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WHY I DO NOT HAVE A TELEVISION SET

By H. C. Van Wormer

"I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me" (Psa. 101:3).

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ABOUT THE DATE OF PUBLICATION

While no date of publication is given for this booklet, a quotation by the author from the October 28, 1957 issue of Life magazine shows that it was published some time after that date. Various other dated quotations are also made, but that of October 28, 1957 is the latest of the quotations. My own "guestimate" is that the booklet was written and published somewhere between late 1957 and 1960. -- DVM

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FOREWORD

Much is being said and written these days concerning TV sets in the homes of professing Christians. Often these writings or speeches are simply dogmatic statements for or against TV which show a sad lack of knowledge concerning the facts. At last I find in this writing by Brother Van Wormer a factual, documented treatment of this highly controversial subject, which must commend itself to the mind of any thinking individual.

Often a minister desires and feels directed of God to speak to his people on present-day issues, but hesitates to, because he does not have the facts or clearly understand the issues. Here is a wealth of information already prepared and documented which any sincere minister will want to present to his people. This writing is a veritable treasure house of information on this subject.

Some hesitate to expose their people to all the facts because this brings many questions into the minds of their people and causes divisions, so they say. The Catholic church early solved this problem by making an index, and any writing that might disturb their people was placed on this index and they were forbidden to read or discuss it. They also squelched any speaker who might speak on any subject that might disturb or divide their church. This system has effectively kept their people in ignorance and damned the majority.

As Protestants, do we willfully keep the facts from our people? Do we call only those evangelists or speakers who will carefully evade the issues of our day? Do we, by our wise manipulations, control the light or shut out the light that our people might otherwise get?

As a parent I have the souls of my children to answer for. I am not primarily interested in someone's ideas on important issues but I am genuinely interested in the facts of the case. This writing contains many facts from many sources. I am indeed grateful for the thoroughness of this article. I am sure that any parent, who loves his child, will also deeply appreciate these facts.

After reading this excellent writing, I am very happy heartily to recommend it to any reader. The fact that this writing is not the thinking of one man but the views of many from all walks of life, as reflected by the many quotations, will certainly cause any thinking individual not to regard it lightly.

Prof. David Budensiek
Central, S.C.

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INTRODUCTION

We shall have to recognize the fact that Christians today are living with what may well be the greatest threat to personal spirituality in this generation, no doubt, and in any previous generation. That threat is the family TV set. Is this an exaggeration? No, for television's threat to spiritual living is a matter of deep concern to every thinking Christian.

Many contend that the greatest percentage of features on the TV are largely educational and informative rather than entertaining but the real facts do not prove this to be true. All you have to do is to take your daily newspaper and look at what is being produced daily to see that the largest percentage is entertainment. To prove my contention let me quote from "Four Years of New York Television" by the Purdue Opinion Poll, published June 1954, by National Associations of Educational Broadcasters, Urbana, Ill. (U. S. News & World Report, Sept. 2, 1955, page 38.)

"Total Entertainment in 1951 was 76.2% and in 1954 was 77.7%. Total Information in 1951 was 23.8% and in 1954, was 22.3%." By this survey, you can see that in 1954 entertainment was on the increase and information (news, interviews, weather reports, cooking demonstrations, etc.) was on the decrease.

It is factually stated that Americans are now spending more time watching TV than any other single activity except sleep. Strangely enough many of the same Christians who said "no" to the movies are nightly devotees to the medium that supplanted movies as the Nation's No. 1 Diversion.

An old lady was invited to the theater and she remarked with some acerbity, "Not on your life! I'm going to sit and watch television like the good Lord intended me to!" You may smile at that, but -- what about her and the thousands like her who watch Hollywood productions on their TV screen night after night? Such wouldn't be caught seen in a moving picture house, but they can watch the same stuff on their TV sets.

Let's face it. You can see scenes on your TV screen that are about as raw as anything at the Bijou Theater down the street. Seeing the stuff in private spares one the shame of being seen in the wrong place, but it does not keep the soul from being damaged. This is precisely why many Christians have gotten rid of their TV sets rather than have their homes controlled by that dreadful, one-eyed monster, for they discovered that the idea of [television viewing] being controlled is a theory only. Christ believed in desperate religion -- the kind that is not afraid to face issues and make changes. "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off," said the Man of Galilee. He might well remark today, "If thy TV set offend thee (or offend one of these who believe in Me), throw it out!" Defend it as you will, the TV will edge out of your heart the desire for God, the Bible, prayer, and soul winning. Sin becomes less sinful, things and the money to buy them

become more important, standards are easily lowered and "the sweet by-and-by" becomes much less attractive than the "sweet here-and-now."

We have to acknowledge that as far as the Church and the TV are concerned we are in a period of transition. We also admit freely that there is a wide divergence of opinion on the subject. To some it will seem a little silly to raise the question at all. After all, TV is here to stay and it is only a matter of choosing the good and omitting the rest. Why not leave out the discussion of the negative and emphasize only the positive? I am one who does not believe it is that simple. For to me, the encroachment of the movies into the homes through the TV and into the community conscience, as a tolerated daily-life factor, is a matter of great concern. Thousands upon thousands of families down through the history of the Holiness Movement have held, as a point of Christian separation unto God, that they would have nothing to do with the world of "show business," and that even though it occasionally presented some highly desirable features, they could get along very well without them, and stay clear with God. Now, we find that the very basis of that separation is breaking down and people are somewhat at sea as to what to believe and how to react on the matter. If this one thing, which we have been taught not to do, is right now -- what about the rest of the things that we have shunned in order to be a true Christian: namely, the dance, cards, morality, etc.? Is morality and Christian living, and Christian separation, after all, simply a matter of relative values, differing with different cultures and geographical locations? Let us be aware of the fact that the devil is forever seeking to weaken, to water down, to render ineffective, the message of the living Christ.

Things are changing to be sure. But it is one thing to recognize a trend and quite another to go meekly along with it. Paul said, "Evil men shall wax worse and worse," but did he condone the condition? Our Lord Jesus said that at the, end-time the love of many would be cold -- in fact, it would be difficult to find true faith on the earth. Did His awareness of that coming condition make it right? A Christian is different, not because he decided to be, but because he cannot help it -- Christ lives within.

We readily admit that neither the Bible nor the Wesleyan Methodist Discipline prohibit TV by name any more than they prohibit the movies by name. But it seems to me that the whole spirit of the Bible and our General Rules is against TV. Has not our contention been that they are the movies, the theater, the dance, tobacco, narcotics, gambling, etc.? More important; it appears that New Testament Christianity as declared by our Lord and by the sacred writers is contrary to TV. Believing this fact, it is the duty of this minister to hold this standard and to be courageous enough to, say, "No" to the TV, even though it be vigorously defended by many. What then, besides this, do I have against TV? Why do I not have television?

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01 -- FIRST REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because many who are not even in the holiness movement as well as hundreds of my most spiritual brethren across the country are against TV for Christian homes. Dr. Oswald Smith says, "It seems to me that television is going to be the greatest menace of modern times, and how Christians are going to be able to make use of it, I do not know. For generations we have refused

to take our children to night clubs, to wrestling matches, and boxing bouts. We have never allowed them to see the sinister evils of this world. Now these scenes are brought right into the home and displayed before the children's eyes. It costs them nothing to see them, except a loss of moral standards. They can turn them on whenever they want to. They can see things that otherwise they never would have seen. In their early life they can now become acquainted with sin in its vilest form. No longer will parents be able to keep them in ignorance of the awful things that go on in this world." (Wesleyan Methodist --Sept. 19, 1956, page 7)

A Christian lady in Texas, writing for a current religious magazine, says: "I have been observing the detrimental effects of television in the homes of my friends. You cannot maintain a high spirituality and close fellowship with Christ and be a regular TV watcher. How can we keep our minds 'stayed' upon the Lord while they are being cluttered with nonessentials?... Anything that blurs the image of Christ in our hearts, dulls the hunger for spiritual meat and drink, dominates our minds and weakens our hour-after-hour sense of His presence, is a major threat to our 'inner man.' A Christian home ought to be a haven from the clamor of the world.

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Dr. Vance Havner said:

"There was a time when I was inclined to take a broad view of the Christian's relation to this world. What I thought was my mind broadening was my conscience stretching. I have lived to learn that friendship with the world is enmity with God. Yet today conservative Christians speak lightly of separation. We have seen the theater move from down the street into the living room. We have seen Hollywood move into the church. We are seeing a subtle campaign to erase gently the line of demarcation between the church and the world, a campaign that is deceiving some of the very elect.

"I know that when I was farthest from the 'simple faith,' the 'pilgrim character,' and the 'blessed hope,' it was the most barren period of my life. It does not become us to speak with levity and flippancy concerning any of these precious tenets of our lost heritage. We had better busy ourselves recovering them."

One evangelical denomination has condemned TV as "unwholesome and not conducive to Christian living." It has instructed its ministers to get rid of their sets.

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Rev. G. T. Bustin had this to say:

"Many of God's saints believe that television is Satan's master scheme to bring the sensual, lust-breeding, murderous, and demoralizing movies into the homes whose inhabitants would never have gone to the movie house. This is hell's subtle plan to thrust into forbidden precincts the mire, moral-mud, and mental slush of Hollywood's adulterous derelicts. How silly is the argument that 'we bought the television to hold our children at home.' Such a strange manner of discipline! Some of us believe this is synonymous with saying, 'I prefer to have the

morals of my children wrecked and their souls damned at home, rather than elsewhere.' A wise man said, 'Between two evils, choose neither.' Some of us were fortunate enough to have a more effective type of discipline administered to us.

"Some of us feel that it is inconsistent with our prayers for the salvation of our children to bring what might become the damnation of their souls into our homes. This would be like placing a very dangerous temptation in the very presence of our children, then praying for God to protect them. This would be like praying for the health of our family, then piping a big sewerage line where it would pour its contents into their bedrooms. Yet, some of us are old-fashioned enough to believe that open sewers carrying every kind of filth about our doors and through our cities would be far less dangerous to our children than the moral filth, mental slush, lust-inspiring scenes, murderous views, vulgar suggestions, stinking rottenness and devil-designed activities piped into most homes which have television.

"How long is it possible to sit and watch television without having flashed before one's eyes those programs which are sponsored by the damnable liquor and tobacco syndicates? Even most of the sports are sponsored by these low-down agencies. How long can one watch television and abide in a praying frame of mind?

"Honestly, what child of God who has a vision of a lost world and is seeking to clear his hands of the blood of the heathen has time to sit and watch the flow of the world's nonsense by television?"

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It is stated that furloughing missionaries are shocked. Friends whom they have not seen for years welcome them into a darkened room. There where they had hoped to share the blessings of the Lord in their missionary endeavors they must sit mute for hours while favorite TV shows hold forth.

Dr. T. M. Anderson said, "Those who pray do not buy television sets: those who buy them do not pray."

To have one would bring discord and lack of confidence between some of the brethren and me. Some time ago, in a letter to me an honored and highly respected saint of God who has had many years of experience in leadership in the Lord's work and one for whose opinion I have the utmost regard said, "The TV has no place in a Christian home " I couldn't afford to disappoint such a saint by bringing into my home what he feels has no place in a Christian home. "Make yourself an example to the believers, in your speech, in your conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (I Timothy 4:12, Weymouth's New Testament)

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02 -- SECOND REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because personally I have watched the lives of some church people who have TV and have found these people are too often in poor spiritual condition. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8) It will not cause me to live closer to the Lord nor to love the place of prayer more, nor help to keep my mind pure and clean, nor create in me a deeper desire to be more Christ-like, nor will it encourage me to be more faithful in my church attendance; but it will have the opposite effect. Therefore, I cannot afford to have anything in my home which will tempt me to be less spiritual in this perilous day. "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me." (Psalm 101:3) It is my sacred duty to keep my soul clear, clean and right. I must be sure that the Holy Spirit is in control at all times and that the Holy Spirit is not grieved by my passing sewage through His sanctuary. I must evaluate the TV in the light of my devotion to Christ. I am different because I am His! "And ye are not your own, for 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."

At its best TV eats up time that should be devoted to the Lord's work. It draws Christians into a make-believe world which dulls the urgency of the Gospel. There is now little enough sense among Christians of urgency over the lost without anything to further dull this sense. It can also be a subtle force conforming Christian life to the Satanic standards of the world. Plainly, TV today is a monster overshadowing too many Christians and Christian homes.

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03 -- THIRD REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because the TV tends to a revival of the carnal mind and I want a revival of the spiritual mind. I would be putting myself in the way of temptation to watch those things that revive and create carnal thoughts and desires. At the moment it may seem harmless to an individual to continue looking at that which is sinful, but such practice will undoubtedly dull Christian convictions and decrease the power of the Holy Spirit in the life. I cannot afford this. The price is too high to have anything in my home which would become a channel of desire which might lead to lust. For the Bible says, "Whatsoever things are true... honest... just... pure... lovely... of good report... think on these things."

Poet Carl Sandburg before some 3,000 members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs of America in Asheville, N. C., declared that "more than half the commercial shows are filled with inanities, assinities, silliness and cheap trickery that to every thoughtful man and woman occurs the question: What are they doing to young people?" (Greenville, S. C. News, June 8, 1957 -- article -- Carl Sandburg lashes out at TV and the movies.)

In the October 28, 1957 issue of Life magazine, under the article entitled "TV Goes Wild Over Westerns -- Cowpokes' clashes fill the programs as horses, camels and classics are taken for a ride -- Television this fall started off with a bang-bang and by this week the bangs had exploded into a huge boom in westerns. Everywhere on TV, along with the sound of six-shooters, comes the noise of bottles breaking on bars, of poker tables crashing to the floor, of

fists smashing into faces and of hooves clattering over the plain. A full third of all the night-time TV network hours is filled with westerns, 12 of them popular holdovers from last year plus 11 rootin' tootin' newcomers.

"The big run on the TV range started when network planners noted that among the 50 or so shows scuttled last year because of audience apathy, not one was a western. Convinced that cowboys were destined to take over where comedians had faltered, the networks started grinding out the series, shown here in photographs by Life's Allan Grant. The big dramatic shows, usually more interested in the inner life than the wide open spaces, went to work on long, serious westerns, and TV syndicated film producers came up with a dozen more. Now there are so many horse operas on the screen that even TV does not seem to be taking them too seriously, indulging on occasion in good-humored hokum about a cowboy riding a camel. The fashion has reached such proportions that right now a Los Angeles family with unlimited leisure, four TV sets and an insatiable appetite for gunplay could tune in on 64 hours of westerns per week."

In a letter written to the editor of the Greenville Piedmont Paper shortly before March 6, 1957, when Sunday amusements were about to be voted on in Greenville, S. C., Col. M. Julep Magnolia wrote: "Up until now I ain't took much part in this debate over Sunday amusements, figgering not to bring down no unnecessary wrath on my rebel head. But something happened Sunday night that makes me jump right in the middle of it! Wrath or no wrath.

"We'uns in the Magnolia household wuz restfully settled down after suppertime and wuz watching television... We wuz looking at the TV, when allasudden on come a picture of a woman dressed in nothing much and what little there wuz wuzn't doing much good. And she started in to sing in a sultry tone, and commence to wiggle something awful.

"My eyeballs musta bugged out a bit, fer first thing I knowed Missus Magnolia hollered, 'Jule, you stop looking at that woman like that.' And I stopped.

"And we had a hard time distracting the young 'uns from the spectacle, even if they is too young yet to pay much mind.

"I got to thinking to myself that here is a purty kettle of fish. It's Sunday all the wholesome amusements in the country is outlawed until tomorrow and you can't do nothin but sit to home and look at sinful sights on the TV.

"So I'm taking pen in hand to inform all and sundry that I think we gotta have some entertainment on Sunday to counteract this kinda thing. When the young 'uns get a mite older, we're agonna have to pack 'em up in the family bus and take 'em to a drive-in movie on Sundays to keep them away from this influence, even if we have to drive all the way to Laurens County... Mr. Editor, I'm agonna come out March 5 and vote for Sunday amusements. Us Sunday-morning-only church goers jes gotta have some way to combat this stuff that's invading our homes on Sunday nights."

This is something to consider when a man of the world regarded the TV more dangerous than the movies, as bad as they are with their regular run-of-the-mill output of love, sex and

crime. Such become channels of desire. On this man's statement the TV must be a worse channel of unholy desire than the movie.

The Bible says that when lust has conceived it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. (James 1:15) How could I honestly pray the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," and bring into my home the very instrument that would become temptation? This wouldn't be very consistent, would it? This new device is a dangerous trouble-maker and can be a tremendous channel of evil desire. Its presence in the Christian home is more a source of sin than of righteousness.

In September, 1951, Jim Elliot, who was martyred by the Aucas, wrote in his diary a penetrating comment on television. "Feared the power of television last night. Psalm 119:37, 'Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity,' came as counsel this morning. Lost victory in not obeying it at Bob's house. Sense of the powerful decentralizing effect it has on my mind and affections. It 'quickens' me in ways not God's, and defeats the purpose of the prayer to be quickened in ways divine. Lord, grant me a disciplined spirit and an obedient body henceforth."

Here is cogent reasoning against television from the high plane of the spiritual man, who was all out for God, and it transcends many of the labored arguments on a lower plane. It is from the point of view of one who does not ask primarily, "Can I watch it?" but, "What will it do to my spiritual life and my communion with the Lord?"

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04 -- FOURTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because I was taught early in the Holiness church that if there were a doubt in my mind about anything being wrong I should leave it alone. We were taught what the Bible says, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." "... Practice self-restraint. In all respects, furnish an example of good actions in your own person... so that your opponent may be put to the blush when he finds no loophole for traducing you." (Titus 2:6b-8, Weymouth's New Testament)

If professed Christians who contend for the TV will be honest, they will have to admit that most programs are at best lightweight time wasters aimed at arousing a mass audience only for the moment. At their worst many present spiritually and morally corrupt situations they would turn from in disgust if they came up against them. Too often such Christians must admit that they are watching in the secrecy of the homes things they would consider a sin to pay to see elsewhere. Such will have to admit that it is easy to become mesmerized by the glassy eye, to watch what is really sordid and to brush off the immodest dress of TV performers with a "tch, tch" -- but go on watching just the same what they would not want the Lord to find them viewing at His coming. They know that the Lord is not pleased with such hypocrisy. Such need to remember that "CHRIST IS THE UNSEEN WATCHER."

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05 -- FIFTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because many of the lawyers, judges and officers of the law trace many of our juvenile crimes back to the influence of TV. Herman G. Stark, director of the California Youth Authority, which is responsible for all youngsters committed in that state, reports: "It has been our observation in talking with many boys that the modus operandi used in crimes against persons has frequently been taken directly from a crime television program."

Dr. Ralph Banay, director of a Brooklyn Clinic affiliated with the district attorney's office, sees, studies and listens to some 400 delinquent youths annually and reports these effects of tele-violence on such youngsters: "They have the impression that all life is full of crime techniques and desire guns and other weapons. They act violently within the family circle, and disregard and defy authority. If the proverb is true that prison is a college for crime, I believe for many disturbed adolescents TV is a preparatory school for delinquency."

A recent survey showed that there is a marked increase of interest in television on the part of children under ten years of age. Think of the implications of this! During their most impressionable years, children for hours on end are watching an endless succession of two-bit comedy, the song and dance routine so reminiscent of vaudeville twenty-five years ago, and various other slapstick and jugglery.

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06 -- SIXTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because many non-Christians are against TV. For me to put one in my home in face of this would nullify with them my example as a Christian. "Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us." (II Thess. 3:9)

J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI says that TV is one of the four greatest influences for evil that there is (comic books, movies, and radio being the other three). Mr. Hoover, in a recent editorial in the FBI Bulletin, says that the nation is threatened "with a flood of movies and television presentations which flaunt indecency and applaud lawlessness." He said further that they are an "affront to our national conscience," and he connected them directly with outbreaks of juvenile violence.

Secular critics even are appalled at the crime, violence, lust, materialism, and sensuality that dance across the screen and into the minds of susceptible children and unguarded adults. The Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission charged not long ago that "some television programming is more appropriate for the barroom or midway than for the living room."

Dr. Morgan, Editor of the "Journal of the National Education Association," said that the schools are now beginning to get children who have been raised on the diet of TV entertainment in the home. He said that the results are terrific and terrible.

A reviewer who watched for a nine-hour period said that there were fifty-three acts of violence shown -- murders, kidnappings, gun battles, poisonings, robberies, threats, hold-ups, arson, and teenage dope addiction. This is an example of how much crime is being consumed by children.

According to Alameda County Deputy Sheriff, Glen Harvey, a twelve-year-old boy in Hayward, California, hanged himself, apparently while re-enacting a scene from a TV show. The parents found the boy in the bathroom hanging from a belt looped around his neck, when they returned from a dance. His younger brother said the two boys had watched a Western movie on TV during the evening. It included a hanging scene, he said, and both boys discussed "how it must feel."

If anyone is interested in studying the effects that TV is having on Christians, youth and children, get the following books: "Seduction of the Innocent" by Dr. Fredric Wertham, in which he shows the effect of comics and TV on the children. The book is the result of seven years of scientific investigation. He has some vital things to say on what is happening to the children who are viewing TV. Then, Dr. Dan Gilbert has an excellent book on "The Truth About TV." This book shows how Christians who are viewing TV are influenced. Don Wharton's article published in "Parents' Magazine" for April 1956, and condensed for the "Reader's Digest" of that month under the title, "Let's Get Rid of Tele-Violence" is a withering indictment -- well substantiated -- of television for its excessive mongering of "crime, violence, brutality, and sadism," with clinical evidence of the teaching effectiveness of these on the young, making television without doubt a serious contributor to juvenile crime. If after reading what these men have to say about its effects on Christians, youth and children one can still maintain the "no harm" attitude, the conscience must be dulled beyond repair.

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07 -- SEVENTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because to have a TV in my home would hurt my Christian influence and hinder my weaker brother. "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." (I Cor. 8:13) "When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." (I Cor. 8:12) Though one imagines that the Lord will approve of his spending so much money on such a device, and though he imagines that he can keep the TV under control (as his neighbors cannot), there is still the matter of influence. When he puts in a TV set someone else will be encouraged to do so -- perhaps several will do so. WHAT IF THE INFLUENCED PEOPLE DO NOT CONTROL THEIR SET? "Am I my brother's keeper?" The answer is, "Yes." Therefore, I cannot afford to have one for when I stand on the dais at the judgment I may find my influence has damned a great many because we are cautioned in the Bible to behave so that our behavior, while right in itself and intelligent to us, may be edifying to others. What I must do is not only consider MY PLEASURE but ANOTHER'S PROFIT.

Christian ethics are not based upon selfishness. We are not told to do as we please. If our pleasure is another's hindrance, then our liberty which is good becomes evil.

Christian ethics considers a Christian's example. If our ideas are right and our example is wrong, we should be willing to suspend our ideas and surrender them for the sake of our example. Your Christian intelligence may tell you that a thing is harmless in itself for you, but that conclusion is not a sufficient motive for your indulgence. A Christian is moved by love. He must not do a thing that would be destructive to another.

Love is to be our prompting motive. Whatever the amusement or the act it must be accepted or rejected on the basis of love. Knowledge considers our interests, but love considers others' interests. While we may be conscientiously free to act on our conscience, we must never violate a conscience sensitized by love. Can we calculate the effect if all acted on this principle?

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08 -- EIGHTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE A TELEVISION

Because TV introduces into the home what the sponsors have to sell -- cigarettes and liquor -- and introduces into the home the low moral standards and worldliness which prevail in the movies. TV in the home opens in that home a beer parlor, a whisky store, a tobacco store, and a house of prostitution.

A man who had quit drinking started again after seeing it advertised on the TV.

By their own admission the creators of TV programs reveal that their objective is "Broad Appeal... seeking for the common denominator of mass interest." Anyone with a modicum of intelligence knows that this is but the stepping stone of vulgar exploitation. Leaders in the industry admit frankly that the trend in this direction will continue for some years to come.

My home, as a Christian home, is not to be a theater, a nightclub, or a midway. It is not to be invaded by the prize fight, the wrestling match, athletics, beer, whiskey, wine, tobacco, stealing, robbery, drinking, gambling, adultery, fornication, nudeness, or the movie. The boast of one network is that it "brings the world right into your home." Who wants the world as we know it in our homes? For God says, "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. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." (I John 2:15-17) "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." (James 4:4)

All research studies are unanimous in one conclusion, that the entrance of TV into the home brings about definite alterations in the pattern of family life. Often the time that should be given to higher and better things is now handed over to viewing TV with the consequent assault on time with intent to kill what this involves. It is death to deep spirituality and a deep prayer life. One would do well to remember Solomon's words (Proverbs 6:27): "Can a man take fire into his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?" Even if it were possible for you to watch TV

without personal detriment and if it were possible for you to take fire into your bosom without burning your clothes, you would still be an accomplice to a gadget that is causing untold crime and moral degradation among the young people of our country. Remember Jesus said, "Whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe in me to stumble, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." (Mark 9:42)

The stock phrase is that the evil can be turned off. This is a theory. That the evils are effectually kept out of the living room when the TV is on is very rare. Why does anyone imagine that he can succeed in this where most others fail?

Recently, a man told me about his brother who has a TV and what happened to his brother's little son. He threw a rope over a limb of the tree, stood on a box, tied the rope around his neck and jumped off. It did not kill him for the rope happened to be long enough to keep from doing that. When asked why he did it, he said, "I saw them do it on TV."

I have yet to see the Christian home where only the "good things," as they call it, are viewed on the TV. The tendency is to slip a little more and a little more into careless habits of watching whatever is to be seen. Most Christians would not care to patronize the local motion picture theater, and want their children to stay away from the movies. But if they are among those who have TV in their homes, something very like the theater is at their fingertips. They may say, "But at home we can supervise what the children watch!" But do they? My observation is that they do not. It seems rather, that the parents fall into the habit of listening to the drivel, too, watching the senseless parade of human inanity that passes for entertainment. One man confessed that, at first, he would jump up and turn off the liquor and tobacco advertisements but later, became very tolerant, saying, "Oh, it is only a moment, and left it on." Thus, he brought into his home the tobacco and liquor advertisements for his children to see. So, you see that the control idea is more theory than reality.

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09 -- NINTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because I have always preached against the evil influence of the movies. My besetting sin in my youth was Western movies. To bring the same into my home would be disastrous indeed, for they are showing on TV the same pictures that I saw in the movies when I was a sinner. To bring a TV into my home would be to go on the devil's territory and I couldn't expect the Lord to help. It would not be in harmony with Colossians 3:17, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." A young man stated that his mother is now allowing in the home and enjoying what she slapped him for sneaking off to see as a boy.

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10 -- TENTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because there is an apparent sense of guilt and self-defense manifested by those who have a TV set. A preacher friend of mine told me about a backslidden preacher with whom he had recently talked and prayed. As my friend was about to leave the home the man said, "If I ever get right with God again, I will have to get rid of that thing there" -- pointing to the TV set. Now, why did he say that? My friend had said nothing to him about the TV. There must have been a sense of guilt.

If there is no harm in having one, why then, do some who defend it, get so upset when some do not approve of its use?

Mrs. Van Wormer had a professed Christian nurse become greatly agitated at her. The nurse with other attendants and patients were telling about the TV programs they were viewing. All of a sudden the nurse turned to Mrs. Van Wormer who was then a patient in the hospital and only a silent listener to the TV conversation, and asked if she watched TV. When she briefly replied in the negative the nurse with much feeling and disgust defended herself by saying that she knew a retired Holiness preacher lady who watched and thought it was all right and that that was all she and her husband had to entertain them for they went nowhere and did nothing else. Now, why did this nurse say anything to Mrs. Van Wormer when she had said nothing pro or con about TV and why did she get so disturbed if it were not that her conscience bothered her in the presence of one whom she feared would oppose TV?

Right along this line of thought, Syd Harris, who was not writing from the Christian standpoint, had some pertinent things to say. We shall quote some from his article "Why are TV set owners angered by Non-owners?" which appeared in the April 6, 1956 Pittsburgh Post Gazette: "Nowadays, when people ask me if I saw a certain television program, I simply shake my head and say, 'No.' I used to say, 'We don't have a television set.'"

"We still don't have a television set, but I refrain from saying so. It makes people mad -- as if I said I hung out the Soviet flag on the Fourth of July, or fed my baby horse meat dipped in Tabasco.

"Why does it make them so mad, so aggressively defensive about having a TV set themselves? They don't react that way to anything else we don't happen to have bought.

"The Harrises are about as unmechanized as any family north of the Cumberland, and it doesn't bother anybody. We don't have an electric dishwasher; or an electric washing machine and dryer; or a home freezer. I even have an old fashioned hand-shift on my car. No power steering, power brakes, electrically controlled windows. None of it.

"This is all right with people; it just marks me as a harmless eccentric. But when they heard we had no TV, the lid really blew off. What was I, anyway -- a snob, a subversive, a dope-addict, a church burner, a Peeping Tom, a violator of the American Way?

"My guess is that they get so mad because they feel guilty -- obscurely and unconsciously guilty --- else why would my not having a set bother them so much? It doesn't hurt them. I don't

agitate against it. Let them have 20 sets, and let me have my books and records. That's my version of the American Way.

"One of our editorial writers asked me a few weeks ago if I had seen a certain program, and I told him we still didn't have a set. He said: 'Well, we just got one when the kids were getting over the measles.'

"Two of his colleagues overheard us, and one said, 'I was in an oxygen tent in the hospital when my wife bought one to keep her company.' The second said, 'It happened when I was in Washington on business.'

"They are somehow vaguely apologetic about it, and have to keep mumbling to themselves over and over again, 'Well, there are some good things on TV.' Of course there are, and let's hope more come. I'm not going over to tear out their sets by the roots. But what do you suppose they feel guilty about when they're sitting slumped in a semi-coma in front of the one-eyed witch doctor? And why be mad at me?..."

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11 -- ELEVENTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because TV is not only the enemy of the Church because of its character but because it hinders revivals and regular church services. This is true in spite of exceptions. One Holiness preacher resigned his pastorate because two-thirds of the members of his congregation bought TV sets and remained at home from services. Many church folk say that they are going to give up a number of their church activities, including the evening services and prayer meetings. What will this do our program of evangelism?

Remember the Scriptural injunction -- "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." (Heb. 10:24-25) In the face of this Scripture how could I bring in my home the things for which many others are forsaking the house of God in these last days?

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12 -- TWELFTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because TV is a waste to time, mind and money, since to help of TV to "education" and the compensating "good things" are negligible. Money spent on TV will surely not be spent on the church or any part of the Kingdom of God. May one waste his money because he has it on that which does not honor God? "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread..." (Isa. 55:2a)

Rev. S. H. Houbolt said: "TV is the most useless, time-consuming, sin-exciting, instrument ever introduced into the home, with the power of suggestion that makes the viewers

slaves of worldly fashion, fad and fancy. It creates a covetous craving for the latest gadgets and forms of worldly pleasure that makes men miserable with the best of last year's styles and methods.

"As for its educational value -- true education means to fill the mind with wholesome, useful knowledge whereby one can learn an honest, honorable living, and glorify God in this life. The mixture of a greater part of putrefaction and a smaller part of edification can never fulfill such a noble purpose."

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13 -- THIRTEENTH REASON WHY I DO NOT HAVE TELEVISION

Because I personally believe the TV is the greatest evil influence against deep spirituality that the Christian has ever known. It hinders pastoral visitation in the home. Pastors will tell you that they must request that the TV be turned off so that they can read, pray and talk about spiritual things. Many resent this as an intrusion, especially the children.

Then, another real danger, in the homes which have TV, is that there will grow up a generation of boys and girls who will have become accustomed to some things which holiness people have never believed in and [these boys and girls will be] strangers to the old-fashioned godly home training.

As a mechanical device the TV is a wonder. Admitted! But the things it stands for and promotes I stand against. Therefore, my opposition to it -- and the reasons why I do not have a TV in my home.

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14 -- JUST A FEW OF THE COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THIS LITTLE BOOKLET

"This is one of the best treatments of the subject we have ever read. Characteristic of Brother Van Wormer is the thorough documentation of the abundant references given." -- Editor Of A Church Paper

"I have read with appreciation your booklet. It seems to me to cover the subject in a way that is indisputable if an individual will approach the subject seeking the will of God." -- A District Superintendent

"I think, all around, this is the most comprehensive I have seen." -- An Evangelist

"It is sane, sensible and scriptural. Thank God for the Truth!" -- An Evangelist

"It is to the point and ought to be widely circulated... Of course some will not want it, nor will they read it; but many will." -- A. C. P.

"It seems to be a good straightforward, scriptural statement." -- Editor Of A Church Paper

"It is the most excellent summary of the issue I have seen." --California

"It is very good indeed -- comprehensive, well-fortified with Scripture and official reports of such a good character that sincere readers must consider." -- A Noted Former Church Leader

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THE END