

# @ctivated

CHANGE YOUR LIFE | CHANGE YOUR WORLD

## **You are what you “eat”**

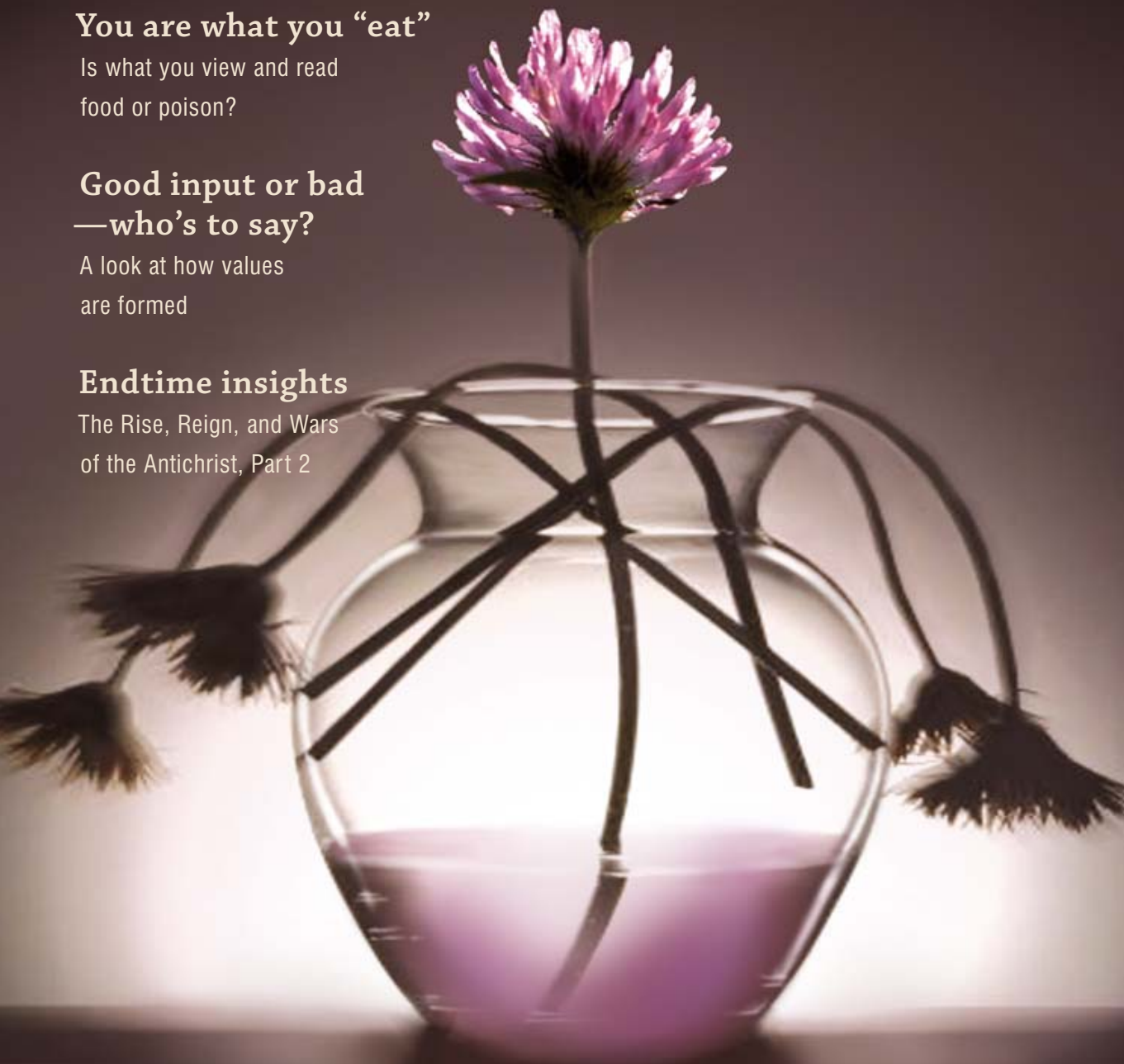
Is what you view and read  
food or poison?

## **Good input or bad —who’s to say?**

A look at how values  
are formed

## **Endtime insights**

The Rise, Reign, and Wars  
of the Antichrist, Part 2



For a wide range of books and audio and video productions to feed your soul, lift your spirit, strengthen your family, and provide fun learning times for your children, please contact one of our distributors below, or visit our Web site at [www.activated.org](http://www.activated.org)

*Activated Ministries*

P.O. Box 462805  
Escondido, CA 92046-2805  
USA  
[info@activatedministries.org](mailto:info@activatedministries.org)  
(877) 862-3228

*Activated Europe*

Bramingham Pk. Business Ctr.  
Enterprise Way  
Luton, Beds. LU3 4BU  
England  
[activatedEurope@activated.org](mailto:activatedEurope@activated.org)  
(07801) 442-317

*Activated Africa*

P.O. Box 2150  
Westville 3630  
South Africa  
[activatedAfrica@activated.org](mailto:activatedAfrica@activated.org)  
083 55 68 213

*Activated India*

P.O. Box 5215  
G.P.O.  
Bangalore - 560 001  
India  
[activatedIndia@activated.org](mailto:activatedIndia@activated.org)

PERSONALLY SPEAKING



While preparing this issue of *Activated*, someone brought to my attention the following statement made in 1958 by Edward R. Murrow, the U.S. journalist who helped pioneer broadcast reporting in the early days of television:

“We are currently wealthy, fat, comfortable, and complacent. Our mass media reflect this. But unless we get up off our fat surpluses and recognize that television is being used to distract, delude, amuse, and insulate us, then television and those who finance it, those who look at it, and those who work at it may see a totally different picture too late. This instrument can teach, it can illuminate; yes, and it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends.”

With all the talk there is these days of declining moral values and the part that the entertainment industry—particularly television and Hollywood—has played in that, Murrow’s words seem prophetic. We **are** seeing a very different picture today. But is it too late?

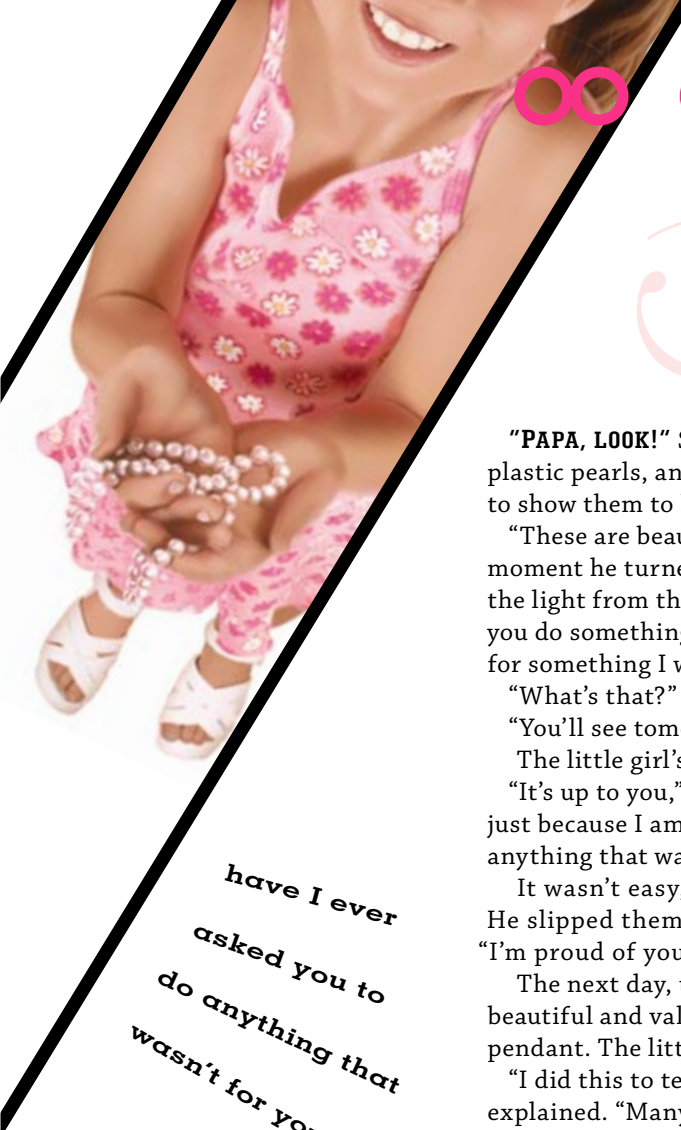
For society at large, I’m afraid so. I say that not out of pessimism, frustration, or despair, but because this trend away from a clearly defined and universally accepted standard of right and wrong is one of the signs that Jesus said would signal His soon return. “Because iniquity [sin] shall abound, the love of many shall wax [grow] cold” (Matthew 24:12 KJV).

But what about you and yours? Is it too late for you? That depends largely on your choices, whether you decide to just “go with the flow,” or buck the tide. You can’t control what’s out there, you can’t control what’s on TV or in movies or on the radio or in print, but you **can** control what you take in. You can’t determine society’s values, but you can determine your own.

Keith Phillips  
*Keith Phillips*  
FOR THE ACTIVATED FAMILY

VOL 6, ISSUE 7 July 2005  
EDITOR Keith Phillips  
DESIGN Giselle LeFavre  
ILLUSTRATIONS Doug Calder  
PRODUCTION Francisco Lopez

© 2005 Aurora Production AG  
All Rights Reserved. Printed in Thailand.  
[www.auroraproduction.com](http://www.auroraproduction.com)  
Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in *Activated* are from the New King James Version of the Bible © 1982 Thomas Nelson, Inc. When other versions are quoted, some typographical changes have been made for the sake of clarity and uniformity.



# THE TRADE

**“PAPA, LOOK!”** Someone had just given a six-year-old a string of plastic pearls, and she was bubbling over with excitement as she ran to show them to her father.

“These are beautiful,” her father said. For a long, thoughtful moment he turned them over in his hand and watched them shine in the light from the lamp next to his easy chair. Then he asked, “Will you do something for me? Will you give me these beads in exchange for something I will give you tomorrow?”

“What’s that?” asked the little girl.

“You’ll see tomorrow,” her father replied.

The little girl’s eyes betrayed her inward struggle.

“It’s up to you,” the father said. “You don’t have to make the trade just because I am asking you to, but have I ever asked you to do anything that wasn’t for your good? Can you trust that I know best?”

It wasn’t easy, but the little girl handed the beads to her father. He slipped them into his pocket, and gave her a big hug that said, “I’m proud of you.”

The next day, the father gave the little girl a gift that was far more beautiful and valuable—a delicate gold chain with a genuine pearl pendant. The little girl forgot all about the string of plastic pearls.

“I did this to teach you to trust the Father in Heaven,” her father explained. “Many times in your life He will ask you to give up something you want, or to avoid something that to you looks good, and often you won’t understand why. But if you trust your heavenly Father as you have trusted me, you will find that He always knows best. When He asks you to give up some things, it’s because He wants to give you *much better* things.”

have I ever  
asked you to  
do anything that  
wasn't for your good?

**I**n one of the parables that Jesus told, He likened the Kingdom of Heaven to a pearl so rare, so beautiful, and so costly that one man sold everything he owned in order to buy that one pearl (Matthew 13:45–46). We can have a little bit of Heaven here and now, but the gifts and treasures of the spirit come at a price. To experience and enjoy the things of eternal value, we have to make room for them; we have to be willing to give up some of our “trinkets,” the trivialities and fleeting pleasures of this life. God satisfies the hungry hearts with good things, but the rich—those who are too busy or satisfied with other things—He sends away empty (Psalm 107:9; Luke 1:53). Will you “sell” the things of this world in order to gain the true riches?





# YOU ARE WHAT YOU “EAT”

{Based on the writings of David Brandt Berg}

>>> **SOMEBODY ONCE SAID, “YOU ARE WHAT YOU READ.”** It’s like the saying about health, “You are what you eat,” physically.

Well, you are what you read, mentally and spiritually. And the same is true of movies, TV, music, and other forms of input, like the Internet and computer games. Tell me what kind of input someone enjoys most, and I can usually tell what that person’s spiritual condition is like.

God created people with a spiritual hunger for *truth*—insights and ideas that will feed their souls, bring them closer to Him by helping them better understand Him and His loving ways, and inspire them to live better lives. But sad to say, a lot of people today have developed perverted spiritual appetites through reading and viewing the wrong kinds of things, similar to what happens when people develop an appetite for junk food and sweets, and lose their appetite for good wholesome food.

It reminds me of the following verses from the Bible: “Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance” (Isaiah 55:2), and, “Do not labor for the food

TELL ME WHAT KIND OF INPUT SOMEONE ENJOYS MOST, AND I CAN USUALLY TELL WHAT THAT PERSON’S SPIRITUAL CONDITION IS LIKE.

which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life” (John 6:27).

The portrayal of attitudes and actions that are contrary to the way God wants us to think and act really does have

an effect on people, whether they like to admit that or not. Filling their minds and hearts with lies and half-truths will eat away at their spirits, even if they are only reading or viewing for relaxation or entertainment. Multiply that effect a few million times, and it has the same bad effect on society. The world today is proof of that!

### DISCERN AND DISCRIMINATE

Everything that you take into your mind affects your spirit. Movies, music, books, newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, and the Internet are all mediums for conveying a

EVERYTHING THAT YOU TAKE INTO YOUR MIND AFFECTS YOUR SPIRIT.

message, and that message is either inspired by God and in line with His Word, or it's not.

Much of what's out there today is what the Bible calls "cunningly devised fables" (2 Peter 1:16)—cunningly inspired not by God, but by the dark side to deceive people, lead them astray, and numb them spiritually to where they no longer know what is true or right.

Reading the wrong kind of books or watching the wrong kind of movies does not make people wise! It leaves them dumber and more confused and further from the truth than ever! The wisdom of this

world is absolute foolishness to God (1 Corinthians 3:19).

People eat junk food because it *looks* like food and is tasty, but enough of it will eventually kill them. That's why it's so dangerous—because it's so deceptive. And the same is true of junk reading and viewing.

The Devil is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). And let me tell you, his lies are very clever! Part of what he says is always true, because he couldn't get people to believe his lies unless he told some truth along with them. He mixes in little truths, like he did with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. When he tempted them to disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he told them, "You will be like God" (Genesis 3:5). What a tempting truth that was—and they swallowed it! (Genesis 3:6).

### HOW ABOUT YOU?

It is not wrong to sometimes read or watch for relaxation, but if you aren't choosy about what input you receive, if you don't guard yourself against ungodly input, it will be more draining to your spirit than beneficial. "Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

Even books and movies and other things that are mostly good can influence you adversely if you don't make a conscious effort to focus on the positive and reject the negative, either during or after your reading or viewing. The Bible says to "eschew [abstain from] evil, and do good" (1 Peter 3:11, KJV)—a verse that applies not only to what we do, but also what we take in, since that will ultimately affect our actions.

You also need to make sure you're getting filled up with the truth of God's Word to counteract any bad influences that whatever else you've been reading or watching may have on you. "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

There is a saying about prayer: "You believe in prayer as much as you pray." I would say the same about God's Word and worldly input: You believe the Word as much as you read it, or you believe in that other stuff as much as you take it in. I hope that you are getting *good* spiritual food, because your spiritual health and happiness depend on it. You *are* what you take in! □



Our souls receive  
personality from God.  
They are designed to  
be filled by Him. The  
danger for us all comes  
when we crowd them  
full of our own petty  
ambitions and our  
shortsighted ideas of  
fulfillment and leave no  
room for the work that  
must be done in us.

— WILLIAM KIRK KILPATRICK

**THE HAPPINESS AND JOY THAT JESUS CAN GIVE YOU** is light years beyond anything that the world can offer. Fulfillment, peace, love, satisfaction, knowledge, truth—there is no way that the world can compete with Him in those areas. It takes discipline of mind and body to learn to treasure those things above the sights, sounds, tastes, and pleasures that the world has to offer. It's a matter of satisfying your heart and mind more than your five senses. When it comes down to it, that's really all the world can give you—temporary satisfaction of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches. But beyond those things, nothing the world has can satisfy the other cravings in your soul. Only Jesus can really satisfy. He is the answer. But as long as you're still looking for the things of this world to satisfy and make you happy, you won't find the truth (1 John 2:15-17).

—MARIA FONTAINE



**IF TODAY WAS YOUR LAST** and you knew it, how much time would you spend on things that mean nothing in the scope of eternity? Your minutes would be extremely valuable, and you would choose to spend them on the things that were most important to you. The things of the world would seem pointless—almost offensive to your spirit. You would want to love those dearest to you, and to make sure they know how much they mean to you. You would be righting any wrongs and working out anything that came between you. If you have ever come face to face with death, or been with a loved one through a life-threatening illness and seen their priorities realign, you understand this. Everything becomes abundantly clear in those moments. The only thing that matters is love.

—MARIA FONTAINE



## The downside of TV



Television is an invention that permits you to be entertained in your living room by people you wouldn't have in your home.

—DAVID FROST (1939–), BRITISH TELEVISION PERSONALITY, CBS TELEVISION

I'm always amazed that people will actually choose to sit in front of the television and just be savaged by stuff that belittles their intelligence.—ALICE WALKER (1944–), U.S. NOVELIST AND POET, 1989



Television was the ultimate evidence of cultural anemia.

—ROY A. K. HEATH (1926–), GUYANESE NOVELIST AND TEACHER, KWAKU

Don't you wish there were a knob on the TV to turn up the intelligence? There's one marked "Brightness," but it doesn't work.—GALLAGHER (BORN LEO ANTHONY GALLAGHER; 1947–), U.S. COMEDIAN

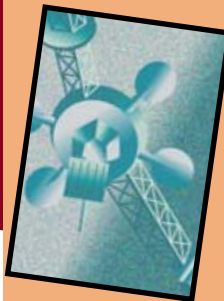
Time sidles by: on television  
The soaps dissolve, the jingles change.  
Defeat or pity or derision  
Constricts our hearts. Our looks grow strange  
Even to us.

—VIKRAM SETH (1952–), INDIAN NOVELIST AND POET, THE GOLDEN GATE

Television's perfect. You turn a few knobs, a few of those mechanical adjustments at which the higher apes are so proficient, and lean back and drain your mind of all thought. And there you are watching the bubbles in the primeval ooze. You don't have to concentrate. You don't have to react. You don't have to remember. You don't miss your brain because you don't need it.—RAYMOND CHANDLER (1888–1959), U.S. WRITER

Each day a few more lies eat into the seed with which we are born, little institutional lies from the print of newspapers, the shock waves of television, and the sentimental cheats of the movie screen.

—NORMAN MAILER (1923–), U.S. NOVELIST AND JOURNALIST, ADVERTISEMENTS FOR MYSELF, "FIRST ADVERTISEMENT FOR MYSELF"



We are bombarded today by such a quantity of images that we can no longer distinguish direct experience from what we have seen for a few seconds on television. The memory is littered with bits and pieces of images, like a rubbish dump.

—ITALO CALVINO (1923–1985), CUBAN-BORN ITALIAN NOVELIST AND SHORT-STORY WRITER, SIX MEMOS FOR THE NEXT MILLENNIUM "VISIBILITY" (PATRICK CREAGH [TRANSLATOR])

Television has proved that people will look at anything rather than each other.

—ANN LANDERS (BORN ESTHER PAULINE FRIEDMAN; 1918–2002), U.S. COLUMNIST



Television is a gift of God, and God will hold those who utilize His divine instrument accountable to Him.

—PHILO T. FARNSWORTH (1906–1971), U.S. INVENTOR AND TELEVISION PIONEER

# GOOD *or* BAD

*who's to say?*

**WHEN THE TOPIC OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL VALUES COMES UP** these days, it's often in the context of what kinds of movies, music, reading material, computer games, and Internet usage are good or acceptable, and which aren't. Often, this generates quite a bit of disagreement between the generations and even between peers. That's not surprising, because all of these things are highly subjective. Something that has an obvious bad effect on one person may not seem to have a bad effect on someone else.

Some people have the attitude that a lot of violence, gore, and foul language in movies, for example, don't have a bad effect on them. They like that kind of movie, and don't think it's harmful for them personally. They think they "can handle it."

Whether they realize it or not, or want to admit it or not, regular intake of things that promote or condone these types of ungodly attitudes and behavior *does* have a detrimental effect on their spirit, and will eventually come out in their own attitudes and behavior. They would probably be better off if they took the opposite approach and instead of asking themselves, "Is this *harmful* to me?" they asked, "Is this *good* for me?"

Of course the smartest thing any of us can do when we aren't sure whether or not something is good is to look to God's Word, the Bible, and to measure that thing against the standard we find there.

The word used in most English versions of the Bible for the kind of good I'm talking about here is "edify," which means "to enlighten; to improve the morals or knowledge of somebody." The Bible makes it clear that we should pursue things that are edifying, and avoid things that aren't.

So the question to ask is, "Does this movie, music, book, or whatever contain information or some moral value that will help me to be a better person? Does it promote things or attitudes that

*"Does this movie, music, book, or whatever contain information or some moral value that will help me to be a better person?"*



# worldly values and input

I consider true and worthwhile, or does it ‘preach’ against what I believe and stand for?”

Of course, nearly all movies these days contain some measure of violence, bad language, and other negative elements, but there is certainly a difference in the *degree* of negativity a movie contains. And the same is true of different types of music, reading material, computer games, and other forms of entertainment.

The Bible tells us, “Come out from among them [the ungodly elements of this world] and be separate” (2 Corinthians 6:17). “For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world” (1 John 2:16). It’s impossible in this hi-tech, media-driven age to block out everything that is ungodly or that could have a bad effect on you, but if you recognize it as a real danger, you will try to minimize its effect by minimizing your exposure to it.

It’s much harder, of course, to minimize something we enjoy, even if we realize it’s basically a waste of time, so this often brings up the question of how much or how little is “minimizing”? Perhaps this example can provide a practical definition: If someone suggested that you minimize the time you spend on some job or activity that you dread doing, how often would you do it? Probably not very often—maybe never. Well, that would be your definition of minimize. So if you would minimize something that you don’t like to do by cutting back to almost never doing it, then you should apply the same interpretation of minimize when it comes to ungodly influences.

If you aren’t sure where to draw the line in your viewing, reading, gaming, and other forms of worldly intake, either in general or in specific situations, ask the Lord to show you. He knows what’s best for your spirit and what will make you happiest in the long run. You may also want to discuss this issue with family or friends whose moral values you respect, and to use their opinions and example to help you set personal limits for yourself. The bottom line is that it all comes down to personal conviction—how convinced you are that something is harmful to your spirit and how serious you are about avoiding it in order to stay on the straight and narrow path that leads to God’s greatest blessings. He will lead, if you will follow. □

Though *in* this world, we are not to be part of it.

John 17:14–16  
Romans 12:2  
Ephesians 2:2–3  
Philippians 2:15  
1 John 5:19



We are not to love this present world.

James 4:4  
1 John 2:15–17  
1 Peter 2:11  
Titus 2:12–13  
Hebrews 11:24–27  
James 1:27



We should resist being influenced by shallow trends, fads, and media.

Exodus 23:2a  
Psalm 1:1  
Psalm 101:3  
Psalm 119:37  
Proverbs 1:10  
Matthew 7:13–14  
Ephesians 5:11  
Colossians 2:8  
1 Timothy 5:22  
2 Peter 3:17





# Let It Flow

I was in Mumbai (Bombay),  
India, a few days  
before the monsoon  
season arrived.

BY CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER

**EVERYONE IN INDIA** looks forward to the monsoon. You can read predictions of its arrival and of its daily progress around the country in the newspaper. The heavy rains clean the dirt that has accumulated over the months. The rains also help to cool things down. Without them, not much will grow. The monsoon is India's lifeblood.

In anticipation of the rains, many trees are trimmed back and drains are cleaned. Until it is collected, all along the roadside next to the drains lies all manner of trash, much of it decomposed into a sort of black goo.

I asked my daughter, who lives there, why they did this, and she explained, "They trim the trees to prevent any weak branches from breaking off and falling on power lines or causing other damage, and they clear the drains so the rainwater will flow freely. It's not enough to clear the drains and just pile the trash on the side of the road, though. If the monsoon were to hit before trucks arrived to cart the trash away, it would either be washed back down the drains and clog them again, or be washed elsewhere. Either way, it would contribute to the monsoon flooding and carry all





## “ABIDE IN ME, AND I IN YOU” (JOHN 15:4).

In the beautiful 15th chapter of John, Jesus says, “I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned” (John 15:5-6). If ever you, as a branch, don’t abide in the Vine, Christ— if you don’t abide

in His love and His Word—then you will become unfruitful and withered, and you will be pruned from the tree as a dead branch. You won’t lose your salvation, but you will be cast aside as being no longer useful to God and His kingdom.

Without the flow of God’s Spirit there is no life. You must be firmly attached to the Vine where you’re receiving the spiritual sap and life and nourishment that you need

directly from the Lord Himself. A lot of how you grow is up to you and how much nourishment you receive, so don’t cut yourself off from the Vine.

Jesus said, “Without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). But if you are dwelling in the Vine, as one of the branches, then you can produce beautiful leaves and beautiful fruit so that He and the Father may be glorified and have much fruit (John 15:8).

kinds of germs with it, creating a lot of problems.”

In our spiritual lives, we have to do much the same thing. We have to get rid of any obstructions that drag us down or hinder our spiritual growth—the things that keep God’s cleansing, renewing Spirit from flowing freely through us.

This “trash” in our lives could be anything that has come between the Lord and us. For example, it could be a grievance we have against someone—a “root of bitterness,” like the Bible warns against, which will eat away at us if we don’t recognize it and make amends with the

person we feel has wronged us (Hebrews 12:15). Or it could be materialistic “thorns and weeds” that choke out our love for the Lord and others—the “cares of this life,” which Jesus warned against (Matthew 13:22). Or it could be our own pride—an exaggerated feeling of self-importance or self-reliance that hinders our link with the Lord through prayer and causes us to miss out on some of the blessings He has for us.

If not thoroughly removed, these obstacles will weaken us. They will also spill out and infect others. It is really worth our while to first of all identify

what it is that is blocking the flow of God’s Spirit to ours, and then to get rid of those hindrances before they can do any more damage.

There is victory to be had! Let’s ask God today to show us what could be hindering us spiritually, and then go to work to clear away the trash in our hearts so the fresh, clean waters of His Spirit and Word can flow freely. As we do our part, God will do His and we will experience Him working more fully in our lives, we will receive more of His blessings, and we will go on to become all He wants and knows we can be. □



## ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

**Q:** My children are at the age that watching TV or movies on video or DVD is one of their favorite activities. The problem is that nearly everything they want to watch has some attitudes, language, or behavior that I don't approve of. It also seems that these negative aspects are what my children remember most and tend to copy. How can I protect my children from that?



**A:** **MANY PARENTS TODAY** share the same concern. They realize the importance of monitoring and sometimes restricting what their children view and listen to, and certainly it is their right and responsibility to do so. At the same time, it is virtually impossible for parents to shield their children from every negative influence that comes their way. If the children don't get exposed to these things via TV, movies, and computer games, they will through their peers or other avenues. You can't always protect your children from the negative, but you can counter it. Here's how:

As is true of nearly all parenting challenges, two keys are prayer and time—two-way prayer, asking Jesus for both insights into their needs and help with their problems, and time spent with your children, instilling the positive values you want to see them carry into life.

In this case, time means making it a practice to watch *with* your children and to discuss the show with them afterwards, with the

goal of helping them get the most positive and the least negative from the experience. This also gives you an opportunity to discuss problem attitudes or behavior from a third-party perspective—"What do you think that character should have done in that situation?" Over time, this will help your children form strong personal values, as well as teach them to be more selective in what they watch.

It's important to preview the material whenever possible, or at least read the reviews on it so you are aware of the content. This gives you a chance to make sure it is age-appropriate and otherwise suitable for your children. It also gives you time to think and pray about what lessons or information can be gained. Think in terms of, "How can this benefit my children?" If you draw a blank, it's probably not worthwhile for your children to watch.

Gear both viewing and discussion to the age of the children. Videos have an advantage over "live" TV in that you can pause to answer their questions.

So if you can, record shows and then show them to your kids later. (That way you can also skip the commercials, which promote materialism, pitch some products you may feel would not be good for your children, or are otherwise detrimental.) If young children are going to be scared or not understand certain parts, then stop and explain or fast-forward. Older children usually prefer to watch the movie straight through and have the discussion afterwards.

In your discussion, the objective is to get the children to think about what they have just watched, and to help them arrive at more mature conclusions than they would on their own. Children learn better by asking questions and thinking things through than they do when all the answers are supplied too quickly. Also, they tend to more readily accept guidance when it comes in the form of answers to their questions or thought-provoking questions that you put to them, than they do when they feel they are being "preached to."

# RATING GUIDELINES

## YOU JUST MIGHT BE SURPRISED AT HOW MUCH YOUR CHILDREN CAN BENEFIT FROM MOVIES AND DOCUMENTARIES WITH A LITTLE GUIDANCE.

As you watch, you may also want to make note of points that you could use as springboards for more fun, positive, educational interaction with your children, such as reading more about historical figures, places, events, or activities depicted in the show, or taking them for an outing that somehow relates to the show.

You just might be surprised at how much your children can benefit from movies and documentaries with a little guidance. They can learn about life and human nature; they can learn how to deal with crises and hardships; they can learn to empathize; they can see that bad choices have consequences, and thus learn from others' mistakes; they can see how many people struggle through life without the Lord, when He could help solve their problems if only they would turn to Him. So while potentially harmful if not properly channeled, movies and TV can actually be a good teaching tool and bring your family closer together if used prayerfully and selectively. □

### ELEMENTS THAT MAKE A MOVIE, TV PROGRAM, OR BOOK WORTHWHILE:

- 👍 A predominantly positive message that inspires noble qualities in the viewer or reader, such as love, self-sacrifice, courage, conviction, or perseverance in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds
- 👍 A portrayal of the triumph of good over evil
- 👍 An exposé of injustice, corruption, hypocrisy, vice, or other wrongs, provided the depiction of the problem is not so traumatic that it overshadows the positive
- 👍 An insight into human nature or a particular cultural or social group that helps the viewer or reader be more understanding, tolerant, etc.
- 👍 A storyline that is humorous or otherwise entertaining and relaxing, provided it is done in good taste
- 👍 A storyline that keeps the viewer or reader guessing, such as a good mystery
- 👍 Historical information, information on current events or trends, or other educational material, provided it is reasonably accurate and balanced
- 👍 A good ending—not necessarily a happy ending, but a “right” ending that leaves the viewer or reader with a good feeling

### ELEMENTS THAT MAKE A MOVIE, TV PROGRAM, OR BOOK OBJECTIONABLE:

- 👎 A message that undermines good morals, where the main characters are criminals or liars, for example, or the “end justifies the means” rationale is used to condone or glorify wrongdoing
- 👎 A storyline that promotes wrong attitudes, such as selfishness or racial or cultural discrimination
- 👎 A message that is anti-God or undermines faith in God, His Word, or other spiritual truths
- 👎 A storyline that glorifies evil and evokes fear, such as horror stories involving Satanism, vampires, werewolves, zombies, demon possession, or sexual or other perversions
- 👎 Violence and gore, especially if they are graphic or senseless and not essential to getting across a predominantly positive message
- 👎 Abundant foul language
- 👎 Humor that is vulgar, derisive, or otherwise distasteful
- 👎 Promotion of unhealthy or ungodly habits, such as smoking, taking drugs, or overdrinking
- 👎 Promotion of worldly hang-ups, such as unrealistic get-rich-quick schemes or an overemphasis on beauty, fashion, dieting, or bodybuilding

# THE RISE, REIGN, AND WARS OF THE ANTICHRIST

Daniel 11, Part 2

■ *In Part 1 of this article, the prophet Daniel (circa 538 BC) began to recount a vision concerning the “latter days”—the Endtime, in which we are now living. The first part of the vision describes in some detail the coming world dictator known as the Antichrist, as well as the first two wars he will wage to seize and try to hold on to power. But there is more to come. ...*

## DANIEL 11:29–31—THE THIRD ANTICHRIST WAR?

Verse 29: “At the appointed time he [the Antichrist] shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter.”

It’s somehow going to be different this time, but again it sounds like war because it says in the next verse...

Verse 30: “Ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage. So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.”

“From Cyprus” could mean “from the *direction* of

Cyprus”—from the west, in other words.

Verse 31: “Forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.”

This is a key verse because, together with Daniel 9:27, it tells us that three and a half years after confirming the seven-year covenant, the Antichrist will break it when he forcibly enters the Jewish Temple (soon to be rebuilt on Mount Moriah, Jerusalem), “takes away the daily sacrifice,” and places there something called the “abomination of desolation” (also referred to in Revelation chapter 13 as the “image of the Beast”).

Five hundred years after Daniel gave this prophecy, when Jesus’ disciples asked Him what would be the signs of His return and of the end of the world, He cited this development. “When you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place ... then there will be great tribulation, such



as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matthew 24:3,15,21).

It seems that three wars precede the breaking of the seven-year covenant—one before it is made, one at some point during the first three and a half years, and one that ends with the breaking of the covenant.

## TRIBULATION TYRANNY AND TRIUMPHS

Verses 32 through 35 deal with the next three and a half years—*after* the covenant is broken: “Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for



many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.”

Although much of the world will continue to follow the Antichrist, some people are going to be desperate for the truth, and those who know God’s Word and are faithful witnesses for the Lord are going to teach and encourage millions.

“The people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.” In spite of all that the Devil’s forces will do to try to stop them, mil-



**“THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW THEIR GOD SHALL BE STRONG, AND CARRY OUT GREAT EXPLOITS.”**

lions of God’s children will keep going for Him till the very end.

Verses 36 and 37: “Then the king [Antichrist] shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.”

The Antichrist is going to be so full of pride that he will try to exalt himself above everyone and every “god”—even the one true God Himself. 2 Thessalonians 2:4 says the Antichrist will oppose and exalt himself “above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

The Antichrist “shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall

be done.” Revelation 13:5 parallels this statement, and also tells us how long this will go on: “And he [the Beast, or Antichrist] was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months [three and a half years].”

Verse 38: “But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses [or “god of forces,” as the Hebrew *ma`owz* is translated in the King James Version]; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things.”

This “god of forces” could be armaments, and the fact that the Antichrist will honor this god with “gold and silver” could refer to his military spending. That’s nothing new, because even the empires of Daniel’s day made a “god” of power and spent much of their empires’ revenue on armaments and maintaining their armies. What *is* new in the last couple of generations is nuclear arms—“a god which his fathers did not know.” □  
(To be continued)

FROM JESUS WITH LOVE



HOW TO

# GET THE MOST FROM LIFE

It's sad how so many people are content to just let life pass them by. Sure, they may be busy keeping up or trying to get ahead, and they may fill every spare moment with activities that they hope will be relaxing and enjoyable, but where is all that busy activity taking them? When do they really live?

The secret to getting the most out of life is in living close to Me and living in My Word. By that I don't mean that you should hide away and give yourself solely to quiet reflection and study; I mean that you should try to include Me in your daily activities and apply My Word to whatever you're doing. If you can learn to do that, your life will take on new meaning and depth. You will not only be much happier and feel more fulfilled, but you will brighten the lives of those around you as you reflect My love and the light of My Word in all you do.

It starts by making a habit of taking a few quiet minutes at the start of every day for prayer and reading My Word. Then take what I have taught you in the "classroom" and apply it throughout the day. If you don't know how, just shoot up a quick prayer and I will show you. On the job, running errands, or relaxing with family and friends, I can make you a greater blessing to others and bless you in the process. Life will become richer and more meaningful as I help you make more time for the most interesting and rewarding thing I have going—people. You'll even get much more out of such everyday things as reading the newspaper or watching a movie or TV if you ask Me for My mind on each matter. I think you'll be surprised to find how much I know and how much I have to offer!