

### No. 3      **Avoid Sowing to the Flesh (Symposium)** —Choose Wholesome Entertainment (Local elder)

*Note to speaker:*

This is the second talk of a four-part symposium. In an upbuilding and positive way, emphasize the importance of avoiding improper entertainment that can contaminate our mind and heart. (See the *Ministry School* book, pages 202-204.) This talk includes a scripted demonstration

#### **CHOOSE ENTERTAINMENT THAT REFRESHES** (7 min.)

Entertainment provides welcome relief from the stresses of life

We must be selective, however, because much of today's entertainment is morally degrading (Col 3:5, 8)

Ask yourself: 'What sorts of people are featured on the television programs I watch? What type of activity is portrayed?' **[Read Proverbs 13:20]**

Christians must plan ahead *before* turning on the television, to avoid having "dealings with the stupid," that is, those who are morally senseless

To illustrate, before planting a crop, a farmer must plan ahead

His work may involve preparing the soil, determining when to plant, and deciding which type of seed to use

Likewise, do you carefully plan ahead for periods of entertainment? Or do you simply watch whatever happens to be on television?

Various websites give detailed reports on the content of movies and television programs

Checking such websites can help you to select entertainment that is wholesome and refreshing

Do not sow to the flesh by being entertained by things that Jehovah hates (Pr 10:23)

Watching entertainment that glorifies illicit sex can weaken our resolve to do what is right

Watching violent entertainment can desensitize our hearts to the suffering of others

Watching entertainment with spiritistic themes can attract us to things that Jehovah condemns

Even brief exposure to improper entertainment can contaminate one's heart

Are you aware of how your entertainment choices are affecting your heart? (Jer 17:10; Mt 15:19)

In the following demonstration, let us see how two young brothers reason on an entertainment choice

#### **DEMONSTRATION** (2 min.)

[Note: You may make minor adjustments to the script for naturalness and to fit local circumstances.

Participants may use their own names if desired. Rehearse thoroughly so that the participants will be conversational, neither comical nor overly dramatic. Select participants who are exemplary in their choice of entertainment]

**\*\*[Two Witnesses in their early teens are standing and talking after school]\*\***

**Jared:** Did you see that new TV show on Friday night, *Fleshly and Deadly*?

**Billy:** Yeah, it was awesome! Its got fast cars and lots of action! **\*\*[Pauses]\*\*** But I wish it didn't show people taking drugs . . .

**Jared:** Not hard drugs. It just showed them smoking a little marijuana.

**Billy:** **\*\*[Thoughtfully]\*\*** Yeah, maybe that's not so bad.

**Jared:** **\*\*[Excitedly]\*\*** Hey! Why don't you come and stay overnight this Friday? We'll watch the show, and then you can go in the ministry with me and my family on Saturday!

**Billy:** OK. **\*\*[Pauses]\*\*** But are we really going to watch that show and then go in the *ministry*?

**Jared:** **\*\*[Soberly]\*\*** Yeah . . . something doesn't seem right. **\*\*[Participants freeze]\*\***

**Speaker:** Although our two brothers made a bad entertainment choice, it is good to see that their consciences have alerted them to the problem. Let's see what they do.

**Billy:** **\*\*[Participants unfreeze]\*\*** Even though I like the cars and the action, I guess I would feel like a hypocrite.

**Jared:** What do you mean?

**Billy:** How can we watch a program like *Fleshly and Deadly* and then go out in the ministry and tell people that Jehovah is going to get rid of the things we watched the night before?

**Jared:** Yeah, I know what you mean. **\*\*[Pauses]\*\*** I got so into the show that I even convinced myself that things I *know* are wrong are not that bad.

**Billy:** So instead of watching *that* program, why don't we get together Friday but do something else? I'll bring my new video game. It's really fun, but it's also *clean*.

**Jared:** Awesome! I know we'll have a better day in service on Saturday.

**Billy:** Sounds good. I'll ask my parents.

**\*\*[Participants exit]\*\***

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**Speaker:** Our young brothers had to reason on their choice of entertainment, and we are happy to see that they made an adjustment

### **KEEP ENTERTAINMENT IN ITS PROPER PLACE** (4 min.)

It is easy to get caught up in entertainment; we need to keep spiritual things in first place

Entertainment should provide relief from our normal activities, not dominate our lives

**[Read 1 Corinthians 6:12]** Do not allow recreation to ‘control’ you, leaving you too tired to engage in theocratic activities

Parents have an obligation to care for their family’s material, spiritual, and emotional needs

This includes making provision for balanced, wholesome recreation

Monitor your children’s entertainment, for “a child left unrestrained brings shame on his [family]” (Pr 29:15)

Too much time spent passively watching television, sports, or movies can promote laziness (Pr 6:9)

In contrast, actively associating with fellow believers is stimulating and refreshing

### **BE DETERMINED TO CONTINUE DOING WHAT IS FINE** (1 min.)

Jehovah’s people are to be commended for rejecting fleshly desires

We work hard to protect our hearts from the corrupting influence of immoral entertainment (Php 4:8, 9)

May we grow ever stronger in our resolve to choose wholesome entertainment

Indeed, by sowing with a view to the spirit, we will reap everlasting life

Brother \_\_\_\_\_ will now consider the next part of this symposium, “Avoid Sowing to the Flesh—Fight the Spirit of Envy”

(Speaker does not need to read or comment on every cited text)