

Should Christians Watch TV?

“I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes” [Psalm 101:3]



In order to properly answer the question “Should Christians Watch TV?” we need to find out what the Bible says about what God expects of us. If you are of the opinion that we dare not be judgmental by speaking out about specific activities, remember that Jesus said “judge with righteous judgment” [John 7:24], lest we come under the condemnation of God’s Word and find ourselves among those spoken of here: “There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness” [Prov 30:12].

This study touches on a subject that affects many people today. It is of concern to both Christians and non-Christians. We are concerned with the Christian perspective since God’s people need to be concerned about things that concern God. When we study the Bible diligently we can see how God has an opinion on everything already, since the Bible addresses all aspects of our lives by its descriptions of what is holy and pleasing to God and what is offensive and displeasing to God. God has provided the Bible to warn us about things that can harm us and things that can hurt our relationship to Him. Many different things that have the potential for harming our relationship to God and others, can be substituted for TV in the discussion below such as reading worldly books and magazines, watching sporting events, surfing the Internet, playing video games, etc. And many new forms of worldly entertainment have crept into our lives since the advent of the Internet in the 1990s. There are some very ungodly movies, songs, videos, games and other activities on the Internet that are not only preventing Christians from “redeeming the time”, but are also a major source of mental pollution and moral corruption.

Hopefully you will be confronted with many challenging, thought-provoking questions to encourage you to examine your own situation and come away with a better understanding of the holiness of God and His will for His people. “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.” [I Cor 9:24]

Is there anything I could get exposed to by watching TV, commercials included, that would pollute my mind?

2 Cor 7:1 - “dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

Does God really care if I accidentally see something sinful or ungodly on TV?

Deu 7:26 - “Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.”

James 4:4 - “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

Does God want me to be unnecessarily exposed to people who mock Him and His commandments and that desensitize me to the sin in me and around me?

Psa 1:1 - “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

Jude 1:17-18 - "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts."

Can I honestly say to God that I am being his obedient servant when I sit down in front of a TV set? Is that the calling he calls me to?

Rom 12:1 - "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Would I tell another Christian that if they want to renew their mind and avoid being conformed to this world, they should watch TV?

Rom 12:2 - "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Is even the most Godly of TV shows more important than reading the Bible, spending time in prayer or ministering to a person in need?

Do I already spend too much time in the word and in prayer? We need to be honest with ourselves and with God about how we spend our time. Is what I am watching drawing me nearer to God? Psalm 119:105 says:

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." It does NOT say: TV is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. Proverbs 3:13-15 says: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."

Does watching TV expose my eyes (and mind) to ungodly and unholy things?

Mat 6:22-23 "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Does TV help me to redeem the time?

Eph 5:15-16 "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

Could things on TV negatively affect others in my home?

Mat 18:6-9 - "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire."

Is TV viewing the most profitable use of my time?

Titus 3:8 - "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."

The Bible exhorts us to do things that are good and profitable. What do I teach family members about my priorities by watching TV instead of having family devotions? What am I telling God when I watch TV and rarely if ever spend quality time in prayer with Him? Should I even watch the *news* when I have yet to make time in the day to pray for family, friends, church leadership, the congregation, missionaries, our nation's youth, leaders, judges, teachers, police, prisoners, the elderly, the sick, the handicapped, the homeless, the jobless and people in bondage to all sorts of sins?

What is the spiritual value of watching TV?

1 Cor 3:12-15 - "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

Where does TV watching fit in to God's plan for me? Is it comparable to gold, silver, costly stones?

Whose time am I wasting if I watch TV?

1 Cor 6:19-20 - "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Does TV help me to glorify God more than praying for and witnessing to the lost or more than ministering to the body of Christ?

Do I want to be counted among the unprofitable and slothful servants?

Prov 24:30-32 "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction."

Think of all the productive things you could be doing for the Lord with time you may currently be spending vegetating in front of the tube.

Does TV fit into my role as an ambassador for Christ?

Eph 6:19-20 - "And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

Am I ignoring admonitions in God's word to avoid putting wicked things before my eyes?

Psa 101:3 - "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes"

Does TV fit into my role as a soldier in God's army?

2 Tim 2:3-4 "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

Do soldiers get paid and trained to watch TV or to do battle? Is TV preparing me to do battle with the enemy or is it giving me new enemies to worry about?

Does TV viewing prepare me to have the heart and mind of Christ?

1 Cor 2:16-3:1 - "who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ."

Can you picture the King of Kings and Lord of Lords telling his disciples that he needed to watch TV to unwind from ministering to the masses of lost sheep who followed him everywhere? He sought and found his rest in the quiet time he spent in prayer alone with his Father. We are supposed to be in the world but not of the world and we are supposed to enjoy living for the Lord and according to his teachings. When we start to enjoy things that the world is in love with, we are dangerously out of touch with the Spirit of God.

Just how serious are the consequences of not caring much about the potential for TV's harmful affects?

Prov 1:29-33 - "For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."

Is TV helping me to be like Christ?

1 John 2:15-16 - "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For 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."

2 Tim 2:16 - "But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness."

What is the best place to seek out profane and vain babblings if not on television where the vain wares and the ungodly wisdom of the world are peddled 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Does TV help me to hear God's voice?

Isa 6:8 - "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."

Has TV become an idol or unclean thing in my life?

2 Cor 6:16-17 - "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them;

and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you”

Am I seeking rest from the wrong source?

Many people feel that watching TV helps them unwind from a weary day. After all the scriptures we’ve looked at, can we say that TV is an appropriate place to turn for rest for our weary soul? Isn’t it the Lord we should be going to in prayer and in the Word?...

Exod 33:14 - “And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”

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Also, shouldn’t we at times turn to other believers?...

2 Cor 1:4 - “Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”

Gal 6:2 - “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

If we are finding peace, rest and comfort in front of a TV set, perhaps we should be examining ourselves to see if we are in the faith. It is one thing to need physical rest and quite another thing entirely to willingly and repeatedly expose oneself to things that grieve a thrice-holy God.

Once I’ve admitted to God what I should be doing with HIS time, what is the next step?

Luke 17:7-10 - “But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”

If you’ve gotten this far in this study, Praise the Lord! I know that this is a very sensitive subject with many Christians today. If it is sensitive for you, ask yourself why? Why do I have a problem with a particular point mentioned above? Ask yourself: Would the Church of Jesus Christ in America be better off today without TV? Would I personally be better off without TV? Would my relationship to Christ suffer if I put my TV on the curb the next time the sanitation crew stopped by to pick up the garbage? Seriously! Is there really any way in which my relationship to Christ would suffer if TV (or whatever else may be consuming my ‘spare’ time) was removed from my life? If the honest answer is ‘no’, and I believe it is ‘no’, then we must ask ourselves: What is it doing in my life?

**“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD,
choose you this day whom ye will serve”
[Joshua 24:15]**
