

Pastor's Desk: 1989-1993

Entertainment

The entertainment industry is constantly searching for the new and the novel. The content of the electronic media changes even more rapidly than the seasonal fashions. Why this quest for the novel? C.S. Lewis observed that in the modern mind there is this unconscious conviction that the new is always better. But can this thirst for the novel ever be satisfied? "Having seen so much change, having experienced so many new things, we assume that the storehouse for new things and new experiences is limitless." The constant quest for the novel is addictive. Since market forces dictate the fare on television, we can expect networks to dominate next season's programs with more sensational and immoral features than ever before.

The introduction of the electronic media has done more to shape our culture than anything else. Our culture has shifted to a popular consumer's entertainment culture. Since the emphasis of television is on seeing, its programs take the language and form of drama. Even the news uses the form of drama. Journalists no longer merely report on events. They do "stories". But what should concern Christians is the anti-Christian bias on television. Most Hollywood writers consider Christianity irrelevant. If there is a Christian character featured in a program, they portray him in an unfavourable light. They attack him/her as a buffoon, embezzler or a hypocrite. When Lee Rich, a producer who has given us, *Dallas* and others, was asked if the church was important in American life, he answered bluntly, "I gave up going to church at 17. I don't know anyone who goes to church." He was over sixty when he said this.

Dr. Dobson of *Focus on the Family* warned in his recent *newsletter* (Sept. 1992) against the incredible crudities which, the public will be exposed to in the new season. Dobson mentioned that the networks depend increasingly on sex and violence to compete. Quoting *US magazine*, "Mix up some sex and violence, throw in a psycho killer and you've got yourself a hit."

Christian parents and youth should be vigilant, seek God's honour and the moral well being of our families. In Philippians: 8, Paul writes, "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable -if anything is excellent or praiseworthy -think about such things." Paul is commanding Christians to discipline their minds and hearts to reflect on excellence. Praiseworthiness should not be established by the market forces but by the objective standards found in scripture.

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