

How Do We Evaluate Our Entertainment Choices?

By David Maxson

We start by eliminating anything that is immoral. We cannot tolerate the filth that has come to fill most shows on TV, songs on the radio, Internet sites, books and magazines, etc.

But the one who fears God is not only concerned about the blatant evils in the media, he is sensitive to other less obvious problems as well. A song on the radio may not have a single curse word in it, but the message is worldly. A movie may be rated "PG" but the underlying premise of the movie is ungodly. Anything that promotes selfishness, materialism, pride, or other forms of worldliness should be rejected.

Why should we be so careful? Because the devil does his best work in subtle ways. It's easy to see the dangers of violence, blasphemy, sexual themes, etc. But our values are changed more easily when our guard is down; when we digest things we feel are safe.

Most of what is fed to us is not safe. A recent study by researchers at UCLA examined the messages the media promotes to 9-11 year olds. In 1997 the top five values were community feeling, being kind and helpful (benevolence), image, tradition and self-acceptance. The top five values today are fame, achievement, popularity, image, and financial success. The bottom two values on this list are spiritualism and tradition.

The battle we're fighting is for the mind. We should be so cautious about the messages we allow into our minds and especially into the minds of our children.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Accept my freewill offerings of praise, O Jehovah, and teach me your rules.



Sick			
Sam Cox (Friend of Anna Stallings)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller)
Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Roger Whatley (Daphene Whatley's son)	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Betty Bradford	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Sandra Qadeer (Rafia Qadeer's mother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Meredith NeSmith (Jessica Anderson's Cousin)	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	Madi Wise (Friend of the Robert's)
Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkin's Dad)	Toni and William Herd	

July Birthdays
3 - Nathan Rouse
6 - Nathan Bradshaw
6 - Mac Searcy
11 - Kay White
11 - Hannah Alexander
11 - Clint Stagner
12 - Aurie Adams
14 - Laurel Jerkins
15 - Bradley Seymore
25 - Yvette Rouse
28 - Jacob Bradshaw

News and Notes
☒ - Laura Weldon will have an additional surgery on July 11.
☒ - The Prattmont church at Prattville will have a meeting this week with Phillip Owens.
☒ - Jon and Debbi Coleman are travelling to be with Jon's sister Mary who continues to be treated for seizures.
☒ - Tom Davis, Walker's uncle, has lung cancer and will have surgery on July 15.
☒ - Remember those recovering from surgery : Jennifer Daniels, Susan Sullivanne and Debbi Coleman.
☒ - Jon Coleman's sister died this week and her memorial service was on Friday.
☒ - Aurie Adam's grandmother dies and was buried on Tuesday.


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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)



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Thoughts to Ponder

Joy is love exalted; peace is love in repose; long-suffering is love enduring; gentleness is love in society; goodness is love in action; faith is love on the battlefield; meekness is love in school; and temperance is love in training.

Elders

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday
Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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Love for All of the Saints

By Bryan Gibson

Don't be envious when good things happen to your brethren; instead, let them know just how happy you are for them. And in bad times, sympathize with them. Let them know you're there for them, that you'll do anything in your power to help them.

Philemon wasn't partial—he loved **all** the saints (Philemon 1:5). And he didn't just feel it; he demonstrated it—"for we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother" (Philemon 1:7).

Other Christians in the New Testament were commended for the same thing: "...after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your **love for all the saints**, do not cease to give thanks for you..." (Ephesians 1:15-16). "We give thanks...since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your **love for all the saints**" (Colossians 1:3-4). "...for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do

so toward **all the brethren** who are in all Macedonia..." (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10).

Clearly, then, this is a point of emphasis in the New Testament. Do good to all the saints (Galatians 6:9-10) — not just family members, not just friends, and not just those you perceive to be the strongest.

Here, then, are some ways you can show love to all the

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saints in your local congregation.

Nothing wrong with sitting in the same pew or chair at every worship service, but don't talk to the same people every time. Before and after worship services, move around and talk to different people. Get to know everyone. They need you, and you need them **(Romans 1:12)**.

Don't think, though, that this can all be accomplished at the place you meet for worship. After all, you are there primarily to worship God. Invite people into your home; in fact, make it your aim to have everyone in the congregation at some time or another. You'll get to know them a whole lot better in your home than you will at services. It's awful hard to "warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak" **(1 Thessalonians 5:14)** when you don't even know who they are. Hospitality is a wonderful way to fill the needs of your brethren (and them fill yours), not to mention that it's a command **(1 Peter 4:9)**.

Visit those saints who don't have as much contact with their brethren—the sick, the shut-ins, the elderly, etc. **(Matthew 25:31-46; James 1:27)**. That's not the preacher's job or the elders' job; it's yours. These folks have special needs, and unless you have a real good excuse, it's your re-

sponsibility to fill them.

"Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep" **(Romans 12:15)**. Don't be envious when good things happen to your brethren; instead, let them know just how happy you are for them. And in bad times, sympathize with them. Let them know you're there for them, that you'll do anything in your power to help them.

Use all the means you have at your fingertips to encourage all the saints—get well cards, phone, email, Facebook, etc. Just don't convince yourself that this is the best way, because in most cases, nothing beats the opportunity to "speak face to face" **(3 John 14)**.

Commend your brethren on a job well done. Such commendations are found throughout the New Testament, so don't ever question their effectiveness. Again, don't be partial; include men, women, and children in these commendations. Folks who excel spiritually need to be commended so that they "do not grow weary while doing good" **(Galatians 6:9)**.

"And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you" (1 Thessalonians 3:12).

"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).



Unshakable Faith

By Justin Robinson

What is the foundation of our life? We all have something that is keeping our life together. **Hebrews 11** teaches us that faith was what guided men and women through life and helped them to do great things for God. All of us have something that is propping up our belief system. What props up our belief system? **Hebrews 11:1** says faith is the substance of things hoped for. Faith literally stands under and props up our hope- this being eternal life or our hope of being safe when we die. According to the Romans, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." So why does our faith get shaken? Why is it easy at times to get discouraged? We all want and need hope. Maybe it's because we put our faith in things that are truly shakable, while God, His word and His Son never are. Sometimes we put our faith in:

1. Our Present Situation - We try to find God in our present situation or experience. The problem is doing this makes our faith very fragile; Life is not consistent- **James 4** tells us in fact our whole life is only the length of a vapor. Maybe God isn't acting the way we think God should act. We should be like Joseph. He had every reason to conclude God was not with him based on his current situation, but we know God was always there with him through good and bad times. It has been said before, "God looks at the calendar, and we look at the watch." Let us thank God that He makes all things beautiful in His time!! **(Eccl 3:11)**

2. Lifestyle decisions - We change the way we behave when we change the way we believe. The pleasures of life will cause our belief system to be inconvenient, and then we leave our faith. The thing about pleasure is it is also not stable and fleeting. **Proverbs 31:30** teaches us that charm actually deceives us and beauty is fading, but a woman who fears the Lord will be praised.

Ultimately if we adapt our belief system to fit our behavior, we

God says I want you to know that 2000 years ago I sent my son into history to die for your sins. To walk as you walk, to be tempted as you are. I love you not because I answered your prayer but because I loved you from the beginning.

look up at the sky and say, "I don't believe in anything," and we realize believing in ourselves is not enough... There is more to life. God is life- without him we can do nothing. "But our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:

They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield." **Psalm 115:3-9**

We cannot put our faith in our present situations or ourselves because both let us down; we need something unshakable, that won't let us down.

Consider Jesus as He is called the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2-3)

The foundation of our faith is a person. The thing we lean Christianity on is something that makes it stand out. Consider that something happened in history- **God sent his son**. This is not my ability to make the world make sense, or an event. This is how people have strong faith through terrible circumstances. God says I want you to know that 2000 years ago I sent my son into history to die for your sins. To walk as you walk, to be tempted as you are. I love you not because I answered your prayer but because I loved you from the beginning. I just want you to trust me and lean your faith on something I did on your behalf.

Thank God for His unshakable power, His promises, His word and His son that showed us we can truly have unshakable faith in Him. God bless you!

