

What Is Television Doing To Our Youth?

by Oswald J. Smith



NOTE: This article was written long before the Internet came in being. What it says about television applies equally to the negative influence of the Internet on both adults and children and that influence is towards an even greater degree of evil. Awful and degrading things that would never be allowed on television are constantly being made available to and thrust at audiences worldwide via the Internet.

It seems to me that television is the greatest menace of modern times, and how Christians are going to cope with it I don't know. Anyone who has seen it must be convinced of its danger.

Television can be used for good. It has tremendous possibilities, but I am afraid it is being used for evil almost exclusively and that it will do more harm than Hollywood to demoralize the youth of our country. It has been proved that the eye-gate makes a much greater appeal than the ear-gate, and while there are good programs on TV, there are so many of the other kind that it is most difficult to put on the one and blot out the other.

I shall never forget how shocked I was when visiting a home where the

television was present. They told me about the lovely church services that could be seen, the concerts and other good programs that could be turned on. But no sooner were the parents out of the room than the children, teenagers and younger still, turned to the TV set, and when some of us returned we found them stretched out on the floor, fascinated by what they were seeing. A bloody wrestling match where two men were trying to tear each other to pieces. And as the children watched and listened to the groans and cries of the wrestlers they could hardly control themselves.

At still another time it was a night club show, women for the most part unclad, drinking and smoking, going through sensual dances, every action plainly visible, the entire scene revolting and demoralizing. Yes, they could have turned on another program, they could have looked at something else; but they turned on that in which they were most interested, the scene that fascinated them.

For generations we have refused to take our children to night clubs, theatres, wrestling matches, etc. Now these very scenes are brought right into the home and displayed before the children's eyes. It costs nothing to see them, except a loss of moral standards. In their early life they now can become acquainted with sin in its vilest form. No longer will parents be able to protest them from the awful things that go on in the world.

A polluted diet of crime, violence, brutality and sadism, sponsored by breweries and distillers, is now the daily menu for boys and girls. The theatre, with all its filth, that most of us as Christians wouldn't dream of patronizing, is now brought into our living rooms. Television may well be the final step in the complete collapse of the moral and spiritual life of our nation. Children will do what they see others doing.

I do not know how TV can be controlled. If it is in the home, it will be watched. Children have been known to physically attack their parents when they insisted on turning it off.

These are the last days and we are going to the bottom. Soon we will be on the lowest rung of the ladder and judgment will fall. Alcoholism has more than doubled since television began to sponsor liquor ads. Robbery with violence is increasing by leaps and bounds. Incidents of this kind can be heard on the news daily. What kind of a harvest can we expect?

I do not know the answer but I am afraid, very much afraid. I always have looked upon the movie world as the most demoralizing agency in existence. It alone has been responsible for the terrible things that our youth has been doing in this generation. The atomic and hydrogen bombs are bad, the nuclear bomb is frightful, but television is worse than either and far more destructive. It is wrecking our generation, and before long it will turn our land into a Sodom and Gomorrah, infinitely worse than the Sodom and Gomorrah of Bible times.

Judgment is inevitable. There is no cure. God will have to send terrible judgment on the race, and it may well be because of television and its diabolical influence on young minds. Science will have succeeded in wrecking civilization.
