carefully pick and choose only those things that promote Jesus' teachings and lead us into a greater awareness of God? Can this be our entertainment instead of focusing on the ungodliness underlying most of TV programming today? As I've stated before, let us, at least, become aware of what we are doing and what we are teaching, both to ourselves and to our children, as we live out our meager lives on this ball of shame. Otherwise, one needs to ask, why did God send us a Savior? It must have been that we needed to be saved from something. We need to be saved from the carnality, the sin, the pride, the self-sufficiency and the selfishness that are the hallmarks of this fallen world.

If we don't watch the current programming with its underlying godlessness, then the combination advertising/TV production machine will dismantle the current programming as they diligently search for what we ARE interested in. In their search, could they find a people who eagerly embrace God's teachings? What a good idea!

"Do you mean," you may ask, "that Christianity is meant to be actually practiced and not just laid out as theoretical concepts?" Yes, I mean just that. And, listen to this, if our churches could help carry the banner of this book and teach classes on what to do now that your TV is gone, as well as teach helpful prayer techniques that exalt God's sovereignty, that would be exciting. How about churches instructing us on how to pray, asking God's help in loving those who don't love us, praying for those who persecute us, and basically helping us toward having an undefiled heart? Wouldn't that be great? THIS should be what we strive for.

As practicing Christians, praying on a regular basis is imperative. We must have a working relationship with God. We must desire to pray effectively and, with our desire, will come an answer from the Holy Spirit within. We aren't praying when we are watching television,

are we? Is it possible that TV producers might want to have all programming go silent for an hour (the hour of prayer) and people would be encouraged to spend this time in devotion and supplication to our Lord and Savior? If this is what WE wanted, this is what we'd get. Why? Because they want our interest in them for a purpose, so they can sell advertising. We have allowed this creative symbiotic godless relationship of producers and advertisers to tell us what we want to see. Isn't it time we told them what our interest is by letting our remotes do the voting? Also, it is possible we may not be interested in ANYTHING they want us to be interested in? Indeed, we might not want TV at all.

## Chapter 7. Why Have a Christian World View

The reason I'm a Christian is because God's hand brought me over from a New Age (or self-sufficiency) belief system. My heart was open for the truth and God brought me to the truth by numerous miracles.

I'm a Christian because God told me (personally) that Christianity is the truth. Some might say, "Them's fightin' words!" I truly don't mean them to be. I weighed a bunch of things before I committed to Christianity. I loved the miracles He performed like multiplying the loaves and fishes, changing the water into wine, the healings, and the raising of the dead...

**Joh 10:37 If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me.**

**Joh 10:38 But if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works so that you may know and believe that the Father *is* in Me, and I in Him. (MKJV)**

A very important reason, for me, was that Jesus is the only religious leader who was killed and came back to life. That, in and of itself, is enough to make me curious and very interested in what He had to say. But why He died is even better. He died for my sins. He died in place of me! Because of Him, I have eternal life also.

I am a fanatic about Jesus' teachings as well. Christianity is not an easy religion and much must be taken on faith (until God has a chance to confirm the truth in your heart).

**Joh 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by Me. (MKJV)**

This means that we all must adopt the Christian point of view. Everyone! I know it sounds like we Christians are a bunch of egotists, demanding that everyone adopt OUR way. We aren't egotists. We didn't make up Christianity. God sent His Son, Jesus. He made it up according to God. The thing is, Jesus' way REALLY IS the only way. If the Christians out there would actually follow Jesus' commands, I mean really, all the way, with intensity, follow Jesus' commands, we'd see people coming onto the narrow way by the droves. Unfortunately very few Christians have tried Christianity in its fullness—loving their enemies, being willing to pick up their crosses of persecution and follow Jesus, showing love to those who do not show love to them. Do you see what a mighty force Christianity could be for God's goodness to manifest through Christ indwelling in each of us?

Of course, this world is filled with lots of people's points of view. And many other people throughout time have claimed to be very enlightened and even presented fine, humanitarian teachings (teachings that say we must love each other.) We, however, are all opinionated. This ability to make our own decisions came from Adam and Eve who deliberately rebelled against God and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, tainting their ancestors (us) at that point with the original sin of rebellion and the ability to know good and evil (judging).

God only sent One to help us all. He didn't send Buddha, He didn't send the prophet Mohammedan, He didn't send Confucius, He didn't send Mary Baker Eddy, He didn't even send Billy Graham, He didn't send Ghandi, and He didn't send Mother Teresa, nor did He send the Beatles. He sent Jesus Christ only. Everyone else, EVERYONE else, might have fine opinions and even some valid points (especially when they promote Jesus), but no one else gave His life for us...or on a more personal level, gave His life for my life and gave His life for your life. This is an extremely unique situation. Please consider this: No where else in human history does someone give their life in place of ours and then is raised from the dead. Forty days later He finally ascends into heaven where He takes His seat right next to God. By the way, people who reject the notion that Christianity is the only path, yet perceive Jesus as a good man, teacher, and even a prophet, are apparently unaware that it was Jesus Himself who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father **except through me.**" (Emphasis mine).

I have been a New Ager. I understand metaphysics, channeling, fortune telling, meditation, and lots of other tricks of the trade. Nothing measures up to Jesus. Nothing. There is something that Christianity asks of us that many other belief systems simply can't (or won't) ask of us. It asks us for complete submission to God. Christianity also says we must be willing to give our lives for Jesus and be willing to love those whom, right now, we may not even like.

The Old Testament points to the coming of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. The New Testament tells the story of Jesus (through the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as well as Acts, and then tells the inspiring story of the early church through the letters of Paul and other early church leaders). This Authority, who proved His divine heritage by His death and resurrection, said He is the only way. He didn't tell us this, during His brief stay on earth, so that we would fight each other until one side or the other was proved right. He came AS THE AUTHORITY and told us what truth was. We all simply must follow Him based on Who it was that was here with us, the Son of God—and has promised to be with us until the end of the age.

There is another reason, besides simply opinion, why many do not choose to be a Christian. Many do not know how to categorize the crucifixion in their minds. They are unable to grasp it with their intellect. It is beyond them why someone would have to go through submission to one of the cruelest deaths the world has ever invented, for all of us. Let me simplify it for you:

God required it and He did it. Period. It took bloodshed to cover the sin and resulting sense of nakedness of Adam and Eve. (Where do you think God got those skins? How do you think God felt to have to kill one of his own precious creations? Why do you think He then received blood sacrifices? Because He wanted us to see the horrible cost of sin in a real graphic way.) It took bloodshed to redeem the earth from that sin. Now don't forget it! This is why you

want to be a Christian. Jesus died for us. Before He died He taught radical love. He taught that we should not strive to save our lives, but willingly give them up, for Him. He taught that we should bear our crosses and follow Him. He asks us to love our God with all our hearts, souls, and strength and our neighbors as ourselves. Is there anything more challenging that we could do on this planet? Is there anything more worthwhile?

Once again, a very important reason people hate Christianity is it teaches a philosophy of submission—but not just submission to God; submission to the attack of others in this carnal world. Submission and a non-violent approach are initially detestable to your rebellious human nature. Turning the other cheek seems ludicrous. Pointless. We have so much to protect, and yet our meager lives here do not amount to a hill of beans, when it comes to eternity with the Lord. We must give up our small lives (die to self) everyday in order to obtain God's abundant life. We so often do not recognize the gift God sends us, in the form of our enemies (whether they are across the street or across the sea). We are not to fight people, we are to love them, we are to pray for them, we are to lift them up that they, along with us, might know the Lord and have His light bursting forth in their minds and hearts, too.

Truthfully, our lives don't make any sense here on this carnally influenced planet. We live for less than a wink of an eye before we are thrust into our permanent homes for eternity. I would like to live in heaven with Jesus, so I choose to follow Him and accept Him as my Lord and Savior. I do not want to dwell in hell. That would be ridiculously foolish and highly undesirable, to put it mildly, since it is described as a place of unquenchable fire, torment, weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Drop all that you have figured out by yourself (or with your parent's, guardian's or college professor's help) and just drop on your knees and accept for now what doesn't exactly make sense—Jesus Christ. Submit all to Him and let His Holy Spirit create your prayers and draw you closer to Jesus, showing you His reality as opposed to the world's reality. Let go of your stuff and grasp on to Jesus. Just do it. He will do the rest to make Himself known to you.

If we all did exactly that, there would be no more controversy regarding "religion" any longer. Jesus would be accepted and the entire world could celebrate the same birthday (Christmas), the same death and resurrection (Easter) and the same submission of all our burdens to Him. Wouldn't that be wonderful? But wait, something else is wrong. What is it? Oh, there are many people who find religion insulting to their intelligence. What can we offer them?

If that is you, please come down a peg or two. Stop trying to make it solely on your own. Stop trying to make sense out of this world of appearances. God is real. Your very life was created by Him. Accept, at least, that you didn't create yourself. Nor are you solely the result of the love of your parents. You were created by God and given an opportunity to accept Him in this world and this is the moment you can do this. Beyond what makes sense to you, beyond all the ducks you have placed in perfect order in your life, beyond all the intellectuals you read and value so highly, there is a man on a cross, who died for you. He would die for you alone, even if you were the last person on this planet. He loves you so much, He was willing to do this for you. Accept Him as your Savior, now. If the wisdom of men could save a single soul, why is this world in such a mess? It's our pride that makes us think we are so wise. The greatest of man's

wisdom fails to prove itself. Science cannot create a single thing without using something that God already made.

Now we've got work to do. We've got to get completely behind Jesus. All of us here on this planet. Because there is no other way to the Father. Let's pray that everyone in the world bows down to Him in this life, before it is too late. And let us show them the love Jesus showed us. The Holy Spirit will take it from there and show them Jesus, as He truly is.

If we did this, newspapers, radio, television, the music industry, the movie industry—everyone could stop avoiding the truth and start living it openly. Persecution of Christians would end. We'd no longer have the oppressive dictates that we must be tolerant of each other's belief systems—forbidden to present ANY Bible-based belief system at all (odd, isn't it, that another religion, the religion of humanism—IS allowed to be taught throughout the secular world and in the schools). We are all Prodigal children and God wants us back! Jesus is the only way. We must all fall to our knees and claim Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We must all be Christians, now! Beloved, it is not the will of the Father that ANY should perish, but that all should be saved through the blood of Christ, shed on the cross. Sadly, however, the Word tells us that many will not humble themselves, repent and be saved. And this earth will have to be destroyed. What a shame that the salvation of every soul is one aspect of God's will that He has had to lay down, for the sake of allowing man to have his own free will.

My wife and I have a ministry today—God has supplied us with an angle, if you will. We are to emphasize the teaching of Jesus' commands, while He dwelled on this earth. (If we had the chance to share our message on TV, and it was the Lord's will, we would be thankful for an opportunity to spread Christ's teachings, even though we generally dislike the medium). He has given us a message for the lost and the Church to live out His Gospel and follow Him. Our ministry and calling is exciting to us. Yet we often find that being a true disciple of Jesus is somehow relegated to a very low position on everyone's "To Do" list. The bottom line is simply that after we've accepted our Lord and Savior into our hearts, and recognized the blood He shed for us removes our sins, we need to walk His walk and not just talk His talk. Our behavior needs to reflect Christ. We need to choose to actually love our enemies, as Jesus commanded us to do. There are many people who claim to love the Lord, but Jesus said, "If you love me, follow my commands." Therefore, there is a condition to our love of Jesus. We must follow His commands. Period. He also said if we don't love Him, don't follow His commands. We are puzzled by the many who say they love Him, yet they don't follow His commands. "Commands" don't mean "suggestions."

Jesus wouldn't have told us to follow Him and change our behavior if it weren't required that we do this. If we DID follow Him and changed our incorrect belief systems conforming to His, we could have prayer in school, we could have theatrical releases with plots that told stories of the power of prayer, we could have books that encouraged us to forgive each other, and all radio stations would play music that sang of the glory of God. There would be no secular radio or TV. All of us would be Christian—because Jesus said He was the way, the truth and the life and based on His authority and miracles and His completely unique death and resurrection, we, at last would all be on the same page.

Unfortunately, very few will recognize God's visitation on earth as being important. Though it is unsettling to think of changing our belief systems, keep in mind we aren't born with a belief system; they aren't genetic or embedded in our DNA, however I believe God DID place a spiritual hunger in us that compels us to seek Him. Belief systems are chosen--and they can be unchosen, and replaced with the one that reflects Jesus' miraculous birth, His completely unselfish death on a cross for our sins, His resurrection from the grave and, finally, His ascension into heaven. Add into the mix that, while on earth, Jesus taught a completely compassionate, caring and forgiving way of life, and we can safely come to the conclusion that there is no other way to the Kingdom of God. He really is The Way, as the early Christians used to say.

## Chapter 8. Children's Programming

*In 1955, Captain Kangaroo made its early morning television debut on CBS. Bob Keeshan starred as the Captain. He had previously been Clarabell the Clown on NBC's Howdy Doody children's program.* There are some shows that I remember influencing me as a child and Captain Kangaroo was one of them. The Captain was loving, peaceful, kind and gentle. As was Mr. Rogers of Mr. Rogers Neighborhood. These are wonderful traits of God with which we can show the world. Today my daughter occasionally enjoys Clifford, the Big Red Dog and Maya and Miguel available on PBS. My wife and I find many good morals presented to the children in these few shows. It is heavenly to be able to say something nice about some of the children's programs. Although these shows don't outright mention Jesus Christ, they at least teach the children traits of God, like love and forgiveness that can eventually lead children to Christ. However, it is not by such behavior alone that mankind is saved, and we remind our daughter of this.

However, the violent Saturday morning children's shows on commercial television, teach kids that if you have very thick armor and super powers or weapons, you can kill all the bad guys and live happily ever after. This isn't the way we overcome the world. In the Old Testament, the Bible tells us many stories of the children of God needing to conquer cities, promised to them by God. They almost always had immense divine help in order to conquer the city. We, too, need that same divine help to conquer all that blocks our way in this world and keeps us from our inheritance from God.

The violent shows are all about self-sufficiency, not God-sufficiency. The children are taught to put on their worldly armor and draw their swords before charging like the men of the Light Brigade (the many who fought fruitlessly until their death in the Battle of Balaclava on October 25, 1854 in the Crimean War). This was immortalized in the poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson entitled "The Charge of the Light Brigade." We need God. Our children must learn about Him so that they'll grow up realizing Who their rock of salvation is, and safely build their homes on His foundation. In addition, we must remember that Jesus taught non-violence and invited us all to quit trying to save our lives, or we'd lose them. Rather, He exclaimed, we should lose our lives for His sake, and obtain eternal life. This is so foreign to our natural thinking and so few really try to practice it. No wonder modern Christianity has left a bad taste in the mouths of those who have chosen to reject it.

**Mat 16:25 For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it, and whoever desires to lose his life for My sake shall find it. (MKJV)**

Jesus taught that we should not desire to conquer the world but, in a sense, rise above its insane premises and follow Him. This goes against the entire "world system." Indeed, our entire society is built on conquering the enemy (or anyone who might upset our way of life), and striving to lift ourselves above them, militarily, intellectually, and emotionally. Jesus gave His life for us and, with His statement that we should pick up our crosses and follow Him, we are expected to give our lives for others. No one will follow us if we beat them up. Yes, we may be killed (martyred, if you will) but the hardest thing to do—the hardest thing to teach our children—is that we must stand firm, not on our own strength, but on the strength of Jesus Christ and His teachings. We need to stop protecting our meager little selves and walk, triumphantly toward heaven, by giving up the worldly methods and adapting Jesus' heavenly ones. They are clearly stated in the New Testament and, with Jesus' walk to Calvary, clearly demonstrated as well—for when Jesus was dying on the cross, He asked our Father to forgive the ones who were killing Him. There is a strength demonstrated there that goes far beyond any worldly physical strength we might conjure up by ourselves. As for me, I want Christ's strength. He truly does give me my way, truth and life. I want to be like Him.

The violent Saturday morning children's cartoon shows teach that we should act crazy and clobber our enemies. They, then, entice the children to desire many wonderful toys (or candy, or cereal) in between the violence. Is it any wonder that our children have not got the concept that God is a very real help in our time of need? Is it any wonder that the children grow up truly believing the lie that we can take care of ourselves, and that we don't need God. Also, is it any wonder that they grow up desiring lots of things to make them happy?

The underlying message of self-sufficiency can be devastating because it ultimately does lead to defeat. The underlying message of the sponsor is really what we must be concerned about. It teaches desire for things and that, inadvertently teaches that our happiness is only found in the acquisition of material goods. Is the TV going to teach the children the Christian values that are needed so that the children can grow up and have a foundation in Christ and be encouraged to actually follow Him as they live their lives? Do we really want to encourage them to sit in front of this one-eyed monster (as a kind of pseudo baby-sitter) while we do other things?

***In 1955, Gunsmoke debuts on CBS starring James Arness. It became the longest running western themed program.*** We love a good story (no matter what the time-period it takes place in). The characters the writers created were believable and credible as they quoted their lines. We got lost in the story every week, but every week our God was relegated to the background, while man's version of justice dominated the screen. Every week, instead of turning the other cheek, vengeance ruled. The bad guys almost always got what was coming to them by the end of the story and Hollywood's twisted version of moral truth became embedded in our hearts and minds. God's word does not say that we are to seek for and make the outlaws pay for their sins. It says we are to forgive—even as much as 70 times 7 times. I know that our justice system today is run on the same principle but, no matter how many times I read the Bible, Jesus still says we are to forgive. Do I mean even murderers, political tyrants, and hateful robbers are

to be forgiven? Does Jesus really mean it when He says we should forgive? Did He forgive the murderer Saul who became the Apostle Paul and wrote most of the New Testament? He sure did. And, in the process, Paul became of great value to God. Is this an unusual case? It need not be.

When we forgive others (and most of us don't have to deal with those who have committed murder) we show them Christ's love AND we die to self (because our pride finds it very distasteful to forgive). It is repulsive to our flesh because everything we stand for rests on our pride. We are able to hold our heads high, as we march through our lives, and it is great to have people looking up to us. When our self-created handles we use to hold onto our lives are threatened, though, we feel we must protect all we have created of ourselves, and lash out at anyone who does not respect us. Jesus never said that when you became a Christian, everyone would respect you. He said there would be tribulation. He said we must take up our cross and follow Him. When we let our pride rule, those who have not found Christ yet, are the losers. We push them away from us and our opportunities to show them the Gospel (the good news) is spoiled by our actions and unChrist-like words.

Gunsmoke rarely, if ever, portrayed this underlying truth to its viewers. It was never about dying to self and the process of forgiving. It was about saving our way of life and eliminating anyone who threatened it. Why do we take Christ's commands so lightly? What is it about us that sees no value in the teachings of our Savior? The saints who have died by the hand of the tyrant, because they refused to stop worshipping Jesus Christ, are enjoying eternity with the Savior right now. We have to be deliberate in our attempt to come at our lives in a different way, with different belief systems from the world's. We have to step out on a limb and trust that we will be supported by our loving Savior, Jesus Christ, as we do what He said to do and follow His commands to love the unlovable and forgive those whom we feel should not be forgiven.

*Also in 1955, the \$64,000 Question premiered in June on CBS, igniting a US game show craze.* We are a people with enquiring minds—and we want to know! The game shows were designed to hold our attention because we are so interested in having knowledge about everything that's going on in this world. I don't mean what I'm about to say to sound pious or "holier-than-thou." I'm not a snob. I'm not holding my nose up in the air when I say this. It is just the truth. The foundation of this world, and all the withering vines that stem from it, is dying. There is nothing worth saving of it. We should never build our house on it because the foundation is false and it will cave in on us.

**Mat 7:24** Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on a rock.

**Mat 7:25** And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house. And it did not fall, for it was founded on a rock.

**Mat 7:26** And everyone who hears these sayings of Mine and does not do them shall be compared to a foolish man who built his house on the sand.

**Mat 7:27** And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the wind blew and beat on that house. And it fell, and great was its fall. (MKJV)

The facts and the figures from the world will mean nothing in the long run. There are some things that must be memorized in order to pass our school requirements, but don't become bogged down by what the world thinks is important. There is only one thing we should build our houses on: Christ. There isn't anything going on in this world that is worth knowing EXCEPT Jesus Christ. Keep in mind the truth that was said about Him by Paul:

**Rom 14:11 For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God." (MKJV)**

Paul is quoting Isaiah 45:23. Our job, as Christians, is to really know this truth for ourselves—which will, in turn, inspire others around us. The Holy Spirit will bring people to us who need to know this truth and by our lives, words, thoughts, and deeds, we will teach them.

Interestingly, the following year another quiz show, Twenty-One, was started up and the producers of the show disregarded the concept of being straightforward with the audience. Behind the scenes, they coached the contestants on how to act uncertain as well as gave them the answers to the questions they wanted them to answer correctly. This caused quite a stir, leading to congressional hearings and sweeping changes in the quiz show business, later. But, as I said, though we remain fascinated by every single aspect of this world, consider that worshipping our world, by focusing our interest in it, to be just another game the world invites us to play in order to distract us from our interest in Christ, our Savior. We can't focus on God AND mammon (or God and the worldly things). It is impossible.

**Mat 6:23 But if your eye is evil, your whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light *that is* in you is darkness, how great *is* that darkness!**

**Mat 6:24 No one can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. (MKJV)**

We have to focus on one or the other. The world wants us to focus on it. God wants us to focus on Him. The clock is ticking, the tension building, theme music is playing. Which one is it going to be for us?

To tell the truth, sole interest in the world has really put us in jeopardy. The consequences of this truth include a sense that God has abandoned us here and we are lost and alone with no one to help us (not even the game show host, Satan). Satan has told us a lie about what to really believe, and we have chosen to believe him. Know the truth and be set free.

## Chapter 9. Sports

***In 1955, NBC broadcast the World Series for the first time.*** There is an incredibly high interest in sports (even on many Christian based television channels). It is considered by many to be good, clean fun and hardly anything to get upset about. We need to look at the underlying teaching that is going on with regard to the various things we watch on TV. We need to open our minds and hearts and, in all honesty, determine what preoccupation with sports on TV (or in real life) feeds us.

Our Christian walk is about giving love to the world. God gives His love to us and we must give His love to others.

**1Pe 3:8 And finally, all *be* of one mind, having compassion on one another, loving the brothers, tenderhearted, friendly.**

**1Pe 3:9 Never give back evil for evil, or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, *giving* blessing...(MKJV)**

Genuine love of the Lord cannot be given if there is a sense of competition.

**1Co 13:4 Charity has patience, is kind; charity is not envious, is not vain, is not puffed up;**

**1Co 13:5 does not behave indecently, does not seek her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil. (MKJV)**

Today sports is not just fun. It is often filled with the flesh (human glory, corruption, and much more. There doesn't seem to be any humility, any holiness in sports. Of course there are always exceptions (such as found in the movies, "Facing the Giants" and "Blindside") but, in general, we can say that the culture of ancient pagan Greece, where they worshipped the human body, its strength, its prowess, is reincarnated in today's world in all sports (from professional sports down to sports in our schools).

**Gal 5:26 Let us not become glory-seeking, provoking one another, envying one another.**

**Gal 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the Law of Christ. (MKJV)**

Paul understood that the only power worth boasting about was the power of Christ. Paul spoke of us becoming weak in order that He, Christ, could accomplish miracles through us and for us despite our sinful natures. This does not fly in the face of today's culture in which sports produces idol worshipping and enthusiasm and frenzy for carnal personal accomplishment.

**2Co 12:9 And He said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may overshadow me.**

**2Co 12:10 Therefore I am pleased in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am powerful. (MKJV)**

Though Paul spoke of "running the race" in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, he was not promoting the pagan practice of worshipping the body but was trying to illustrate in a way we might all understand, how important it is to strive for God's glory (and not our personal glory).

God and His miracles can appear anywhere. Mighty miracles can occur on the playing field, on a basketball court or hockey court. God can appear wherever a prayer is prayed and

wherever a heart opens up to Him. But the general tone of sports seems to leave God in the lurch. What value is there in spending so much time watching sports? When you choose to quit watching it, replace it with prayer. Do not be afraid to allow some void to come into your heart as initially your mind will be craving your addiction to the games. Let God's Holy Spirit fill that void, which is left in your heart, when you give up sports or TV in general. God will change your life and make a way for you to have a great time with your new interest: prayer. Hopefully, if you'll stick with prayer in place of sports for three months, you'll never want to go back to sports to "kill time" again.

When you begin to know the truth (as Jesus told us in the word), you will feel the large TV icicles, formed when all these decisions were made to watch TV, begin to melt.

***Videotape is introduced by Ampex Corp. in 1956. The three networks place orders for the recorders.*** This enables east coast evening news to be taped and fed to the west coast channels three hours later. Suddenly the entire continent was seeing Douglas Edwards broadcast the news at the same time in all the time zones. Video tape recorders later became available to consumers and I jumped for joy, once I was able to record my favorite shows, then play them back at my convenience. The moment they became available, I had to have one. I bought one for around \$700 (wholesale) through a record and tape distributor that I worked for in the early 80s. It could record one event in 24 hours. I was in TV heaven, able to rent movies without needing to cart the player home any longer (as we used to do when renting movies first became a business).

Our minds belong to Christ and Him only. I am saddened when I think of all the time I devoted to TV, in my younger days. I sold my soul to it and, over time, it gave me nothing in return. Our minds have a tendency to remember how we have been hurt, slighted, misjudged, and put down. We, on our own, have the ability to re-play these events in our minds. Sometimes, this can get out of hand as we re-play an event, giving it much higher precedence than we should, even throwing our lives out of balance by our obsession with it. Man seems to have the ability to create anything his mind is capable of imagining—hence the development of the video tape and recorder. Now, anything we like on TV can be recorded, kept, and re-played over and over again.

Our minds, however, belong to Christ. It is He we should be focusing on, it is He we should be listening to, it is His wisdom we should be allowing to flow through us, to permeate this dark and cold world with His love. Can we get the picture?

Paul said:

**Phi 4:8 Finally, my brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* honest, whatever *things are* right, whatever *things are* pure, whatever *things are* lovely, whatever *things are* of good report; if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* any praise, think on these things. (MKJV)**

Paul didn't say, "One day you will have a device that will enable you to record and play back anything you want to on your TV. Make sure you record anything that tickles your fancy and play it back often. It is an invention that God gave you and you may use it as often as you like, even forsaking prayer time. God will understand your preoccupation."

God has given us free will. The world has enslaved our free will. With every device that draws us deeper into the world's clutches, it appears our Father drifts further away from us until, alas, it appears He is nowhere around...and we're alone with our devices, our entertainments, our diversions. But it isn't our Father who is drifting from us. It is we who drift from Him.

Our free will appears to be satisfied as we march through this world, enjoying its temporary delights, but every one of these carnal delights eventually leads to depression and wailing and gnashing of teeth (just like hell). Not one enticement of this earth will ever lead you to the personal peace and joy that Jesus Christ gives us. To know Jesus Christ, you have to spend time with Him. Just as with any friendship, you must develop it and nurture it.

Our wills are free to embrace the world and its goodies OR Christ and His true freedom. We can't have both as is attested in a previous verse I quoted, Matthew 6:24.

"But," you say, "I've tried sitting still and praying to God. I just can't get into it. It is kind of boring, sitting there. All these other thoughts come to me and I can't control them." Will you observe what is true for you and share it honestly with the Holy Spirit? Will you attempt to pray (even if you don't feel like it or don't know how)? Will you ask God's Holy Spirit to help you pray? Don't expect instant results. Just take the time to want to pray, ask the Holy Spirit to pray through you, and relax and let it happen. Start with 15 or 30 minutes a day. That's all. Devote it to God and His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to us. He is also known as the Comforter. As you pray, be comforted and assured.

You are God's child once you've accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior. He has promised that He will not leave you comfortless. You have tainted your heart and mind with all the choices you have made to watch TV so much, for most of your life. Now you must persistently desire that past incorrect choices be eliminated from your mind and heart. God will work with you to purify your heart.

Is it worth it? Oh, my, yes! Doors will begin to open for you as you pray correctly. Stick with it. Do not let the world pull you back down into its dark chasms and evil ways. Walk with the Lord as He stills the storm raging in your mind. Allow Him full charge in your life. He's not just all the people in the world's Savior. He is your very own personal Savior.

***In 1960, 90% of all homes in the US have television sets.*** Did we see this coming? Do we really want to continue to invite this one-eyed monster into our homes? This monster is really a very unholy marriage between production companies and advertisers. We are the experiment. We are the ones who respond to the ads favorably, thereby keeping this unholy marriage so healthy. Perhaps it would be possible to set aside a week of abstinence from TV. Just say NO to it. Do you start to get nervous just thinking about doing that? "What if a big disaster happens during the week, how will I know what is going on?" you ask. Let's talk about disasters and TV. Do they really tell you what is going on?

## Chapter 10. Disasters and TV

Kathryn Fry wrote a very informative article which you can read on the Internet's Museum of Broadcast Communications found at <http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/D/htmlD/disastersand/disastersand.htm>. It gives you a little broader understanding of how disasters (both natural and technological) are covered. You can begin to see how TV affects our perception of disasters. How a disaster is reported can help us form opinions and give us a false sense of completion about what happened and why.

Television cameras can focus on a particular aspect of a disaster and magnify it in all the viewer's minds. There is a lot of power there that we willingly give to the television news media because of the authority they have presumed they have and that we have presumed they have, as well. All we see in any disaster is the physical remains, we are not shown the spiritual at all. Why? Our worldly bodies were not designed by God for us to be able to see the spiritual. The spiritual is invisible. How, then, can the spiritual be known to those who cannot see, by way of faith, beyond the physical? Disasters, then, leave us feeling depressed and agitated because they do not convey any sense of hope, but only hopelessness. For the focus of those who report the "news" must be on appearances and the physical, not on faith and the invisible. True hope is only found in Jesus Christ. He is rarely, if ever, brought into coverage of disasters because the world has placed Jesus in a subordinate position. He is the leader of our spiritual life on Sunday, but He is somehow not worthy to be considered as anything special the rest of the days of the week.

The reason we wanted to separate church and state many years ago was because MANKIND tainted the church with carnality. God didn't do this, we did. Unfair laws were made that forced others to do things against their will. Society took a firm stand against that and said, by virtue of the laws they passed, "Church, you will not do this again." The church forced itself upon the community and the community rebelled against the church. Jesus became the scapegoat because of this. Now, all of society attempts to run on its own steam and God is unacknowledged as the power and authority that He is. Prayer is not generally thought of as an important ingredient in disaster reporting. The one-eyed monster just stares at the mess and shrugs its metal shoulders hopelessly as if saying, "This is the way it is and we are helpless in this world." Is this the attitude we want to bring into the disaster, whatever it is? When we watch TV, we take on the attitude of the reporters and find ourselves, with our spiritual thinking caps off, shaking our heads in despair, in agreement with the godless approach the reporter takes.

We, the viewers, cannot help but adopt this helpless, hopeless point of view because we are relying on a godless system to tell us what is going on. Again, this godless system cannot know that life goes on eternally for everyone. This godless system cannot advise all of us to hope and pray that everyone who lost their lives knew the saving power of Jesus Christ. The media is often run by people who have a vested interest in reporting only appearances, only what they can see, hear, touch, or feel. God's Holy Spirit, and our eternal spirits, are never acknowledged because to them, they are unreal.

Are they unreal to you? Do you find yourself somewhat down when you watch the unfolding of a disaster on TV? This is because the media cannot acknowledge the existence of God or His Son, Jesus. They cannot suggest that people pray because, in order to do that, people would have to turn away from the TV (and the sponsors) and close their eyes. This would be unthinkable to them. Besides, if prayer were suggested as often as it should be (considering the

mess the world is in), people would eventually rightfully decide that prayer offers more to them than television ever did. And they'd be turning off the sets by the millions, never to turn them on again. As the televisions were carted out to the garbage dumps, furniture could be rearranged in such a manner that people would be facing each other, communicating once again, laughing, loving, and enjoying each other's company. What a concept!

Of course there are times when God can use the TV to let us know of impending danger. But we have allowed the television to dominate too much of our lives. Let's somehow let it be a servant to us rather than we being a servant to it.

Have you watched the reporting of severe weather? Some reporters can get very excited about dangerous situations, and they talk very fast, pointing at circulating arrows on their big map, and warning people to take cover. The violent forces of nature appear to be stronger than Christ. He is not even considered. Do you remember reading in the Bible about the time Christ calmed the storm, relieving the anxiety of the apostles, who feared for their lives? Can Christ do this today? Do fretful weathermen ask everyone to pray to the Lord that He might calm the storm, and keep us from harm? Actually, we know of one local forecaster who did just that. His request for prayer, when a tornado touched down, was refreshing, but he is a rare exception to the norm. My family and I have experienced God's protection during a particularly violent storm with golf ball sized hail raining down—yet had no damage to our vehicles parked outside. We sang "Praise God" to the tune of Amazing Grace, over and over, praying with all of our hearts for God's protection, which He provided. Why do you suppose, the mighty God of countless miracles, is given such low emphasis, when we need Him the most?

We have fallen into a deep and dark ravine that envelopes our minds and hearts and makes us insensitive to others. We have taken a sleeping pill known as TV, and Jesus Christ is gently shaking us even now, to awaken us from our slumber. He loves us and wants us to share and live the truth as the writers of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (and Paul) have written it. The truth will set us free. Appearances never will. Know the truth and be set free. Know only appearances and dwell in a grotesque world that sucks the life out of your mind and heart. It calls you a "consumer" and yet all it does is consume you. It wants to do nothing, but eat you up alive!

Next time you pick up the remote, remember what it is called. It's called a remote control. This is because with each click, it takes control of your mind as it takes you to a remote place, very far away from the truth. It takes you away from our Lord and Savior, Jesus. With each click, its underlying teaching is that we live in a godless world and all is hopeless. Is this what we want to believe? Is this the truth? Is this the faith that can make us whole?

Why do we get excited about all the carnage that goes on in this world? Why is death so fascinating to us? Which headline is likely to find its way into the newspaper: A Million Souls Found Christ Today or Ten Bodies Found in a Home? Of course, the ten bodies found in a home will garner top headlines. Why? The media cannot acknowledge God's Spirit and all that is related to His Spirit. But they can count bodies left behind and this makes for interesting, sitting-on-the-edge-of-your-seat reading. But, it isn't just the reporter that makes the decision to dwell on all the negative stuff that is going on. He does this because we, his readers, are obsessed by this news as well.

Make sure you check your heart and your heart's desires. Make a conscious decision to swing toward Christ's hope and away from the compelling but depressing carnage being reported daily, all over this world.

There is a sense of completion that we all need. It is very comforting when someone can sum up the day's events in a half-hour and tell us all, "Good night." We now know it all and can rest assured that nothing is getting away from us. We've got it. Our attention can now resume to our own lives, where we cope in a world fraught with unresolved issues, because we refuse to adopt Jesus' commands to love and forgive. This is too dangerous, we assume. The risk is too high, we surmise. It's a foolish idea, we reason, as we refuse to check our hearts and lift others up to the Lord's care.

Let me help be a reasoner for you. There is no truth that needs to be known except Jesus. There is no news that needs our attention except the good news, The Gospels. There is no sense of completion that is of any value unless it stems from God's word, the Alpha and the Omega and involves what Jesus did for us on the cross.

***In 1960, Seventy million people watched the presidential debate between John F. Kennedy and Vice President Richard Nixon.*** I was too young to vote, but I remember watching this debate. I was impressed with John Kennedy and I sensed a genuineness emanate from him that seemed lacking in Nixon. Others must have thought so, too, because John became the President for a season. But the TV failed to reveal the genuine spiritual condition of either of these men, so we elect our leaders based on the carefully presented "appearances" of their character.

There are so many things we have to do for ourselves here on this planet. We have to have political leaders because our invisible God chooses not to manifest Himself as He did in the days of Moses. He only dwells here by the Holy Spirit, of Jesus Christ, in each of our hearts. Jesus occupies a throne next to the Father's in heaven. He was in the world, but not of it, when He was a man walking this world. He did not want to be made king here, but gladly accepts His role as King and Lord, in heaven, as well as the coming millennium. "Every knee shall bow" before Him, one day.

Meanwhile, here on earth, we, too, might like to withdraw some of our investment we have in this world and redirect it toward heaven. Only our awesome and almighty God should be involved in our decision making. And, in turning more toward Him in prayer, we will find our lives gathering a heavenly momentum that draws men to Christ.

Why don't we spend more time in prayer? As individuals, let's discover the amazing potential God can have in our lives (which are really His lives). Let's watch Him do amazing things with times, places and circumstances, here with us today, as He is made ruler and Lord of our lives. No, we can't literally hand over the reigns to our invisible God and ask Him to run things here, but we can ask Him to run our own lives, as we get to know His reality more every day. As more and more people do this, His hand will actually reach into the very mechanism of our government and He will play a very proactive role in helping us get our priorities straight. We'll begin to see that because of God's sovereignty, He DOES rule all the time.

He allows us to make fools of ourselves as we position ourselves in this world. He knows we can never trust Him fully right away. It takes time for us to hand over the reigns to God. But, as we see His wisdom, given to us through our prayers, we'll know that no knowledge, totally based on the world, is ever enough. We need God's wisdom and He is more than willing to give it to us IF we will only spend more time with Him in prayer.

Initially we cannot see that giving our lives to God means much because we are numb to His reality. We have numbed ourselves by our daily choices—to watch TV instead of pray, to read entertaining books or magazines, instead of pray, to watch or play sports instead of pray. We think our minds to be worth next to nothing in the entire scheme of things—and we are wrong. God needs every one of us to get to know Him and trust Him and love Him as a friend. For He is our best friend and He is willing to share with you His deepest truths and give you His full attention, for He is your personal Savior.

Prayer is rated very low on many people's priority lists. And yet, through the power of prayer, we can be given, through God's Holy Spirit, wisdom that does not come from the world. Prayer is interactive. When we submit all our talents to God, God often gives our talents back to us with instructions on how to use them...for Him. How much of our lives are we willing to give to God? What portion of our lives is self-made and, thereby, completely worthless to God? God knows our hearts. He wants to be in charge of them. He wants to be the King for you. He will lead you on an exciting journey with His abundant life and a shared joyous walk, with Him always in your heart and at your side.

Seek first the kingdom of God...and political and all other worldly interests and events will take care of themselves. Build your trust in God through prayer.

**Mat 6:31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, With what shall we be clothed?**

**Mat 6:32 For the nations seek after all these things. For your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things.**

**Mat 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. (MKJV)**

If you want things to go on as usual, never knowing what "fate" will bring, then keep on watching TV for many hours a day and wait and see what happens. But, if you want to give God more of your life by spending more time in prayer, He will see you triumphantly through everything and you will have a peace that goes far beyond the world's understanding.

***In 1962, Walter Cronkite succeeded Douglas Edwards as anchorman of the CBS Evening News. "And that's the way it is."*** For 20 years Walter Cronkite would actually cause news to happen by his insightful interviewing, and his choice of which news stories to report. He almost always ended his newscast with "And that's the way it is." But is it?

As stated earlier, with levity, someone has to cull through thousands of news stories to determine which ones are newsworthy. This someone is making an arbitrary decision that the

news they report is actually all that's happening. Walter's signature sign off statement drove home a certain false conclusiveness to those watching the news for the twenty years he was managing editor at CBS.

We need to be conscious that what is reported on TV (or anywhere, for that matter) is not necessarily "the way it is". We have a tendency to fall into a kind of dream world in which what is said on TV is considered fact. But what often isn't considered is that the world is made up of people who live and think and breathe and pray and dream. Many people are confused and lack a strong faith in God. The "news" has not generally helped anyone feel more confident in the Lord, or helped them see that their lives are of tremendous value to God, or that they have a special purpose that regular communion with God (through prayer) can reveal to them.

The "news" often leaves nothing but huge question marks hanging in the air like, "Why did THAT happen?" and "Where's God in this?" How does the evening news promote faith in God? It can't. What is it that most of us need around 6:00 PM and 10:00 PM every night? Faith in God. Has faith in the world and its events, ever satisfied us or made us feel safe in the arms of our Father? Why do we choose to view the news (as the local and national TV reports it) when, 1.) it is never satisfying from a spiritual point of view and 2) it is, by its very nature, and by natural time-constraints, very incomplete. All it does is make one feel completely powerless and hopeless.

Is there some payoff that TV reporters (and the networks) get for sharing the fragmented and hopeless stories in which bodies lay strewn on the ground and the ones who blew up the building, are still at large? Where is God in all of this? Why can't He be brought in? Why can't people be asked openly to pray for the victims and their families? Why does God have to be left out? Perhaps because, in the name of objective reporting, no religious assumption can be incorporated into the fabric of the "news."

We don't need "objective" reporting. In the name of Jesus, we need a more complete report that includes the assumption of our spirits, alive and (if our bodies lie still on the ground), the assumption that we are, hopefully, in the presence of the Lord. These physical eyes cannot see past the physical and one of the major atrocities of the evening news is that nothing is reported PAST what can be seen. Death is always seen as final, and not an entrance into the eternal. We damage our hearts (defile them, if you will) by assuming, "That's the way it is!" with every newscast. Check your Christ-centered heart and ask yourself, "Is this the way it is?" Don't numb yourself to God's truth by watching "the news" and unconsciously buying into the underlying assumptions of our absolute death and the underlying assumption of godlessness. God loves us too much to allow us to continue to delude ourselves with these untruths.

***In 1962, TV surpassed newspapers as an information source for the first time. A Roper poll indicates that 36% of Americans find TV a more reliable source. 24% favor print.*** There is really only one reliable source of news: The Bible. It is the Gospel or "The Good News." With a tremendous variety of angles, and personalities, and sources that surround the events of the world, we can't really know what happened because everything is tainted with the underlying bias of the ones gathering the news and the ones disseminating it. Though God's word has all the news we need, we remain far too interested in the temporal news found on TV.

Take a break from temporal news and soar into the heavens, while replenishing your heart, with the news found in God's word.

***As of Jan. 2, 1971, all radio and TV cigarette ads were banned due to a congressional law passed in 1970. The broadcast business survived despite losing 220 million in advertising that year.*** The Surgeon General had come out earlier saying that cigarette smoking was bad for us. Over time, we came to our senses regarding this issue, and stopped suggesting that people harm themselves with this product.

We need to become aware of the power we allow TV to have over our lives. We may need to strip ourselves of it for a time as we step back and observe what we have allowed it to do to us. Will it survive us doing this? More than likely it will. It is driven to survive. Will it change to suit our needs? Of course. Maybe if programming begins reflecting a Christian view instead of a worldview, some time could be devoted to it again. Meanwhile, we must all learn to appreciate each other as time opens up for us. We want to talk with each other more, and, of course, we must all use a portion of our new found time to get to know our God through prayer.

***In 1952, TV reached the Dominican Republic.***

***In 1953, TV reached Japan.***

***In 1954, TV reached Colombia.***

***In 1956, TV reached Australia, Spain, Sweden, Germany and Uruguay.***

***In 1957, TV came to Cyprus.***

***In 1958, TV came to Portugal.***

***In 1960, TV came to the Republic of Ireland.***

***In 1960, 90% of US homes have television.***

***By 1968, nearly 200 million households owned television sets in the world. 78 million of them are in the US.*** Some of the areas in 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries that are furthest away from civilization, in which the inhabitants are living in squalor, with barely enough to eat—in their homes, you may still find a television or two on.

***The Television Bureau of Advertising and other reporting organizations, announces that the average American household watches television between 3 and 7 hours a day.*** "The amount of time people spend watching television is astonishing," according to the article quoted earlier from [Scientific American](#), February 2002 issue, "Television Addiction is No Mere Metaphor" by Robert Kubey and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. "On average, individuals in the industrialized world devote three hours a day to the pursuit--fully half of their leisure time, and

more than on any single activity save work and sleep. At this rate, someone who lives to 75 would spend nine years in front of the tube."

***In 1992, there are 900 million television sets in use around the world. 201 million are in the United States.***

***In 1993, 98% of all US households have at least one television. 64% have two or more.***

***In 1996, over a billion households around the world now own a TV set.***

It is obvious that we haven't got our own best interests in mind and cannot really make proper choices here on this planet. As you may have noticed, we've chosen to spend an incredible amount of time staring at a box. Perhaps we could make another choice—and back off from this preoccupation, for now. Maybe we could, sort of, regroup.

There are some wonderful ideas found in the Bible. The Bible is the account of Someone God sent to save us (primarily from ourselves). By the blood He shed on the cross, He has given His pure life for our sinful ones. In addition, He has given us some guidelines for living by His teaching, while He traveled with us on this planet.

Eternal salvation is quite simple to achieve. It is free. Although you had to listen to some advertising to find out about it, you are only required to claim it in order to have it. Once we have given our hearts to Jesus and made Him Lord over our lives, there is a channel that we need to turn to. We need to switch our mental, self-sufficiency focus. We need to stop what we are doing and humbly ask God for help. We have done more absurd things than just spend uncountable hours staring at a box. We were born in sin and are part of this fallen world. We all must take Jesus Christ as our Savior. We must understand that we need Him more than anything this world has to offer. We need Him exactly as God sent Him, as our Lord and Savior.

God didn't want to use a remote control to change us. Instead, He sent His only Son, Jesus to lift all the sins of the world from us. God didn't want to just zap us into submission. He asked His most precious Son to journey from heaven and dwell in this fallen world for a time, teaching us how we must behave so that we might be a representation of Him. He prays that we would decide to make Him a part of our hearts, that we would, hopefully, shine His light for all to see, and share Christ's love that all might receive it.

His death for us was the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to the human race. It must be grasped by us. It is not in the TV Guide. It is in the Bible. The Old Testament points to His coming and the New Testament tells us He came, fulfilling all the Old Testament prophecies. Let's look at some passages for help in praying correctly as well as to help us understand why TV may not be in our best interests.

## Chapter 11. The Bible and TV

**Exo 20:1 And God spoke all these words, saying,**

**Exo 20:2 I am Jehovah your God, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (MKJV)**

If there is any sense of bondage in us, if we feel trapped in any way, to anything of or in this world, we must know that Jehovah God can and will free us from it. He will not free us from it unless we ask Him and we must ask by sincere prayer. That means if we choose to escape from our sense of bondage by watching TV, the bondage will still be there at the end of the show (especially if TV is our bondage). But if we choose to seek escape from the chains, forged by this fallen world, by falling on our face before the Lord and humbly allowing Him to send a helper or deliverer, God will do it because our God is a God of miracles. He will make a way of escape from snares. In addition, while you are still in bondage, do not forget Joseph's example. He always stayed true to God and was a fine witness to everyone he met, even as he was held captive, unjustifiably, for many years.

Television shows are around 30 minutes. Sometimes they are an hour or more. The freedom from bondage that God promises you can have, will often require a "pressing in" that will take longer than that. Don't expect one half-hearted prayer to change your life. If necessary, think of prayer as a mini-series in which it is imperative we tune in to the next program of the series, and the next, and the next. Jesus said to knock and keep on knocking and it will be answered. Trust this with all your heart. Expect to be made free. This freedom will not always occur in the way you expect it to occur. Rather than an escape out of the environment you are in, God might change your heart so that the environment you are in, becomes new in Christ. God's ways, I've noted, are always higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:9).

**Exo 20:3 You shall have no other gods before Me.**

**Exo 20:4 You shall not make to yourselves any graven image, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in the heavens above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth.**

**Exo 20:5 You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them. For I Jehovah your God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons to the third and fourth *generation* of those that hate me,**

**Exo 20:6 and showing mercy to thousands of those that love Me and keep My commandments. (MKJV)**

God desires our attention. We rarely give a thought to our Creator and yet it is He who sustains us, Who gives us our every breath. It is also He who sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us...so that we can watch TV? No, so that we can be a witness to others, so that we can have an abundant life for God. So we can go out into all the world and preach the Gospel to every living creature. How dare we waste so great a salvation that cost so dearly, on godless entertainment!

**Exo 20:7 You shall not take the name of Jehovah your God in vain. For Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain. (MKJV)**

It is amazing how many movies (and videos) are loaded with phrases that take God's name in vain. "It doesn't bother me," you may say. Then you have become numb to it. You have become

used to it. What does this say about our inner altar? It is defiled because you have grown accustomed to hearing God's name in vain. Our hearts can become hardened, our eyes can be set on the appearances of the world and we cannot lift them to God because if we become numb to people saying God's name in vain, we will become numb to God, Himself, and find ourselves unable to trust God, unable to become humble before Him, unable to worship Him.

We cannot look down on God and have a proper relationship with Him. We must look up to Him and if we are listening to a whole lot of people taking God's name in vain, we may think we are handling it okay, but the underlying assumptions, the subconscious teaching is that God is not worthy to be exalted and if He isn't worthy to be exalted, then we have no one to pray to and pour our hearts out to. We have become, in a sense, detached from our God. God's name is holy as He is holy. It should only be uttered reverently and in prayer. Let us not become calloused to our most holy God by casually listening to His name being spoken irreverently or by uttering profanities ourselves, thereby demeaning the name of our most holy God.

**Exo 20:8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**

**Exo 20:9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work.**

**Exo 20:10 But the seventh day is the Sabbath of Jehovah your God. You shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger within your gates.**

**Exo 20:11 For in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day, and sanctified it. (MKJV)**

Jesus clarified this commandment when He walked the earth thousands of years later. Our Father never stops working for us. We should never stop working for Him. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. The day should be set aside for holiness, however. It should be set aside for prayer. If necessary, we can work toward letting go of the massive restraints that we have allowed the world to attach to us by our consent. TV's underlying assumptions teach us that God doesn't care for us. Perhaps some prayer time can be devoted to meditating on the truth, found in the Word, that God DOES care for us. At first you might not believe it but, in time, God's truth will take the place of the world's truth, embedded so deeply within you. Then one day you'll come out of your prayer closet, tears streaming down your cheeks, as you feel God's loving embrace all through your heart, soul, and body. Then you'll know that the underlying teaching you were getting from TV, was false. Why not start weaning yourself from TV by simply fasting from it on the Sabbath in honor of God?

**Exo 20:12 Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long upon the land which Jehovah your God gives you. (MKJV)**

There are quite a number of situation comedies today (and in the recent past) in which children do not honor their mothers and fathers. Nor, may I say, often mothers and fathers do not edify their children. There is an underlying sense of sarcasm and loathing in the television relationships. Parents cannot live up to their kids' expectations, nor do kids live up to their

parents' expectations. Neither respects the other. Humor is reduced to coarse jesting, rudeness and insults.

If God were put first, if prayer was a way of life, then, what naturally follows, is a recognition of the holiness (or potential holiness) of all. We are no longer focusing on appearances and making them real to our hearts, but focusing above the appearances, to God's eternal point of view, and adapting His view for our own. Prayer, with a humble request for God to help us let go of the demeaning attitude, does that. How about a show where the characters build one another up instead of tearing each other down?

I had enjoyed *Fawlty Towers* with John Cleese. But, as I became more aware of the sarcastic spirit that is being taught on TV, I found my interest waning in that program because of the sarcastic spirit running through it (particularly between Cleese and his TV wife, as well as between Cleese and many others in the show.) There are plenty of shows that denigrate fathers, mothers, and children—making us laugh at them, giving us a spirit of sarcasm as we watch them act foolish or haughty. When we see someone act foolish, why wouldn't our sympathies and love go out to them as we prayed silently for them?

The sarcastic comedy has assumptive teachings that can be devastating to our increasingly pure heart and our walk with the Lord. I doubt that laugh tracks are adjusted according to God's Word. We must watch our hearts and not be tempted to enjoy others being put down. This includes gender bashing, where husbands make fun of wives and wives make fun of husbands. The pollution of television has even snaked its way into the churches and gender-bashing often occurs from the pulpits.

**Exo 20:13 You shall not kill.**

**Exo 20:14 You shall not commit adultery.**

**Exo 20:15 You shall not steal.**

**Exo 20:16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

**Exo 20:17 You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's. (MKJV)**

But, keep in mind, the Lord never said that we couldn't watch others break these commandments on television, way in the future.

**Exo 20:18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled, and stood afar off.**

**Exo 20:19 And they said to Moses, You speak with us, and we will hear. But let not God speak with us, lest we die.**

**Exo 20:20 And Moses said to the people, Do not fear, for God has come to test you, and so that His fear may be before your faces, so that you may not sin. (MKJV)**

We can no longer stand far off and allow Moses to speak to God for us. Moses said, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, and so that His fear may be before your faces, so that you

may not sin." The television is a test. Just a test. It has a power that is solely of the world and it cannot hold a candle to the power of Jesus Christ, who is not of this world—but of heaven.

We, who have allowed Jesus Christ residence in our hearts must now, get down on our knees and weep before the Lord. When our weeping is finished, we must repent of all the time we spend mindlessly before the mammon-god, television. We must vow to spend time in prayer, getting to know our God, who dwells in the depths of our being, just waiting for us to reach for Him, so that He can reach for us. What fate awaits us, if we neglect so great a salvation?

Christ has obtained the kingdom of God for us and in His wisdom has created a plan for our lives that He wants to give to us—if we will only stop occupying every spare minute of our lives with worldly stuff and quit allowing Satan to deceive us with the lie that despair and death, as well as worldly entertainment, are all that we have to look forward to. So we need not turn the channel for another dose of this worldly dismal dream. Please recognize God's promises found in the Word. It is not necessary to live such a wasteful life.

**Amo 3:10 For they do not know to do right, says Jehovah, those who store up violence and robbery in their palaces. (MKJV)**

**Jer 4:22 For My people *are* foolish; they have not known Me; they are stupid sons, and they have no understanding. They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. (MKJV)**

**1Jo 2:15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him,**

**1Jo 2:16 because all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.**

**1Jo 2:17 And the world passes away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever. (MKJV)**

A true, practicing Christian understands that we are not to love the world, nor the things in it. God loved the world (so much so, that He sent His only Son so that we might have eternal life in heaven) but we are not to love the world, nor all the things that make this world attractive. This does NOT mean we are to shun people. They are lost in the worldly things and need help breaking free from its clutches, just as you and I do. We are to love people (as Jesus commanded) but not the things of this world (like TV, and all that the advertising on it is hawking). We are not to lust after the beautiful bodies that are on display on the TV because, in doing so, we lose our perspective about what is to be valued and what isn't to be valued (plus, as you'll see, we are guilty of adultery). Do not place value on the temporal, the carnal, the things of this earth, but place value on the things of heaven (which includes the fruit of the spirit—love, joy and peace). Jesus also said quite clearly:

**Mat 5:27 You have heard that it was said to the ancients, "You shall not commit adultery."**

**Mat 5:28 But I say to you that whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (MKJV)**

Folks, if we lust after someone, we have as good as committed adultery. In fact, TV has unlimited occurrences of nudity and scantily clad men and women to ensnare every viewer. If we allow ourselves to dwell (unmindfully) on all of these atrocious acts that break the Ten Commandments, that are committed regularly on TV, we have as good as committed them ourselves.

The heart is what God looks at. To "have already committed adultery with her in one's heart" is considered falling into the carnal, lustful mentality of the world. If what one thought about something really didn't matter, Jesus would never have said Matthew 5:27 and 5:28. From these verses one can surmise that conscientious Christians WILL NOT allow just any old rubbish into their minds. There is a relationship between what we perceive on TV and how we live our lives and how we think.

In 1969, the US Surgeon General was given the task to conduct research to determine if watching violence on TV affected children's behavior by making them more aggressive. The result of that study was inconclusive, however the debate has been going on since then. I would like to simplify the whole issue for you by asking this question: Do we have the capability of learning new things? If you believe you do, I'd like to strongly suggest that we ALL learn from TV. We learn from both the underlying assumptions and outward acts of aggression. For instance, we learn that violent behavior is the way to combat and totally stop opposition to our way of life—which is not in Biblical agreement with Jesus' teachings. This is just a fact. We learn from whatever we are focusing on. As a thinker and strong advocate of Christianity, I do not understand the controversy surrounding this fact. It is a "no-brainer" that negative stimuli which issues forth from the TV does effect our behavior and mental positioning in this world.

In Daniel 5:5, 6, a very strange event happened in the annals of Biblical history. The term, "Don't you see the handwriting on the wall?" was born with this story. King Belshazzar was enjoying a feast (and totally ignoring God's sovereignty even over kings), when he decided to bring the sacred cups absconded from the Temple in Jerusalem and drink from them. About then, the king and many others saw a hand, writing on a wall, and it frightened them. The words written were, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." The king called in all the current astrologers and magicians and offered them a fine reward, but none of them could understand what the handwriting on the wall meant. At the recommendation of the king's mom, Daniel was called in to explain the handwriting on the wall. He refused the riches offered by the king, and simply told them all the meaning as God told him.

The phrase "Mene, Mene" meant "Numbered, numbered" and Daniel told the king, "God has numbered the days of your reign and they are ended." The word "Tekel" meant "weighed" and Daniel pointed out that the king had been weighed (put to the test) and failed. "Peres" (the singular for Upharsin) meant divided which meant that his kingdom would be divided and given to the Persians and the Medes. He gave the reward to Daniel anyway, but, as it turns out, King Belshazzar was killed that night and his kingdom was divided. The writing was immediately prophetic.

Folks, can we see the writing on the wall, with regard to our choice to deliberately ignore Jesus' commands to pray for those who do evil to us, to love our enemies, to be willing to lay down our lives for others, as well as turn the other cheek, when we are either literally or figuratively offended by a slap across the face? If we reject Christ's commands, how can we claim to be His? If we are not His, then captivity by our enemy is our future fate.

We have been feeding our flesh mammon and carnality from the TV by our choice of programming. When we feed our flesh nature, our spirit nature languishes. We have been teaching ourselves how to cope in this world, instead of learning from Jesus, then applying His teachings (by faith), thereby showing others how we draw many into God's kingdom. The mysterious finger of old is positioning itself on our walls. It is not wise for us to continue our behavior in the ways of the world. Our free will was given to us so that we might choose to learn God's ways. Instead, however, we choose to perpetuate the world's ways, where problem after problem is brought to the surface, apparently solved, but then new ones come that are replicas of the old ones we thought we'd solved already. The chains of this world tighten around us, as problems that were never really solved the first time, parade by in a grotesque march of death and sorrow, from which it seems we'll never escape.

"The Christian ideal," as G. K. Chesterton said, "has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried." Jesus really DOES want us to solve our relationship problems with forgiveness and love, not retaliation, resentment and revenge. If the world's way of solving problems worked, problems would not continue to charge into our lives and we'd have relief instead of being in a continual state of dire straits. It seems man's supposedly "highly evolved" wisdom should have fixed the world by now, yet things are worse than ever.

The Bible says that unless we forgive, we will not be forgiven. Most TV dramas do not portray this complete cycle of forgiveness. Our eyes may be open as we watch TV, but our eyes are closed to the truth. We sleep and we dream in this carnal world. We dream we fight and win and then need to fight and win, over and over. But our eyes flicker open when we adopt God's ways (which are higher than our ways according to Isaiah 55:9) and choose to forgive instead of preserve our dignity and pride.

Because we are not encouraged to have a Christian world view, we strive to evaluate things with incomplete data. In TV (and in life) we can't see God forgiving us when we forgive others, so the whole picture is never portrayed. TV says it is very important that others learn their lessons. Actually, according to God's rule book, we are to only be concerned with **our** responsibility in following Jesus' commands and learn our own lessons. We must allow God's sovereignty and power to change others. When watching news, every time our anger at the way others appear to be getting away with what they did, rises within us, we must stop and pray for them, giving them over to our Almighty God, just as we must do with those in our own lives. We must ask God to forgive them of their sin (so that we might be forgiven from our hidden sins and hardened hearts). And what about fictional situations where injustice and wrong, causes bitter resentment in our hearts? It is just foolish to subject ourselves to it. Turn it off!

TV's script writers always have man dependent on his own understanding (which generally exalts the wisdom of a particular character in the show) but, in reality, our

understanding is very limited and almost always wrong or incomplete, because we lack information about one's heart, soul and situation—information that God alone is privy to.

**Pro 3:5 Trust in Jehovah with all your heart, and lean not to your own understanding.**

**Pro 3:6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.**

**Pro 3:7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear Jehovah and depart from evil. (MKJV)**

**Rom 12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse.**

**Rom 12:15 Rejoice with rejoicing ones, and weep with weeping ones;**

**Rom 12:16 minding the same thing toward one another, not minding high things, but yielding to the lowly. Do not be wise within yourselves.**

**Rom 12:17 Repay no one evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.**

**Rom 12:18 If *it is* possible, as far as *is* in you, being in peace with all men.**

**Rom 12:19 not avenging yourselves, beloved, but giving place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance *is* Mine, I will repay, says *the* Lord."**

**Rom 12:20 Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him. If he thirsts, give him drink...**

**Rom 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (MKJV)**

Reason with me on this: Have you ever tried to change yourself by taking a self-help course of some sort? Did it, alone, actually work for you? Self-help courses change behavior and habits by our own strength and will. But without God, no change of the heart occurs. Therefore, any change made by ourselves only is incomplete and likely, temporary. Changing ourselves or "growing" ourselves is not a wise thing for which to strive, because our will attempts to usurp God's will for us, and we become Lord and Savior of ourselves—a very dangerous and deceptive role to give ourselves.

When we attempt to lay righteous and corrective judgment on someone else, we are asking them to change themselves—which is not even something we should or can do ourselves! The Holy Spirit knows our hearts and He corrects us from the inside out. Our prayers for others (which Jesus says to do instead of laying judgment) will promote activity of the Holy Spirit in others and, if not now, if not tomorrow, if not next week or next year, SOMETIME that person will receive the benefit of your prayers for him and submit to the corrective measures of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit knows exactly when the best time is, to incorporate change in theirs and our hearts, so that it will be accepted and take hold.

If you've tried praying for others and it just never seems to work for you, consider that unless we allow the Lord to take our burdens (our own need to correct and fix everything), we will continue to strive for personal victory, to the exclusion of Christ's victory, through us.

Are you aware that with God, all things are possible? This statement is not meant to further self-sufficiency and personal victories. This statement should fortify us with the truth that whatever God asks us to do, through His Son, we can do it. This means that the impossible task of complying with God's commands to love and forgive, instead of retaliate, or correct others and

have personal victory, can be accomplished through submission of our will to God's, as we humbly request God's help. We can do this because of the Biblical truth that, with God, all things are possible.

The writing is on the wall. We must prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ by making sure He really knows us, for we have refused to follow His commands even though we may have cried, "Lord, Lord," countless times. Remember, He will know us as we follow His commands (and not by our strength, but by His strength).

Television teaches us to go with the thinking of the self-proclaimed intellectuals, who have determined God's ways are not worthwhile and should be ignored. Television is what happens when we are left to our own devices. Television presumes the world's ways are true, and God's ways aren't. Television lifts itself up, in its own one-way eye, and mostly refuses to be humbled and be in service to the Lord.

When it comes to violence, anything on TV with a rating that indicates it should not be viewed by children, should not be viewed by adults either. This is not because anyone is forcing you to leave the violence behind. It is because you are now aware that the underlying assumptions that accompany a program teach us things that dull our sense of the divine and leave us feeling bad or, at the very least, armed with the incorrect tools to understand and accomplish God's will.

In the Word, Jesus says:

**Mat 6:34 So do not worry or be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries and anxieties of its own. Sufficient for each day is its own trouble. (MKJV)**

When we watch TV we are taking on artificial burdens of artificial people living artificial lives that were made up by writers cramped in tiny rooms that generally do not have windows that look from a Christian worldview. As they write, they strive to present problems in as unique and creative ways as they can. Cleverly carnal, their brows are furrowed as they take pen in hand, to scribble out scenes that shock us and make us feel horrible, or causes us to laugh at the cruel and obscene, or cripples us with fear and dread.

But Jesus says that we should not be anxious about tomorrow for tomorrow has anxieties of its own. Jesus says we must stay in the now moment and prayerfully deal with each of our own life's events as they occur, with understanding that we will give all our problems as they happen, to Him. If we watch intense dramas on TV, we are burdening ourselves with anxieties, that cause our adrenaline to flow freely through our system—we are making ourselves worry needlessly. This releases free radicals, which are stroke, heart disease and cancer-causing agents, into our system. We do this, more than likely, because we have trained ourselves to morbidly enjoy being anxious, or to love to worry.

## **Smell-o-Vision**

I've got an idea. It is not a unique idea. It is used in shows at some very well known amusement parks. Here it is: Smell-o-Vision. Need I say more? Do the possibilities seem endless to you? They do to me.

The detectives have just come upon the body, partially buried in the woods. A man had confessed he had put the body there after killing him. The camera moves in to a close-up of the body. Poof. Out shoots an odor that knocks everyone gathered around the TV, down. It's that bad. It's putrid!

A war film is being shown. A large bomb goes off in a field, blowing up two soldiers. Poof! The acrid putrid smell of burning bodies inflames the nostrils of the viewers gathered around the tube. That should drive some addicts away from the screen!

Death and all of its mysteries and fascinations fill the television stations from early morning until late at night. All manner of creative writing and teleplays show and tell every conceivable angle of the terror that comes from the murder, the escape of the murderer, the discovery of the body, the examining of the evidence, the mistake of the murderer, the cleverness of the detective in finding the one who committed the act, and finally, the promise that justice shall prevail against the one who committed the act.

Some shows, though, only deal with the crime scene itself, as the scientific investigators thoroughly examine every piece of flesh and bodily fluid, examining even the tiniest fragment for incriminating clues. Clever dialogue prevails over the constant background of death and decay, leading us all on a dreadful path as we grow numb and number to God's word about this. Fellow Christians, we are not supposed to be so fascinated with death. Does this graphic description repulse you? Then why do you watch such stuff?

**Gen 6:5 The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination and intention of all human thinking was only evil continually. (MKJV)**

**Gen 6:11 The earth was depraved and putrid in God's sight, and the land was filled with violence (desecration, infringement, outrage, assault, and lust for power).**

**Gen 6:12 And God looked upon the world and saw how degenerate, debased, and vicious it was, for all humanity had corrupted their way upon the earth and lost their true direction.**

**Gen 6:13 God said to Noah, I intend to make an end of all flesh, for through men the land is filled with violence; and behold, I will destroy them and the land. (AMP)**

**Hab 1:2 GOD, how long do I have to cry out for help before you listen? How many times do I have to yell, "Help! Murder! Police!" before you come to the rescue?**

**Hab 1:3 Why do you force me to look at evil, stare trouble in the face day after day? Anarchy and violence break out, quarrels and fights all over the place.**

**Hab 1:4 Law and order fall to pieces. Justice is a joke. The wicked have the righteous hamstrung and stand justice on its head. (Message)**

Look objectively at the TV and see if you don't get a picture of godlessness. Because of the Prince of the Air (Satan), the godless broadcasts routinely pay no attention to the different nations they serve, crossing all national lines so that, through TV, the world is really only one nation, and it does not appear to be under God.

**Hab 1:5 "Look around at the godless nations. Look long and hard. Brace yourself for a shock. Something's about to take place and you're going to find it hard to believe.**

**Hab 1:6 I'm about to raise up Babylonians to punish you, Babylonians, fierce and ferocious-- World-conquering Babylon, grabbing up nations right and left,**

**Hab 1:7 A dreadful and terrible people, making up its own rules as it goes.  
(Message)**

Those who do not advocate the strong morals found in God's Holy Bible, will try to make up rules as they go along. Their foundation, though seemingly stable, is very weak and their self-importance causes them to gloat that God's ways are ridiculous and not even worthy to be considered. Everyone who pushes Christianity out of the picture in favor of a more liberal philosophy, paves the way for a world built on "self." Those who strive to adhere to Jesus' teachings, pave the way for the true, agape love of Christ and selflessness. Those who follow Christ, recognize His death, for each of us, was payment to God for our sins, which were passed down from generation to generation, since Adam and Eve rebelled and had to vacate the Garden of Eden. Though we have been bought with a price and are not our own, we are not very careful of our precious minds and hearts. We have adopted a belief in self, rather than God, that has perpetuated the development of personal entertainment that involves every type of fleshly sin that tortured God before the flood. We have allowed our "base, sinful nature" to have a predominant position in our living rooms and dens and we spend every spare moment watching a re-enactment of the world's fatalistic attitude, and its pitiable attempts to fix itself through its own volition, and not Christ's.

**Hab 2:2 And then GOD answered: "Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run.**

**Hab 2:3 This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming. It aches for the coming--it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It's on its way. It will come right on time.**

**Hab 2:4 "Look at that man, bloated by self-importance-- full of himself but soul-empty. But the person in right standing before God through loyal and steady believing is fully alive, really alive.**

**Hab 2:5 "Note well: Money deceives. The arrogant rich don't last. They are more hungry for wealth than the grave is for cadavers. Like death, they always want more, but the 'more' they get is dead bodies. They are cemeteries filled with dead nations, graveyards filled with corpses.**

**Hab 2:6 Don't give people like this a second thought. Soon the whole world will be taunting them: "'Who do you think you are-- getting rich by stealing and extortion? How long do you think you can get away with this?'**

**Hab 2:7 Indeed, how long before your victims wake up, stand up and make you the victim?**

**Hab 2:8 You've plundered nation after nation. Now you'll get a taste of your own medicine. All the survivors are out to plunder you, a payback for all your murders and massacres.**

**Hab 2:9 "Who do you think you are-- recklessly grabbing and looting, Living it up, acting like king of the mountain, acting above it all, above trials and troubles?"**

**Hab 2:10 You've engineered the ruin of your own house. In ruining others you've ruined yourself. You've undermined your foundations, rotted out your own soul.**

**Hab 2:11 The bricks of your house will speak up and accuse you. The woodwork will step forward with evidence. (Message)**

We are not victims of this heartless, downcast world. We are Christians, alive in Christ, ready to be of service to God. We do not want to give a small portion of our lives to Christ. We want to give ALL of our lives to Him. Why do we spend so much time viewing fake cities on television and examining evidence of the flesh, instead of visiting the sick, helping the needy and befriending those in nursing homes who have been forgotten by their families (who are at home watching Jeopardy, no doubt). "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brothers, you have done it to Me." says Jesus in Matthew 25:40. Do not take those words so lightly and do not think you can continue to be so involved in yourself that you forsake the standards our Savior gave to us.

**Hab 2:12 "Who do you think you are-- building a town by murder, a city with crime?"**

**Hab 2:13 Don't you know that GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies makes sure nothing comes of that but ashes, Makes sure the harder you work at that kind of thing, the less you are?"**

**Hab 2:14 Meanwhile the earth fills up with awareness of GOD's glory as the waters cover the sea.**

**Hab 2:15 "Who do you think you are-- inviting your neighbors to your drunken parties, Giving them too much to drink, roping them into your sexual orgies?"**

**Hab 2:16 You thought you were having the time of your life. Wrong! It's a time of disgrace. All the time you were drinking, you were drinking from the cup of God's wrath.**

**Hab 2:17 You'll wake up holding your throbbing head, hung over-- hung over from Lebanon violence, Hung over from animal massacres, hung over from murder and mayhem, From multiple violations of place and people.**

**Hab 2:18 "What's the use of a carved god so skillfully carved by its sculptor? What good is a fancy cast god when all it tells is lies? What sense does it make to be a pious god-maker who makes gods that can't even talk? (Message)**

The television is a one-eyed mammon machine, only capable of transmitting one humanistic, world view, not made to receive our arguments or our Christian stand. How long must we despair of our lives, as we buy more television sets with new features and greater technological advances, giving them increased power over us? How long will we continue to

lavish our love on our new toys, now with sharper and clearer pictures, higher definition, wider screens, better sound (but still only pictures of death)?

**Hab 2:19 Who do you think you are-- saying to a stick of wood, 'Wake up,' Or to a dumb stone, 'Get up'? Can they teach you anything about anything? There's nothing to them but surface. There's nothing on the inside.**

**Hab 2:20 "But oh! GOD is in his holy Temple! Quiet everyone--a holy silence. Listen!" (Message)**

Smell-o-vision may never catch on. It would allow us to get too close to the truth for us. It might make us gag, if we only knew what we were really allowing ourselves to be subjected to. Yet, perhaps it would be the great dose of reality the Church of Jesus Christ desperately needs!

## Chapter 12. How to Pray

Praying is much simpler than you may, at first, believe. Our Counselor, our Comforter, the Holy Spirit will teach us how to pray, as soon as we desire to know. I am not talking about the short, quick prayers given before a meal or during an emergency—although those are important, too. I'm talking about a generous time allotted to God every day. The amount of time will vary from individual to individual.

I'm talking about recognizing the value of prayer and allowing it to be an excellent replacement for the time that used to be devoted to TV. Initially, sitting with your eyes closed in a room, by yourself, may seem a bit silly and unproductive. Do not listen to Satan's voice, as he attempts to discourage you from the one thing he detests more than anything else: Allegiance to and submission to God.

Prayer is talking to a friend, Christ, who is real and knows far more than us about our lives and our deepest concerns. The Holy Spirit dwells within the Christian, and He points unwaveringly toward Jesus Christ and the saving power of the cross. We must strive for meekness and contrition, for as long as we are self-sufficient, God may need to allow us to hit bottom, so that we might reach for Him and allow Him to help us.

Prayer is a release to God of all of our burdens. It's getting to a place where we know we can no longer handle things on our own. We recognize that we have been hopelessly addicted to control—controlling our lives, controlling others' lives, controlling our day to day activities, controlling our future and controlling the remote. We realize we need to let go of our controlling nature and be submissive to God.

Prayer ought to be strived for, with all of our hearts especially when the enemy distracts us with other things that we think we have to do in place of prayer. Prayer ought to be attempted (even if we don't know the first thing about it), and persevered through, especially if you begin to feel bored and feel like you are wasting your time. Strive for effective prayer as if your life depended on it. The world has drummed its song into your heart and head, telling you over and over again how insane it is to REALLY believe in God. It is now time to let God prove His

reality to you and allow Him to be Lord and Savior over your life. Believe on Him and He will manifest His presence, strength and power to you.

Prayer should not be tried for a few minutes and dropped because we feel it is ridiculous to assume that God cares for us, individually. Many crates of debris have been left in front of the door to your heart that Jesus has been knocking on all these many years. Reach for Him persistently and allow the Holy Spirit to remove the crates and dissipate the debris, so that the door, your soul, which Jesus knocks on, slowly opens bringing with it a shaft of light so bright, you will never perceive the world the same way again.

Do not allow your thoughts to control your prayer time. As each distracting thought comes in, gently bring your mind back to God, back to the truth. Some days you will feel tremendous success and a washing of the Holy Spirit all through you. Other days you will deem as unsuccessful, having had to fight off an amazing amount of distractive elements. God would very likely say that your successful day was the one in which so much had to be battled—and you maintained your ground for Him, never once giving up and reaching for the TV remote, instead.

Find the truth, in God's Word, the Bible, and dwell on the truth (which you really hunger for). Write the strong statements of faith out on index cards so that you can refer to them when you are filled with distractive worldly thoughts.

How long should you pray daily? As I said earlier, that will vary with each individual. If ten minutes seems to be too much, try five. Eventually, I would challenge you, to pray an hour a day. Considering that the average time people spend in front of TV is around three hours a day, one hour of prayer a day is not asking too much.

Remember, you may not have what you deem as successful prayers at first. The Holy Spirit will be removing debris piled up in front of the door of your heart and it may take some time for Christ to penetrate your darkness. Be diligent and persistent. Do not give up. Find the truth in God's word and KNOW it, so that you will be set free.

Television needs to be looked at—in the light of God's Word. The development of it was never for a holy purpose. It cannot have suddenly taken on a holy purpose now. I hope that we can look objectively at this device every one of us has invited into our homes—and allow God's Holy Spirit to convict us and help us choose a different means to obtain our entertainment and information. I hope that all of us choose to spend time in prayer, allowing Christ to open the door to wisdom found only through Him, as we shun Satan's many glittering worldly attractions (not limited to TV), for Christ's glory.

And now, to wind this book up, here is the Lord's Prayer, as found in Luke:

**Luk 11:1 THEN HE was praying in a certain place; and when He stopped, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, [just] as John taught his disciples.**

Luk 11:2 And He said to them, When you pray, say: Our Father Who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come. Your will be done [*held holy and revered*] on earth as it is in heaven.

Luk 11:3 Give us daily our bread [*food for the morrow*].

Luk 11:4 And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us [*who has offended us or done us wrong*]. And bring us not into temptation but rescue us from evil.

Luk 11:5 And He said to them, Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and will say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves [*of bread*],

Luk 11:6 For a friend of mine who is on a journey has just come, and I have nothing to put before him;

Luk 11:7 And he from within will answer, Do not disturb me; the door is now closed, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and supply you [*with anything*]?

Luk 11:8 I tell you, although he will not get up and supply him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his shameless persistence and insistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

Luk 11:9 So I say to you, Ask and keep on asking and it shall be given you; seek and keep on seeking and you shall find; knock and keep on knocking and the door shall be opened to you.

Luk 11:10 For everyone who asks and keeps on asking receives; and he who seeks and keeps on seeking finds; and to him who knocks and keeps on knocking, the door shall be opened.

Luk 11:11 What father among you, if his son asks for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone; or if he asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent?

Luk 11:12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

Luk 11:13 If you then, evil as you are, know how to give good gifts [*gifts that are to their advantage*] to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask and continue to ask Him! (AMP)

## Invitation

Thank you for reading “Shall I Pray or Watch TV?” I hope it was a blessing to you. My wife and I would like to invite you to visit our website, <http://www.thefinalharvest.org>.