Monday, February 4, 2013 – Reality TV Needs a Reality Check

"**Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you**" (**Philippians 4:8, 9**).

Garbage in, garbage out…an adage that will always hold true regardless of the subject.

As Christians, we are in the world but not a part of the world. Paul states in **Roman 12:2**, "**And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.**" Very few Christians realize the full impact of television on their lives. The influence of television is as great on the Christian home as it is the non-Christian home. The Federal Communications Commission has estimated that children get more verbal influence from radio and television than from: parents, school, neighbors, and church combined. It is likely by the time they enter first grade, the average child has spent more hours in front of a television set than they will spend in a college classroom.

When it comes to how we spend our time, the subject of reality TV comes to mind as the biggest pile of garbage we could wallow in. We have replaced a lovable, floppy eared dog named Snoopy with an irreverent, immoral brat named Snooki. I'm sorry, but how did that improve our society?

Reality TV is the poster child for the immoral standards to which the Untied States of America has sunk. That our world is sliding down a path of immorality is beyond question. Values in regard to sexual purity, personal integrity, and basic honesty are rapidly becoming virtues of the past. The softening of regulations for television programs has brought profanity, violence, sexual exploitation, perversion and nudity into every home in the country.

The most powerful effect of television on the church is the direct influence it exerts on the lives of God's children. Television extols standards for living and acting which are contrary to God's principles for righteousness and purity. Openly practiced in reality TV programs are: adultery, cursing, assault, muggings, fighting, rape, drugs, mate swapping, homosexuality,

bigamy, prostitution, consumption of alcoholic beverages, and many other activities which are opposed to God's way of life. The lifestyle and world of television, reality or other, is not even distantly related to the life of a Christian.

As great as this danger is, there is an additional danger in the subtle influence being exerted upon Christians by television programs which do not stand for or against unrighteousness, but present sin in a favorable light. These types of programs present objectionable materials in a favorable situation to condition viewers to consider such activities even if they do not approve of them. Over a period of time resistance to sinful lifestyles can be weakened.

How much farther down this path can/will the world go? To what extent will the longsuffering of God continue to give men opportunities to repent? We need look no further than the Old Testament to see God's feelings about such immoral lifestyles.

In the midst of a world which scoffs at sin and accountability, Christians must remain pure and clean. Christians have entered into a new relationship with God, having become children of light in the Lord (**Eph. 5:8**). As such, we are to "**have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them**" (**Eph. 5:11**). Often one can stay in darkness until the eyes adjust and become accustomed to the lack of light. That is exactly the danger Christians are facing. Are we becoming accustomed to the darkness?

We must cultivate within people a hatred for sin. Amos instructed the Israelites to "**Hate the evil, and love the good**" (**Amos 5:15**). Paul urged the Romans to "**abhor that which is evil**" (**Rom. 12:9**). With this hatred for sin, a confrontational warfare must be waged on the forces of evil. While it is true that the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, it is a reality that we are to be "**mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds**" (**2 Cor. 10:4**). We are "**to demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God**" (**2 Cor. 10:5** NIV). With an aggressive attitude toward sin and error and an intense love for truth and righteousness, Christians will automatically keep themselves pure from the threats of immorality which assail them.

There are things that we must seek to do. First, we must overcome the danger of conformity (**Rom. 12:2**). Christians must exist in the world, but not

be a part of the world (**John 17:15**). Christians, having been called out of the world, must maintain that separate relationship of holiness (**2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9**). Second, we must seek to be pure in order to be a proper influence upon the world. There is a great opportunity for Christians to serve as a leavening, savoring, and enlightening influence upon the surrounding world (**1 Cor. 5:6; Matt. 5:13-15**). Third, Christians must take a firm stand against every form of evil. Christians should be known in their community for their stand against liquor, pornography, sexual permissiveness, and every form of sin.

There is no greater challenge to be accepted than to fight the immoral influences in the world. The word of God is our sword and is powerful enough to defeat the enemy (**Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12**). With faith and courage, let us go forth as a mighty army on its way to battle. In so doing, we shall bring glory to God and salvation to the lost. Through Christ, the author of our salvation, we shall ultimately be victorious (**Rev. 17:14**).