



THE VALUE OF CHRISTIAN MEDIA

By Waldo Malan

“The Word of God should be the only measuring tool we use to filter the information presented to us through all media. I am guilty of fundamentalist tendencies - I believe the Word at face value. “No murder” simply means “no murder”. “No envy” is precisely that - envy nothing. There is only one God and He is immutable, eternal, love, gracious and a whole lot more.”



In order to establish the value Christianity adds to the media, one first needs to examine the nature of media itself. Media is a term that loosely describes all forms of communal communication methods in a society. This includes printed media (newspapers, magazines, information leaflets), broadcast media (radio and television) and social media (internet-based platforms and electronic media). Since all media communicates directly with a society, it has an inherent force and power to sway the thinking, and ultimately the actions of that society. All power has the potential to corrupt, and this is also true of the media.

Advertising companies have long ago realized the power of the media, and hence they exist! Their sole purpose is to convey a message to the general public (media consumers) that what they are selling, or saying about any product, is the truth. Daily newspapers carry the same power, since they distribute newsworthy stories about things that happen all over the world. Every article that is published is done as "fact", and most readers will believe every fact published as the "gospel truth." Social media has the power to make or break reputations as well, whether that be of a person or a thing.

The world has indeed become a very small place; what happens in South Africa is common knowledge in Australia in a matter of minutes. Our contemporary society suffers from an

overload of information, most of which is conveyed through one form of media or the other. Our problem is not a lack of information or knowledge, but rather on how to digest an encyclopaedia of information into a palatable one-page document containing truth and wisdom.

We are confronted daily by an overload of voices (or messages) that try and grab our attention and try to get us to believe them. Simply look at your own email inbox and the daily spam it collects, even after extensive filtering systems are put in place! Whether we like it or not, some of those messages do penetrate and will influence the way we think, speak and act in future. Once our own voice and actions repeat something that has become a belief system, we habitually perpetuate a behaviour based on our beliefs. But what if somehow our belief system got corrupted through ingesting the wrong information?

In an era of information overload we need a fail proof system in place that can help us sift through this, and let us distil all until only the truth remains. And this is precisely the point where the value of Christian media is most crucial. Perhaps allow me to change "Christian" to "Biblical" for the sake of this article, as I don't want to bring in the added dimension of denominational beliefs and differences. So when I speak of "Christian media" I am in fact referring to a Biblical worldview.

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Therefore the value of a Biblical worldview is invaluable in the context and scope of the media, because without it we can very easily start believing the wrong things, place value on that which has no value, and ultimately even corrupt the way we relate to one another.

The value of Christian media is indispensable in the arena of modern media. So, my encouragement is for you to get in touch with the wisdom contained in the Word of God in order to distil the overload of information that is our reality.