

MEDIA, ENTERTAINMENT AND THE CHRISTIAN  
Apologetics  
Závadka, 3rd October 2015

OUTLINE

**0. INTRODUCTION:**

- 0.1. WHAT ARE THE MEDIA?
- 0.2. MEDIA IN HISTORY
- 0.3. THE DRIVING FORCE OF THE MASS MEDIA

**1. THE POWER OF THE MEDIA OVER YOU**

- 1.1. THE MEDIA AND YOUR EMOTIONS
- 1.2. THE MEDIA AND YOUR MIND
- 1.3. THE MEDIA AND YOUR ATTITUDES

**2. PROTECT YOUR FAITH!**

- 2.1. CONTROL YOUR CURIOSITY
- 2.2. LEARN TO THINK CRITICALLY
- 2.3. GUARD YOUR HEART

**3. TO REMEMBER**

**0. INTRODUCTION:**

- "...the most famous utterance ever attributed to Lincoln is, "You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time." (he never said it)<sup>1</sup>
- "You can fool all of the people all of the time if the advertising is right and the budget is big enough." —Joseph Levine
- film, TV → "Dreams that money can buy"<sup>2</sup>

[radio] ...others are listening with him and in this way feels a community of interest with people outside his home. He feels less lonely,... Radio brings greater variety into the lives of men, and yet at the same time tends to standardize and to stereotype mental life. Experts tell us what to eat, what to read, what to buy, what exercise to take, what to think of the music we hear, and how to treat our colds. When the expert signs off, the advertiser takes up the assault on individuality in taste and conduct. (Over the air the distinction between the expert and the advertiser is often intentionally vague.)<sup>3</sup>

- we must not *demonize* the technology/media

**0.1. WHAT ARE THE MEDIA?**

- "medium" - 5.a An intermediate agency, **means**, **instrument** or **channel**. Also, intermediation, instrumentality: in phrase by or through the medium of. spec. of newspapers, radio, television, etc., as vehicles of mass communication. Also attrib. and in pl.
- philosophy: the *senses* are media (HUME; KANT...)
- communication: *language* is a medium; signs (semiotics)

<sup>1</sup> abrahamlincolnassociation.org\Newsletters\5-4.pdf

<sup>2</sup> RIEBER, R. W. – KELLY, R. J. *Film, Television and the Psychology of the Social Dream*, New York : Springer, 2014, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> CANTRIL, H. – ALLPORT, G. W. *The Psychology of Radio*, New York : Harper & Brothers, 1935, p. 18, 22.

- art: music → tones; visual arts → shapes, colours;
- your neighbour giving a report... Newspapers, radio, television, etc., collectively, as vehicles of mass communication.<sup>4</sup>
- → (1) listening, (2) reading, (3) seeing a **reported message** (indirect access to fact)
- ⇒ the world we know is *the world known through various media*... → must be careful who is on the *broadcasting* side of the message

## 0.2. MEDIA IN HISTORY

### 0.2.1. MEDIA AS TECHNOLOGY

- **printing** – around 1450 (GUTENBERG); → cheap print around the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> ct. → the “average man” began reading trash instead of useful matter
- **photography** - [Wiki] ...around 1800...Thomas Wedgwood made the first reliably documented although unsuccessful attempt. In the mid-1820s, Nicéphore Niépce succeeded, but several days of exposure in the camera were required and the earliest results were very crude. Niépce's associate Louis Daguerre went on to develop the daguerreotype process, the first publicly announced photographic process, which required only minutes of exposure in the camera and produced clear, finely detailed results. It was commercially introduced in 1839, a date generally accepted as the birth year of practical photography.
- **radio** (wireless) - [Wiki] Between 1886 and 1888 Heinrich Rudolf Hertz published the results of his experiments where he was able to transmit electromagnetic waves (radio waves) through the air, proving Maxwell's electromagnetic theory. In 1894 the young Italian inventor Guglielmo **MARCONI** began working on the idea of building a commercial wireless telegraphy system ... In 1900, Brazilian priest Roberto Landell de Moura transmitted the human voice wirelessly...
- **film** - The **history of film** began in the 1890s, when motion picture cameras were invented and film production companies started to be established.
- **TV** - [Wiki] The invention of the television was the work of many individuals in the late 19th century and early 20th century. ...On March 25, 1925, John Logie BAIRD (Scottsman) gave the first public demonstration of televised silhouette images in motion, at Selfridge's Department Store in London.
- **internet** – [Wiki] The **history of the Internet** begins with the development of electronic computers in the 1950s. ...The term "internet" was adopted ...in December 1974 as an abbreviation of the term *internetworking* and the two terms were used interchangeably... TCP/IP goes global in 1980s...
- cellular phones – [Wiki] Prior to 1973, mobile telephony was limited to phones installed in cars and other vehicles.<sup>[17]</sup> Motorola was the first company to produce a handheld mobile phone.
- players - [Wiki] iPod ...portable media players and multi-purpose pocket computers designed and marketed by Apple Inc. The first line was released on October 23, 2001, about 8½ months after iTunes (Macintosh version) was released.
- tablet (iPad) - iPad is an iOS-based line of tablet computers designed and marketed by Apple Inc. The first iPad was released on April 3, 2010
- media depended on advertising → reaching wider public; making more money... → consumerism

### 0.2.2. MEDIA AS CONTENT

- the problem of the media is *what is mediated* ... (news; ads; stories; obscenities; addictive games...)

...a variety of signifying forms apart from face-to-face interaction—buildings, pictures, statues, coins, banners, stained glass, songs, medallions, rituals of all kinds—were deployed in pre-industrial societies to express sometimes highly complex ideas. At times, these signifying forms reached vast audiences. For instance, the proportion of the adult population in Europe regularly attending mass during the central middle

<sup>4</sup> Oxford English Dictionary,

ages was almost certainly higher than the proportion of adults in contemporary Europe regularly reading a newspaper.<sup>5</sup>

- **printing:** first the Bible; newspapers; magazines

[America] The Daniel Yankelovich Group estimates that an average citizen who lives in a city may encounter up to 5,000 advertising messages a day. That translates to more than three each minute. It's a significant increase from the estimated 2,000 ads the same person would have seen during a day in the mid-1970s, when advertising focused on network TV, magazines, newspapers, and radio.<sup>6</sup>

- [20<sup>th</sup> ct.] ...continuous portrayals of sensuality, unbridled passion, crime and violence could hardly contrast more starkly with the values of self-control, moderation and reason that bourgeois social reformers sought to inculcate

### 0.2.3. (SOME OF THE) PROBLEMS

Average American TV viewing = more than 4 ½ hours/daily

By age 65 - 12 uninterrupted years

Hungarians = 4 hours/day Poland = a little more than 4 hours/day

Russia = 4 hours/day Slovakia = unknown

Compare George ORWELL'S *1984* with Aldous HUXLEY'S *Brave New World*

What they feared:

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. Banned Books           | No one wanted to read                            |
| 2. Deprive of information | Too much information producing passivity         |
| 3. Truth concealed        | Truth drowned in sea of irrelevance              |
| 4. Captive culture        | Trivial culture preoccupied with the unimportant |
- Before things like radio and television there was no "news of the day." The rapid pace of today's technology makes it difficult to process and give
  - What an **image** does is to distort the reality. An image of God distorts the reality of who God really is. The image communicates the wrong message, an untrue message. God's wants His message communicated through His word, not through an image. This was an unusual concept for its time that required a high order of abstract thinking. But God wanted His people to understand that He was something, someone other than earthly.
  - Remember those times Mom told you to turn the TV off because it turns your brain to mush? Well, it turns out she was right. A new study by Japanese researchers indicates that too much television impacts children's brains in damaging ways. Scientists from Tohoku University performed MRIs on 276 children, ages 5 to 18, who watched between zero and four hours of television daily. They found that the more children watched TV, the more gray matter they had in regions around the prefrontal cortex, an outcome linked with lower verbal intelligence. The researchers compared excess gray matter to excess body fat, and said that this area of the brain needs to be "thinned" during adolescence by avoiding television and engaging in other creative endeavors, such as learning to play an instrument. The Tohoku researchers concluded, "TV viewing is directly or indirectly associated with the neurocognitive development of children. At least some of the observed associations are not beneficial and guardians of children should consider these effects when children view TV for long periods of time." [dailymail.co.uk, 1/10/14 c&e]

### 0.3. THE DRIVING FORCE OF THE MASS MEDIA

- "There is a strong correlation between the growth of the media and the growth of advertising. One supports the other; the dependence is mutual."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> CURRAN, J. *Communications, Power and Social Order*. In GUREVITCH, M. – BENNETT, T. – WOOLLACOTT, J. *Society and the Media*, London : Routledge, 1982, p. 198.

<sup>6</sup> VOLLMER, C. – PRECOURT, G. *Always On*, New York : MacGraw Hill, 2008, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> VILANILAM, J. V. – VARGHESE, A. K. *Advertising Basics!*, Thousand Oaks : Response Books, 2004, p. vii.

[Germany] As always, **the box-office served as the final judgement** of success or failure. Unlike the traditional theatre or intellectual press, popularity was measured primarily in terms of sales, not critical acclaim. Audiences only bought what they liked, so observance of the 'bottom line' therefore functioned as an important conduit of audience feedback<sup>8</sup>

## 1. THE POWER OF THE MEDIA OVER YOU

- Noam CHOMSKY: "10 strategies of manipulation" by the media<sup>9</sup> (CHOMSKY: atheist; anarchist...)
  1. The strategy of **distraction** The primary element of social control is the strategy of distraction which is to divert public attention from important issues and changes determined by the political and economic elites, by the technique of flood or flooding continuous distractions and insignificant information.
  2. Create problems, then offer solutions This method is also called "problem-reaction-solution. "It creates a problem, a "situation" referred to cause some reaction in the audience, so this is the principal of the steps that you want to accept.
  3. The **gradual strategy** acceptance to an unacceptable degree, just apply it gradually, dropper, for consecutive years.
  4. The strategy of deferring Another way to accept an unpopular decision is to present it as "painful and necessary", gaining public acceptance, at the time for future application. It is easier to accept that a future sacrifice of immediate slaughter.
  5. Go to the public **as a little child** Most of the advertising to the general public uses speech, argument, people and particularly children"s intonation, often close to the weakness, as if the viewer were a little child or a mentally deficient.
  6. Use the **emotional side more than the reflection** Making use of the emotional aspect is a classic technique for causing a short circuit on rational analysis , and finally to the critical sense of the individual.
  7. Keep the public in **ignorance** and **mediocrity** Making the public incapable of understanding the technologies and methods used to control and enslavement
  8. To encourage the public to be complacent with mediocrity Promote the public to believe that the fact is fashionable to be stupid, vulgar and uneducated...
  9. Self-blame Strengthen To let individual blame for their misfortune, because of the failure of their intelligence, their abilities, or their efforts.
  10. Getting to know the individuals better than they know themselves Over the past 50 years, advances of accelerated science has generated a growing gap between public knowledge and those owned and operated by dominant elites.

### 1.1. THE MEDIA AND YOUR EMOTIONS

- journalism – the *ideal* of objectivity and the *selection* of news items
- [Germany] "Admittedly, **emotions and passions** were the stock-in-trade of commercial entertainments. They deliberately **appealed to the senses**, they promised **immediate pleasure**, and they frequently titillated audiences with action and eroticism." (ROSS p. 55)

[WEAVER 1948] Our age provides an example of the **ravages of immediacy**. The clearest symptom is a failure of the modern mind to recognize obscenity. The media is filled with a hunger for titillation — not only sexual but gratuitous violence [seen in the radical decay of Puritan ideals]<sup>10</sup> → *obscenity*,

- "journalism of attachment"

A smiling face of a now murdered child, a pretty young woman disfigured in an accident, family members mourning the loss of a loved one, soldiers portrayed as fathers and husbands, hungry people in rags take the screen at the mention of the Third World... or men in turbans and guns when its time for terrorism analysis: these are pictures that we see everyday in the media's attempt to bring "reality" to life. The essential ingredient to get any desired result is emotions! The **tremendous use of emotional play in news reporting** makes one wonder whether it is reporting, or is it crossing over into something else and whether the media are increasingly getting involved in a moral crusade? ...Coined by BBC's former correspondent Martin Bell, "journalism of attachment," agrees that reporters are now participants in the

<sup>8</sup> ROSS, C. *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, Oxford : OUP, 2008, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> CHOMSKY, N. [parisis.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/noam-chomsky.pdf](http://parisis.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/noam-chomsky.pdf) (1-Oct-15)

<sup>10</sup> WEAVER, R. *Ideas have Consequences*, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1948, p. 26-27.

conflicts that they report, and we need a journalism that is not just concerned with the facts and the statistics, but with the moral and ethical issues raised by the conflicts.<sup>11</sup>

- WILEY, N. *Emotion and Film Theory*<sup>12</sup>

*Table 1.* Comparison of Movie Spectator Emotion with that of Everyday Life.

	Real World	Movie Spectator World
(1) Risk	Unlimited Risk	Limited Risk
(2) Distance	Natural Distance	Medium Distance
(3) Attention	Close attention	Split Attention
(4) Effects	Indefinite	Often Terminate with End of Movie
(5) Subject	You are the subject	Pseudo-subject (Vicarious Emotions)
(6) World	Everyday World	Movie World
(7) Epoche	Natural Attitude	Movie Reality
(8) Feeling Rules	Normative	Easily Broken without Sanction
(9) Emotion Work	Routinely Required	Rarely Needed
(10) Responsibility	Considerable	None (Emotional Freedom)
(11) Clarity	May Need Labelling	Movie Cues, e.g. Music, do Labelling
(12) Discussable	Often Kept Quiet	More Easily Talked about
(13) Context	One's Whole Life	Context Bound by Frame of Movie
(14) Identification	Cautious	Hedonistic
(15) Frequency	Sporadic	Continuous and Sped Up
(16) Intensity	Ordinary Intensity	Extraordinary Intensity
(17) Range	Normal	Extreme, e.g. Terror, Wild Sex, Bliss

### 1.1.1. EMOTIONAL RESPONSE – DESIRE

- compassion; anger; fear; desire; → “shock treatment”

[Germany] ‘The first function which a newspaper supplies is that which formerly was performed by the village gossip,’ noted the Chicago sociologist Robert Ezra Park. ...the new cult of the ‘star’, ...grew out of the same desire for intimacy and familiarity. By conveying personal information about an actress or athlete that was wholly irrelevant to his or her professional role, the practitioners of ‘stardom’ sought to forge a pseudo-intimate link between the celebrity and the individual fan.<sup>13</sup>

- → manipulation

### 1.1.2. SELECTIVE KNOWLEDGE – PREJUDICE

- “Have you noticed that life, real honest-to-goodness life, with murders and catastrophes and fabulous inheritances, happens almost exclusively in the newspapers?”<sup>14</sup>
- the importance of the things you do *not* know

### 1.1.3. FAITH AND EMOTIONS

- Jonathan EDWARDS – “True religion, in great part, consists in holy **affections**.”
- [Timothy DWIGHT 1846] “There is no more absolute folly than to believe doctrines because we love them, and to reject doctrines because we hate them : or, in other words, to suffer our inclinations to govern our understanding.”<sup>15</sup>

## 1.2. THE MEDIA AND YOUR MIND

- originally: newspapers – not *just* reporting but giving *opinions*, educating
- [early film:] ‘What plays itself out before our eyes is the fullness of life, depicted in stunning detail. Every scene is a vivid portrayal of nature, so precise down to the last detail that it appears to us as if<sup>16</sup>
- BOORSTIN: “A Flood of Pseudo-Events” (*The Image* 1962) “The celebrity is a person who is known for his well-knownness” (p. 57)

[BERNAYS 1907] The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country. We are governed, our minds are molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of. This

<sup>11</sup> KHAN, R. <http://theunjustmedia.com/Media/Articles%20On%20media/Emotions%20in%20journalism.htm>

<sup>12</sup> cdclv.unlv.edu/pragmatism/wiley\_emo\_film.pdf\

<sup>13</sup> ROSS, C. *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, Oxford : OUP, 2008, p. 17

<sup>14</sup> ALLAN, S. *News Culture*, Maidenhead : Open University Press, 2004 p. 1

<sup>15</sup> DWIGHT, T. *Theology Explained and Defended in a Series of Sermons*, New York : Harper & Brothers, 1846, p. 100.

<sup>16</sup> ROSS, C. *Media and the Making of Modern Germanys*, p. 35.

is a logical result of the way in which our democratic society is organized. Vast numbers of human beings must cooperate in this manner if they are to live together as a smoothly functioning society.<sup>17</sup>

- ...we are viewing the real world itself.' ...or are we?
- "Many people argue that the media are now governed first and foremost by an **entertainment ethos** and that this new news culture has virtually usurped traditional journalistic norms, thus abandoning the investigative and educational principles on which the industry was founded."<sup>18</sup>

### 1.2.1. TRIVIALITIES

- "Nowadays cable news networks have to scramble to have something to talk about **twenty-four hours a day**, even when nothing of import is going on. Sales departments are still selling advertisements, after all. Mass Media can't just run content made entirely of ads..."<sup>19</sup>

### 1.2.2. UN-TRUTH & ILLUSIONS

[BAUDRILLARD] When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning. There is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality; of **second-hand truth**, objectivity and authenticity.<sup>20</sup>

- [Internet] "Despite the fact that many Internet users are "communicating" with people throughout the world, they grow isolated from actual social contact in their lives at home and in their communities."<sup>21</sup>
- The advertising profession transformed the capitalist model of buyers making rational choices in a free market into a **consumerist model** where the buyer was driven by irrational emotions associated with particular brand names and/or products.<sup>22</sup>

### 1.2.3. FAITH AND MIND

- **Mk 12:30** ...you shall love the Lord **your** God with **all your** heart and with **all your** soul and with **all your mind** and with **all your** strength.'
- **2Cor 10:4-5** For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments<sup>5</sup> and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,
- **Col 3:2** Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

## 1.3. THE MEDIA AND YOUR ATTITUDES

- a. = deliberately adopted, or habitual, mode of regarding the object of thought

An attitude represents an **evaluative integration of cognitions and affects** experienced in relation to an object. Attitudes are the evaluative judgments that integrate and summarize these cognitive/affective reactions.<sup>23</sup>

- [BENJAMIN ] "A man who concentrates before a work of art **is absorbed** by it. He enters into this work of art the way legend tells of the Chinese painter when he viewed his finished painting. In contrast, the distracted mass absorbs the work of art."<sup>24</sup>
- [PATTEN 1907 *consumerism*] "Men idealize the future and depreciate the present; they advance into a period of restraint and morality, puritan in essence but various in form."<sup>25</sup>

Television and the print media pander to the **lower emotions** and make erotic relationships dramatically attractive. So indecent have the sex flicks become that even the U.S. Attorney General's office now regards as tame some magazines which as recently as a decade ago were considered patently pornographic. If ancient Pompeii was a world center for kinky sex, the media more and more channel eroticism into the homes of

<sup>17</sup> BERNAYS, E. *Propaganda*, New York : Horace Liveright, 1907, p. 9

<sup>18</sup> MONAHAN, B. A. *The Shock of the News*, New York : New York University Press, 2010, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> CURTIS, D. *It's not News, It's Fark*, New York : Penguin, 2007, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> BAUDRILLARD, J. *Selected Writings*, Palo Alto : Stanford University Press, 1988, p. 171.

<sup>21</sup> ARDEN, J. B. *America's Meltdown*, Westport : Praeger, 2003, p. 22.

<sup>22</sup> SPRING J. *Educating the Consumer-Citizen*, New Jersey : Lawrence Erlbaum, 2003, p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> CRANO, W. D. – PRISLIN, R. *Attitudes and Attitude Change*, New York : Psychology Press, 2008, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> BENJAMIN, W. *Illuminations*, New York : Schocken Books, 1969, s. 239.

<sup>25</sup> PATTEN, S. N. *The New Basis of Civilization*, New York : Macmillan, 1907, p. 141.

viewers. They have played a major role in making sports a national religion, in promoting the consumption of alcoholic beverages despite the national vice of alcoholism, and in publicizing lotteries that encourage the masses to gamble away their hard-won earnings.<sup>26</sup>

- [GABLER p. 6] “Michael Wood in his book *America in the Movies* described our films as a “rearrangement of our problems into shapes which tame them, which disperse them to the margins of our attention,” where we can forget about them. This is what we really mean when we call entertainment “escapist”: We escape from life by escaping into the neat narrative formulas in which most entertainments are packaged.”<sup>27</sup>

### 1.3.1. OPENNESS

- what is possible (the filming of smoking women – Freud’s influence on advertising) [*The Century of the Self* – BBC]
- feeling “everybody does it – it is on TV”

### 1.3.2. PARTICIPATION

- [Germany] “Unlike ‘great art’—or, for that matter, attempts that fell well short of it—it did not seek the veneration of the viewer but rather his or her participation. Any claims that it made to cultural value were not based on its intrinsic merits, but on its ability to entertain.”<sup>28</sup>

### 1.3.3. FAITH AND ATTITUDE

- **Phil 2:5** Have this attitude (φρονεῖτε) in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus

[CHAMBERS] The one attitude of the life is **Jesus Christ first, second, and third, and nothing apart from Him**. The thing that hinders God’s work is not sin, but other claims which are right, but which at a certain point of their rightness conflict with the claims of Jesus Christ. If the conflict should come, remember it is to be Jesus first (see Luke 14:26).<sup>29</sup>

## 2. PROTECT YOUR FAITH!

- **Ecc 1:8** ...the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

### 2.1. CONTROL YOUR CURIOSITY

- Gn 3Eden;
- **1Sa 6:19** He struck down some of the men of Beth-shemesh because they had **looked into the ark** of the LORD.

My best friend when I was small was a Friend. Her parents were birthright Quakers active in prison reform and nuclear disarmament. As a child I saw the homelier side of Quaker practice - the silent meetings, the delicious treats at the annual bazaar and an early introduction to the three-fold sieve.

#### THE THREE SIEVES

A LITTLE boy one day ran indoors from school and called out eagerly: "Oh, mother, what do you think of Tom Jones? I have just heard that ——"

"Wait a minute, my boy. Have you put what you have heard through the three sieves before you tell it to me?"

"Sieves, mother! What do you mean?"

"Well, the first sieve is called Truth. Is it true?"

"Well, I don't really know, but Bob Brown said that Charlie told him that Tom ——"

"That's very roundabout. What about the second sieve — Kindness. Is it kind?"

"Kind! No, I can't say it is kind."

"Now the third sieve — Necessity. Will it go through that? Must you tell this tale?"

"No, mother, I need not repeat it."

"Well, then, my boy, if it is not necessary, not kind, and perhaps not true, let the story die."<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> HENRY, C. F. H. *Twilight of a Great Civilization*, Westchester : Crossway Books, 1988, p. 26

<sup>27</sup> GABLER, N. *Life: The Movie*, New York : Vintage Books, 1998, p. 6

<sup>28</sup> ROSS, C. *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, p. 55.

<sup>29</sup> CHAMBERS, O. *Approved unto God*, (Complete Works p. 10).

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2012/05/23/1092850/-Is-it-true-Is-it-kind-Is-it-necessary>

### 2.1.1. REFRAIN FROM...

- meddling – **Pr 26:17** Whoever **meddles** in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a passing dog by the ears.

[CHAMBERS] Beware of **curiosity** in spiritual matters (see 2Cor 11:3)<sup>31</sup> ...“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing.” God will not have us come with an **impatient curiosity**. Moral or intellectual or spiritual insanity must result if we push down barriers which God has placed before our spiritual progress is fit for the revelation. This is a day of intolerant inquisitiveness. Men will not wait for the slow, steady, majestic way of the Son of God; they try to enter in by this door and that door.<sup>32</sup> ...One word of warning—we must guard the life where the Spirit of God warns we should guard it, and the first thing to be guarded against is inordinate curiosity.<sup>33</sup>

- **1Pt 4:15** But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a **meddler** (a busybody in other men's matters) – všetečník
- **2Thes 3:11** For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies (μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους).

### 2.1.2. FOCUS ON...

- **Pr 4:25** Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you.
- **Ps 101:3** I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless (דְּבַר-בְּלִיעַל).
- **Phil 4:8** ...whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

[CHAMBERS] “Prayer means that we get into union with **God’s view of other people**. Our devotion as saints is to **identify** ourselves with God’s interests in other lives. God pays no attention to our personal affinities; He expects us to identify ourselves with His interests in others.”<sup>34</sup>

## 2.2. LEARN TO THINK CRITICALLY

- **Rom 12:3** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you **not to think of himself more highly** than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment.

The uncritical mind is unconsciously driven to identify truth in accordance with the following tacit maxims:

- “It’s true if I believe it.”
- “It’s true if we believe it.”
- “It’s true if we want to believe it.”
- “It’s true if it serves our vested interest to believe it.”<sup>35</sup>

### 2.2.1. ASK QUESTIONS

- Critical Thinking: Basic Questions & Answers<sup>36</sup>
  - What is the purpose for the book?
  - What is the author trying to accomplish?
  - What issues or problems are raised?
  - What data, what experiences, what evidence are given?
  - What concepts are used to organize this data, these experiences?
  - How is the author thinking about the world?
  - Is her thinking justified as far as we can see from our perspective?
  - And how does she justify it from her perspective?
  - How can we enter her perspective to appreciate what she has to say?

<sup>31</sup> CHAMBERS, O. *Bringing Sons unto Glory*, (Complete Works p. 222).

<sup>32</sup> CHAMBERS, O. *The Place of Help*, (Complete Works p. 1011).

<sup>33</sup> CHAMBERS, O. *Our Brilliant Heritage*, (Complete Works p. 925).

<sup>34</sup> CHAMBERS, O. *The Psychology of Redemption*, (Complete Works p. 1090).

<sup>35</sup> PAUL, R. – ELDER, L. *How to Detect Media Bias & Propaganda*, The Foundation for Critical Thinking.

<sup>36</sup> www.criticalthinking.org/pages/critical-thinking-basic-questions-amp-answers/409\



### 2.2.2. COMPARE, CONFRONT

- analyze – has the message internal problems? (contradictions; bias etc)
- verify – what do say some other sources?
- make a decision – how to use/unuse the information

### 2.3. GUARD YOUR HEART

- **Pr 4:23** Keep your heart with all vigilance (מִזְכָּל-מוֹשְׁקֶיךָ), for from it flow the springs of life.
- “The first form of objectivity is based on the possibility of developing intellectual humility, knowledge of our ignorance.” (*The Thinker's Guide to How to Detect Media Bias & Propaganda*)
- **Eph 3:17** ...so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...
- **Col 3:15** And let the peace of Christ rule (βραβεύετω) in your hearts

### 3. TO REMEMBER

- The world you know is *mediated* through some sort of media.
- Be sure to check who/what is the source and why is the information/message mediated to you. Analyze and compare with other sources. Do not get swamped by a flood of unnecessary info.
- Protect you spiritual life by opening up to the unseen world of God and his word.