

The Television

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A study about the influence of television on the believer's ability to conduct spiritual warfare.

Introduction

This outline has two points I wish to make concerning Spiritual Warfare. The first point is that we, as believers, are fighting this spiritual war the wrong way. Like Israel, both ancient and modern, we think that the war is fought by someone else. Moreover, we do not seem to understand that our actions, no matter how benign and mundane they appear be, are not. We cannot grasp that we are frequently our own worst enemies in this war because we discount the things we are involved in.

The second point is that we are ignoring the television and its influence on our ability to fight in this spiritual war. Moreover, we are unwilling to take decisive action against this pervasive influence. In short, we do not like the price we must pay to be effective in this war.

It is sad that so many "fundamental, bible-believing" Christians are unwilling to take the Lord's warnings seriously about looking upon evil. It is not enough that we are bombarded with wickedness everywhere we go, but must we invite it into our homes as well? It is this failure to clean out the home that leads to the defeat of so many otherwise strong Christians.

I. Where is the enemy?

March 21st, 2002 was a gray, overcast day in Jerusalem, Israel.

King George street was crowded with shoppers in preparation for the coming Passover. In the midst of the afternoon, as so many people went about their business on this street that had been the scene of so many Palestinian attacks upon Israel, surely security was tight. After all, IDF soldiers are everywhere. Israeli Intelligence, always up on so many movements of the opposition, surely would know of an impending attack. Had not the intelligence services and the IDF so many times before singled out Palestinian officers in the midst of traffic in crowded cities and dispatched them with accuracy and efficiency? Surely, there is nothing to worry about. Would not the police and the military be on highest alert at this place, just prior to the holiest of Jewish holy days; the Passover?

Except – recently, despite the peace efforts of the United States and Israel and all the security, attacks seem to have gotten through. Just that niggling of doubt and question. Oh well, not today – perhaps. ((This is a synopsis of a Debkafile report following a suicide bombing in Jerusalem. It is used to illustrate the complacency and misunderstanding that individuals have about war and how it is waged. Far too many “Christians” are stuck in the rut of thinking that the Devil has some respect for them, or that there are some lines he just will not cross. Worse yet, quite a number of “fundamentalists” think that the Lord will “bullet-proof” them so that the Devil cannot touch them.

It should be clear by this point in history that the above ideas are about as valid as thinking one can raise rice in the midst of the Sahara Desert without any assistance whatsoever.))

Fighting the war the wrong way.

And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down

to their gods.

And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.

And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baal-peor.

And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. (*Numbers 25:1-6*)

II. What exactly is a television?

By that I mean: What category of thing would a television fit into? What does it do? What can you use it for?

The television is a tool.

1. The television is a rather different kind of tool than we are used to, but a tool nonetheless.
2. As a tool, an inanimate object, it itself is not intrinsically good or evil.
3. However, unlike most tools we are familiar with, the television can convey information in the form of sound and images. ***This is where the issue lies.***

Some things to consider:

1. What is the quality, or content of the information transmitted unto the viewer.
2. How perceptive are we of the information presented unto us?
3. Do we always consciously perceive the information presented?

4. When we do perceive the information presented, do we always catch the subtlety of the message?
5. Do we always note the secondary messages presented?

III. The television and spiritual warfare.

1. The vast majority of this medium of communication belongs to the world and thus Satan. (99.9999%)
2. The deceitfulness and subtlety of Satan is such that we cannot, without a close walk with God, determine when we are being deceived, and thus influenced to think and do wickedly. i.e. Peter (Matt. 16:21-23), James and John (Luke 9:52-55), etc, etc. (Remember the third of the host of heaven (Rev. 12:3-4))

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: (*1 Peter 5:8*)

What then is the difference between watching television and going to Wal-Mart?

1. We don't spend hours every day in Wal-Mart.
2. We are generally focused on specific tasks at hand in Wal-Mart.
3. We know that Wal-Mart is worldly and ungodly (at least we ought to) and are thus on our guard. (By the way, how many of you men go through the checkout lane in Wal-Mart and look at the magazine covers? How many parents allow their children to go through the checkout lane and look at the magazine covers? What about the Mall?)
4. We can generally choose which parts of Wal-Mart we enter into. (Men, do you follow you wives through the Lingerie section? Or, do you avoid it?)

D. For the Television.

1. How many of you are faster on the remote than the

television is at switching scenes?

2. How many of you allow(ed) your children (or yourself) to watch Captain Planet (or other such cartoons) not realizing that it (they) teach rank environmentalism – of which witchcraft and evolution are major components? (By the way, evolution is not expressly reserved to humanist doctrine.)
3. How many of you catch the humanist/evolutionist bias in the documentaries you watch on the History Channel, in the News and on Discovery Channel? What about the pro-Catholic bias present on these same channels? (Several years ago I watched a documentary on the Gunpowder Plot. It was entirely presented with a pro-Catholic, anti-King James bias.)
4. How many sports programs are interlaced with alcohol/lewdly suggestive commercials? How many major sports figures live ungodly lives and don't mind displaying it?
5. When was the last time that the 'news' was interlaced with Victoria Secret, or Hanes Her Way commercials? (While I am at it, what about the commercial by a burger chain several years ago that had more to do with illicit relations between a boy and a girl than the merits of a particular hamburger? Or, as I was informed, of the more recent Mentos commercial that completely undermined a father's authority in the home?)
6. How many of you catch the fact that the vast majority of 'entertainment programming' teaches both you, and your children to rebel against all God-ordained authority?

How many of you were, or are able to avoid these things on the television?

IV. The danger of viewing, or hearing something.

A. God warns us about looking upon evil.

And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) (*2 Peter 2:7-8*)

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

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,

And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (*II Corinthians 6:14-7:1*)

The crux of the matter

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (*II Corinthians 7:1*)

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works

of darkness, but rather reprove them.

For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. (*Ephesians 5:8-12*)

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (*Ephesians 5:15-16*)

B. Satan cannot use what is not there.

Only God can create. The only thing that Satan can do is pervert that which already exists.

If you will notice, when Satan tempted Christ he did not present something that did not already exist. In fact, if one will research all the false religions in the world, it will be found that they are all to a greater or lesser extent perversions of the true Gospel of the Lord.

Please note: It is logically impossible for a creature to know anything outside of the context of its existence.

C. What we see, hear, taste, touch, smell, or feel stays with us all our life long. Every bit of it.

Not only that: We will answer for what we partake of and put forth.

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. (*Matthew 12:36*)

For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. (*Hebrews 10:30*)

Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. (*1 Corinthians 15:33*)

V. Affecting the Warrior.

1. Just how effective are you at presenting the gospel when you know you have sinned and displeased God?

2. How effective are you at presenting the gospel when you doubt your own salvation?
3. How many ideas of things you want to do with your life are initiated, or driven by something you have observed that was ungodly, from the television? Or, how many of your actions are motivated by the ideas and concepts promoted by the television?

What about this idea: When was the last time it was presented in a positive light on television? (*For that matter, when was the last time it was presented at all?*)

And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. (2 *Corinthians 5:15*)

VI. Affecting the Camp.

The church is weakened when its covenanted members are themselves weakened.

- Remember Aachen and the Valley of Achor? (Joshua 7)

VII. Conclusion

Where is the enemy: Revisited

You do know, Satan's most effective way of neutralizing the children of God is to be right there with them subtly getting them comfortable with his presence, and with the presence of sin.

From DEBKAFfile – March 21: The Palestinian suicide bombing that shattered lives and storefronts in downtown Jerusalem on Thursday also made a shambles of any coherent Israeli and US policy toward Yasser Arafat. The aftershock of the attack

would be even greater where it not for an Israeli court's gag order, issued at the urging of the prime minister's office, banning full DEBKAFfile reporting on the atrocity.

What DEBKAFfile can report is the account offered by the Jerusalem police: A suicide bomber killed three people and wounded 87 others when he struck Jerusalem's central shopping district on an overcast afternoon, yards from a dozen deadly terrorist atrocities in the past year. The horror was unimaginable – even in a city that has lost count of the atrocities visited upon it by Palestinian terrorists. Severed heads rolled down the sidewalks of King George Street, which was littered with limbs. Dozens of wounded writhed in agony from the nails and screws that spewed from the bomber's explosives belt.

The attack spelled the failure of moves by US President George Bush, envoy Anthony Zinni, vice president Dick Cheney and Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon to come to terms with Arafat. The failure was two-fold. As DEBKAFfile has written many times, Arafat simply does not want peace. He also does not want the ceasefire work plan drawn up by CIA director George Tenet, nor the truce-to-talks blueprint charted by an international panel led by former US senator George Mitchell. The Palestinian leader seeks the destruction of the state of Israel and he will use any means or trick to achieve his goal.

I remember a message by Brother Brian Disney of Mission Boulevard Baptist Church delivered on October 9th, 1996 titled 'Step by Step to the Slaughter: The Gradual Decay of Character' where he spoke about the 'pigcatcher' and equated the methods of the pigcatcher to Satan and the world.

I have two questions relating to this:

1. Just who let the pigcatcher into the home?
2. Who makes the decision to allow the world into the home – without opposition.

Brethren – Satan is driving at the very same thing for you. The total destruction of your witness, your testimony and you. He will not stop until he achieves it, and he is using the television to do it.

Fighting the war the wrong way – Revisited

Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you: (*Joshua 24:9*)

But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. (*Revelation 2:14*)
(the church in Pergamos)

Balaam was a tool of the enemy against Israel. (By the way, just who was the real enemy of Israel?)

- See Revelation 12:1-5)

The Solution God offers

And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. (*Numbers 25:7-8*)

And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and

Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword. (*Numbers 31:8*)

Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. (*Numbers 31:16*)

A Caution

One can, and many have, argued that all things are 'lawful unto them' and that they have 'liberty.' Those persons would do well to remember the admonitions that go with these phrases. We should not ever use our liberty in Christ as an occasion for the flesh. Nor should we partake of those things that do not edify. To do so is to subvert the very reason the Lord left us on this earth.

Moreover, since we are in a war – how much sense does it make to walk into the enemy camp and hand over your loaded weapon; then sit down with your back to the enemy?

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