

## **Who Rules Your Heart?**

***“There is nothing wrong with entertainment. As some psychiatrist once put it, we all build castles in the air. The problems come when we try to live in them.”***

The words above were penned by Neal Postman, a prolific writer who published 20 books, including the now famous, ***Amusing Ourselves to Death***. Postman was a fairly early pioneer in recognizing what electronic media does to the culture and the individual. He saw the negative effects of electronic media on the brains of young and old alike (TV, movies, computers, etc).

Jesus warned us that the mouth speaks out of the abundance of the heart (Matthew 12:34). The “heart” as used in scripture usually refers to the inner man; what psychologists call the “subconscious.” (Yes, I know that is a debated topic, but let’s use that for the purposes of this article.) That “inner man” is shaped and sculpted by that to which we expose ourselves. Many social researchers in numerous countries see this *inner self* (psyche, subconscious, heart) being malformed by exposure to electronic entertainment media (even small amounts can affect the very young). In one study, college students claimed electronic media has no effect on them, while believing that it does affect almost all others around them. We speak here of *entertainment media*, ***NOT serious electronic dialogue***.

I’m aware of the irony of this article, as I type it on a computer, but the focus here is *not* on word processing but entertainment media that forms far too much of our beliefs about the world and its inhabitants. Study after study has found that those surrounded by electronic media have their belief systems morphed, primarily unconsciously, by the media they see.

*That should not be surprising since God, Himself, formed our brains to become like the audio/visual images we see/hear in life. No wonder Paul wrote, “Do not be deceived, bad company corrupts good morals,” 1 Corinthians 15:33.* In our modern scenario the audio/visual “bad company” is the electronic entertainment media.

In calling us to re-evaluate how *entertainment media* affects our us, Postman wrote, **“Everything in our background has prepared us to know and resist a prison when the gates begin to close around us . . . But what if there are no cries of anguish to be heard? Who is prepared to take arms against a sea of amusements? To whom do we complain, and when, and in what tone of voice, when serious discourse dissolves into giggles? What is the antidote to a culture’s being drained by laughter?”**

Is it any wonder that even elected officials in our nation’s capital cannot seem to get a serious grasp on the problems we face and “dissolve into giggles” when asked serious questions? They are, after all, products of this same entertainment driven, amusement formed culture affecting us all.

The antidote is:

**“Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”** Romans 10:17.

**“You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”** John 8:32

**“My word is truth.”** John 17:17

***What is shaping YOUR heart?***

Ray Wallace

