

# MEDIA

## INTRODUCTION:

1. Give me examples of the media in your life?  
(Radio, ipod, DVD, TV, movies, books, facebook, computer games)
2. Think about how pervasive the media is in our lives.  
You wake up to your alarm clock, set to music  
After you take your shower, you listen to the news on TV while eating breakfast  
You ride to school listening to your ipod  
You text a couple of friends before school  
Announcements are scrolling on school TV monitors  
You might watch a DVD in one of your classes  
You get home from school and play computer games while eating a snack  
You check facebook and text your friends  
You do your homework, listening to your ipod while you surf the internet  
After dinner, you turn TV on to relax  
You go to bed with music playing.

Media surrounds us. It's like the air we breathe.

3. The Power of Media  
Does media impact our lives? (Advertisers pay over \$200 billion annually)
  - (A) Why do you think advertisers will pay between 2.5 and 2.8 million dollars for 30 seconds during the Super Bowl? They believe that in 30 seconds, they can influence you.
  - (B) Do you think watching premarital sex on TV impacts teens behavior? According to the Rand Corporation study released 11/3/08, teens exposed to high levels of sexual content (sitcoms were the highest), were twice as likely to be involved in a pregnancy, as teens who had little exposure.
  - (C) Some will argue, "Just because I watch a murder on TV doesn't make me want to go commit a murder," which I agree with. But just because we don't instantly mimic something doesn't mean it isn't affecting us negatively or subtly causing us to drift toward love of the world.
  - (D) I would suggest to you that one of the dangers of the media is that it is subtle. If you know the enemy is advancing, you prepare for battle. If you aren't even aware of the danger from the enemy, you are vulnerable and easily defeated. The entertainment media lulls us to ignore the battle. (Col. 2:6-8)
  - (E) Example. I remember years ago watching a movie about this loser guy married to this great woman. He was lazy, couldn't hold down a job, and was mean to his wife. They

did a great job of portraying this husband as someone who you didn't like. This wife meets this really nice, loving guy who really treats her well. They construct the drama in such a way so that you want her to divorce her husband and marry this guy.

I remember watching that and cheering for her to leave her husband, until it occurred to me what I was thinking. My thoughts totally violated Scripture and for a moment, I was totally unaware.

- (F) One of the powers of media is to amuse us. Amuse literally comes from two words. The prefix "a" which means "not". The word "muse" which means to think. Amuse, literally, means to not think. I would suggest this is one of the powers of the media, to shape our thinking and we aren't even aware of it.

## I. How should Christians respond to media?

- A) We need to be discerning about what we put into our minds.

Why is this so important?

- 1) The battle for our hearts begins in our minds (2 Cor. 11:2b-3)

- (a) What was Paul's desire (to present us pure in Christ)  
(b) What was Paul afraid of? Why?

- 2) What kinds of things are we supposed to allow into our minds? (Phil. 4:8)

- 3) What can we do to make sure we are taking control of our minds?

- (a) Be careful what we allow into our minds (1 Thess. 5:21-22)  
(b) Don't allow our minds to dwell on sinful things (2 Cor. 10:5)

- B) We need to be discerning with how we use media.

- 1) Even if the media isn't bad, ask:

- (a) Is this not just permissible, is it beneficial?  
(b) Is this a good use of my time? (Eph. 5:15-16)

Playing hours and hours of computer games is probably not a good use of your time

- 2) Is my use of media helping me or hurting my relationships with others?

- (a) What are ways that media can help us in our relationships with each other?  
(cell phones, texting, facebook can help us keep in touch with each other)

- (b) What are ways that media can negatively impact our relationships with each other?  
(1) It can be a distraction to really engaging each other.

-How often do you see people hanging out with each other but instead of really giving each other undivided attention, they are continually interrupted by numerous text messages or cell phone calls?

-How often do you see people spending time around others but instead of interacting they are playing a game on their phone?

-How often do you see people spending time with others but they have their head phones in? What does it communicate to you if you see someone in a public place with their head phones in? (They don't want to be disturbed. Don't talk to me)

- (2) Cell phones and texting have actually made us very poor communicators.

Instead of having to decide about what you are going to do or where you are going to go, cell phones have caused people to put off talking about things like that. Texting has also encouraged people to communicate in short sentences and discourages in depth conversations.

C) What are some guidelines to help us in our use of media?

1) We cannot be a passive viewer, but need to be discerning. (Eph. 5:8b-10). (We need to discern what pleases God - good, right true)

EXAMPLE: Have you ever watched an infomercial? Were you skeptical about their claims? We need to watch with that kind of discernment (Acts 17:11)

(a) All media has a message (world view) they are communicating. The more subtle the message, the more discerning we need to be; otherwise, we can be sucked in without even knowing it.

(b) The homosexual movement in America is winning. Why do you think that is? I don't believe it is because they have done a direct assault but because they have been very effective at getting into sitcoms and getting people to laugh at them. As a result attitudes toward homosexuality in our culture are gradually changing. Humor has caused people to stop from being discerning and as a result they are gradually being duped.

2) We should avoid entertaining ourselves with things that are displeasing to the Lord (Eph. 5:3)

(a) "not a hint of sexual immorality, impurity, or greed". Does this tempt me with sexually impure thoughts or actions?

(b) We should not entertain ourselves with things our holy God despises (Eph. 5:11-12)

(c) How far do we take this; after all, the Bible records sexual sin?

(1) It's one thing to include sexual sin as part of the story line where it serves a moral purpose. It's quite another to dramatize the act for the camera just to feed the flesh.

(2) The visual and verbal details of immorality should remain in secret (Eph. 5:12)

(3) If impurity is included in the story, how is it represented?

In Ephesians 5:6, Paul warns of sins portrayed without consequences. This leads to deception, which leads to an insensitivity toward sin.

(4) Immorality must never be portrayed as appealing, alluring, or good.

(d) We should not entertain ourselves with speech that God forbids (Eph. 5:4)

(1) Obscenity: vulgar, perverted, off-color speech

(2) Foolish talk: speech of fools; a fool is not someone who lacks intelligence, but lacks the fear of God and mocks or ignores the moral law of God

(3) Crude joking: humor with sexual overtones; dirty jokes

(4) If we're forbidden to speak this way, we're equally prohibited from listening to it, especially when it comes to choices about what we

entertain ourselves with.

- (5) Why is this kind of speech out of place? It reflects a heart of those who disregard God and His Word

II. Some practical considerations:

- 1) Don't just depend on the movie rating system to determine if a film is okay to watch. Do some research. Check: [www.pluggedinonline.com](http://www.pluggedinonline.com).
- 2) Be prepared to respond to temptation: press the remote, click the mouse, walk out of a theatre
- 3) Maybe you need to make some changes (Psalm 101:2-4) and stop doing some things
- 4) View Accountably (2 Tim. 2:22)  
If you struggle with looking at stuff on the internet or reading certain books, etc., tell another Christian about your struggle. To defeat temptation, the first step is to expose it by bringing it to the light (Eph. 5:8)
- 5) View gratefully  
If you can't thank God for what you are doing with a clear conscience, then you shouldn't watch it. (Col. 3:17, Eph. 5:4)  
Remember God is watching it right along with you.
- 6) Make sure that your use of media is not only hurting your relationship with God but is not hindering your relationships with others. When you are with other people do your best to engage them and seek ways to encourage them (Eph. 5:15-16)

## CONCLUSION

We are surrounded by media in many forms. It has an influence on you. As a Christian, we must be aware of this influence and exercise discernment. Our greatest desire needs to be to seek to do what pleases God and helps us advance His kingdom.

## APPLICATION:

- 1) Have you been watching/reading things that aren't pleasing to God?
- 2) What changes do you need to make?
- 3) How many hours a day do you spend watching TV, on the internet, playing on the computer, texting, reading books for entertainment? How does that compare with time spent with family and God?
- 4) If you can't spend the time you want watching favorite TV shows or some media, does it upset you? Why?
- 5) When you are with others do you give them your undivided attention or do you tend to "multitask"? What do you think that communicates to your friends?