

Download Wk. 2
Discern

We started a new series last week on filtering our media. We talked about how much media we subject ourselves to, and how the media we watch, listen to, play, and read can and does influence us in a lot of ways. Our challenge last week was to begin to ask questions of the media we subject ourselves to. For starters I gave you three questions to ask of the media you participate with, what (what's the point?), why (why is or isn't it important?), how does/can it influence it and how much so? You see the reality is this, many of us don't think about the media we are exposed to. We just go through it mindlessly, eating up whatever is fed to us. As adults though, as believers who seek to want to know Christ and become like Christ we need to be able to think mindfully. Process and understand the messages we are receiving. Once we are able to do that, to ask questions of the content we are taking in then we can move on to step two in filtering our media choices. That's where we are going to be tonight, discerning.

In order to understand discernment we need have a standard and understand that standard. Most of us have some sort of standard, there are very few of us who would say we don't have some sort of standard. For most of us our standards are pretty flexible, because they are created out of a number of mindless thoughts of information we have received over the course of our life time. When it comes to dating let's say, we all have a standard. The type of person we will date, how "far" we will or won't go, the places we will or won't go with the person, etc, etc. The issue that arises though is when our desire is stronger than our standard and all of a sudden our standard has some flexibility. The reason is this, our standard was built on our experiences, and the messages we heard from a variety of places rather than a holistic message we heard from the same source. What I mean is this, if you come up with a dating standard and you build your standard off of conversations with your friends, movies you see, sex education at school, music you listen to, and a trusted adults opinion. You probably have a large base from which to pull and a pretty secure standard. The truth of it though is this, most of those messages we never filter, we just accepted them. Some of them, some of those perspectives actually contradict each other and then our standard contradicts itself. The standard becomes flexible. On the other hand if our dating standard comes from truth, the word of God then our standard has the ability to become concrete, despite the circumstances or desires because the standard is based on the one source of truth.

Another way of describing this is our world view. The way in which we view the world is the basic set of beliefs that we hold of the world around us, our purpose in life and the way the world is verses the way it ought to be. Our world view is largely influenced by the media we associate ourselves with (along with other things) or the glasses in which we view life. Let me give you an example....

Juno Clip... <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbkSnBvuijI>

You see in the clip, we have two separate world views coming together (Pro Life and Pro Choice). And it was this brief conversation with Sue Chin that influenced Juno's world view and that resulted in change. This is what happens when we really begin to think mindfully of the media that we subject ourselves to. World views converse and the shape and direction of our life can easily be shifted or redirected. You see this is why it's so important that our world view is grounded in concrete standard of truth rather than a gambit of opinions based on a number of experiences which may or may not be truth.

In the scripture we see this at the very beginning of time Adam and Eve have God's standard, don't eat from the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Don't do it, it's not in your best interest. Adam and Eve begin with a biblical world view; they begin with seeing the issue

through God's lenses. But then as the serpent arrives and presents a different a perspective, Eve and then Adam drops God's world view. Why? I'm not sure, was it because they weren't thinking through the process, maybe? We know that Eve was deceived; she was tricked and manipulated into seeing things from a perspective, from a world view that was not of God, which was not concrete. It's really the same thing that happens to us when we do not choose to live with a biblical world view; we pick up whatever is around us, whether it's media, opinions, etc. Look at this advertisement for a second....

What are some things that this advertisement communicates about; value, self-worth, identity. In contrast what does God's word say about self worth, value, and identity? Do you see the difference, believing what the ad tells you will lead you in one direction and believing what God's word tells you will lead you in another? It can very easily become a big deal when you see where these paths can lead.

I don't have the time tonight to go into every aspect of a biblical world view, in a few minutes in small groups you'll watch the video you saw last week again and ask some questions, comparing and contrasting what is portrayed in the video with a biblical world view. What I do want to do is point out that the bible isn't scared of your questions. I know weird, right? But some of us live that way, we think to ourselves "well, the bible doesn't talk about _____?" and you might be right, but what you miss out on is that the bible speaks of principles that apply to _____. The real question is not whether the bible can handle our question's, the real question is whether or not we have the guts to actually see what the bible has to say, why it says it, and what evidence there is to back it up. In fact scripture says itself that...

^{2Ti 3:16} All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ^{2Ti 3:17} so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

You see ALL of scripture is from God, ALL of it is useful, ALL of it is beneficial, ALL, ALL, ALL. The challenge for us is this, will we use it as a filter and guide for our lives, falling in love with the God who gave it to us. Will we choose to have a biblical world view, mindfully? Or will we settle for picking up whatever is given to us, mindlessly?

Small Group Exercise

What does the video/ song say about?

Love, Life, Pain, Death

What does God's word say about?

Love: 1 Cor. 13:4-8, 1 Jn. 4:10-11

Life: Psm. 63:3, Psm. 90:2, Jn. 10:10

Pain: James 1:2-4, Heb. 12:6-11

Death: Heb. 9:27, Rom. 6:23, Rom. 5:15