



MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT, Part 2

How Good Is Your Filter?

June 21, 2025

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

1 Thessalonians 5:21 (NIV) • “Test them all; hold on to what is good.”

Luke 12:57 (NIV) • “Why don’t you judge for yourselves what is right?”

Hosea 4:6 (NIV) • “My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.”

2 Corinthians 10:7 (NIV) • “You are judging by appearances. If anyone is confident that they belong to Christ, they should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as they do.”

Philippians 1:9, 10 (NIV) • “And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.”

Matthew 13:14-16 (NRSV) • “With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: ‘You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive. For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn—and I would heal them.’ But

blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.”

1 Corinthians 10:23 (NIV) • “‘I have the right to do anything,’ you say—but not everything is beneficial. ‘I have the right to do anything’—but not everything is constructive.”

(See additional passages in student material.)

B. WHAT’S TO BE SAID ABOUT “MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT, PART 2”

This week’s lesson is dealing with how the good we get from certain things we expose ourselves to in the media is not good enough to warrant us seeing the bad.

“They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth” (John 17:16-19, NKJV).

This week’s lesson is also about: How do we help kids to make good decisions about what they allow themselves to watch, to hear, and to experience when it comes to the media?

C. WHERE WE’RE GOING WITH “MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT, PART 2”

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Understand that they need to have a very close connection with God in order to make wise choices with regard to the media.
2. Recognize the negative control that the media has on viewers and the importance of resisting such influences.
3. Make critical decisions about what they will or will not allow themselves to see.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) 10 pieces of poster board, paper, pens; (Activity B) a device to record sound, a video recorder (digital or other), paper, pens, drawing pencils, tables, chairs, small prizes for winning teams.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk.

Applying • Paper and pens or pencils.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE'VE BEEN BEFORE

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Where all can see, list the following concepts regarding the media (if possible, have each on a separate piece of paper or poster board):

1. All media messages are constructed (or created, or scripted) to do something specific.
2. All the messages are created with a specific creative language and set of rules.
3. Not everybody experiences the same message in the same way.
4. The messages all have within them the values and points of view of their creators (producers).
5. The messages are constructed with the aim of gaining profit or power.

In your own words discuss the above concepts with your students.

Point out that hardly anything (if anything) that they see or hear in the media is simply spontaneous human communication. Even seemingly spontaneous sidewalk interviews captured on TV or the Internet are collected and edited to make a specific point. And they are created with a specific formula, just like a speech you may have to give in class, or a paper or book report you may have to write. Someone (producers, writers, editors, performers) has an agenda or point of view that they are trying to communicate. And no one is just communicating with you for your sake. The communication is being entered into either to get money or power (ratings, royalties, awards, etc.) for the communicator (TV, music, radio, movie producers).

Get set • Post the following questions with each of the corresponding concepts you have just discussed while letting the students look at.

1. Who created this message?
2. What techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently from me?
4. What lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?
5. Why was this message sent?

Go • Divide the students into small groups and have them discuss the ad you showed them based on the five questions you have just posted. It will work best if you assign or they choose a recorder and actually write down the answers to the questions. Give them a set amount of time, and then bring them back together to report what they have discussed.

(Concepts and questions for this exercise are adapted from www.medialit.org.)

Debriefing • Ask: What have you learned today? (It is important that they discern the process they just followed. We want them to understand that this is something they can do for everything they watch and read and listen to.) **When and why might you do this again? How, if ever, do you think you fall into the trap that advertisers and those who make media productions want you to fall into? How does what you see in the media affect you?** (They may seriously believe that it doesn't.) **How are the way you dress and the kind of music you listen to connected with each other? If you don't think they are, explain.**

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Have a few tables set up. On each table have a different medium of communication: paper, pens, and drawing pencils; a camcorder or video recorder if possible (even a computer would be great to edit, but it is not needed); a tape recorder, or digital voice recorder.

Get set • When the students come into Sabbath School, don't mention the things that are on the tables; simply let them choose where to sit. Then, to introduce the activity have a commercial or a printed news ad or movie trailer on cue for them to watch. After they have watched it, tell them that they are going to spend some time creating a print ad, a commercial, or a radio spot. Tell them who their target audience will be (preschoolers, retired people, parents of elementary students, college students, doctors, etc.). Give them the target audience (a different target for each team), and the subject of the ad (Bible story book series, Bible study CD, etc.). If possible, couple this activity with the learning points in Activity A. They both pertain to a better understanding of what the media is all about.

Go • Give them sufficient time to develop their communication. If feasible, allow them to go outside or to other available space. When the time is up, bring the groups back together in order to listen to each presentation. Have the students vote on whose ad was the most effective, and have a prize for the winning team.

Debriefing • Ask: How did it feel to be on the other side of the media (the encoding side rather than the decoding side)? Did you enjoy it? What was difficult about being given restrictions when it came to whom your audience was? How did you decide what would appeal to them?

What similar processes do producers of media communications go through to create an ad or a piece of media?

Ask: What would the challenges be for you as a Christian in the media business? How are they the same or different from the challenges a Christian consumer faces?

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story:

John is a typical young person—enjoys watch-

ing television, listening to the radio and playing video games. In fact, you could say that John is a hyper-consumer of mass media. In fact, he has a TV and a Sony PlayStation right in his own room. His computer, which is also in his own room, is connected to the Internet with a broadband connection. John is literally hooked up when it comes to the media.

However, John has been going to the youth group and is becoming convicted that the world does not want what is best for him. He has been considering baptism, and wants his life to change. His youth pastor has suggested that John take a “fast” (a time-out to refocus on other things and reorder priorities) from many of the things he is used to doing, in order to evaluate where he spends his time, and whether or not those things he watches and plays are of a benefit to his purpose for a new walk with Jesus. John is at a crossroads. What advice can you give him?

Debriefing • Ask: What makes John different from most other kids his age? (He is beginning to think about what he watches.) **What would you do in this situation? What do you think of taking a mass media fast? Could you do it? How much time each week do you think you spend taking in the messages that the mass communicators are sending? What can you do to avoid exposing yourself to such messages?**

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Pose the following questions in your own words:

Read **Hosea 4:6**: “My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge” (NIV). How does this apply to our lives as Christians when it comes to the mass media? Does God want us to be knowledgeable about the media, what they are selling, and what is going on in the world? If not, why? If so, how much or how little?

If God does want us to affect the world with

His love, is it important to know about all the bad stuff going on in the world? Just what does it mean to be in the world, but not of the world? How can we be citizens of change for Jesus without immersing ourselves in the practices of the world?

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath’s section of the lesson.

Debrief the students with the following ideas:

Families like Sean’s are actually much too common in our society. What is it that makes us want the things we want in life? Is it true or not that much of what we want comes from the images we see?

Say: Let’s make a list of things we really want, and we’ll see if the media is what influenced us to believe we have to have those things to be happy. Have students call out things they really want and list them on the board. Then have them justify those things, the expense, and the reasons that they want them. Make sure not to judge the things they say.

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Pose the following scenario:

Imagine that it is the end of the summer, and it is time for Girl X and Boy Y to purchase new school clothes. They go to the store, and they have a decision to make: name-brand clothes, or generic. Let’s imagine that they have enough money to buy several name-brand things. What should they do?

Chances are that those who can afford it will choose the name-brand clothes. But this time, ask yourself another question: what makes them think they need name-brand clothes? Who is telling them that they should wear this or wear that? Most name-brand clothes are between 50 percent and 200 percent more expensive than generic clothes that are very

much the same. Think about it!

Ask: What would you do in this situation? If you choose name-brand clothing, why would you spend more? And what would be your reasons for spending more?

Say: We get so many images from the media that tell us what is good and fashionable, or popular and accepted. **Ask:** What do we do, as Christians, about these messages? Do we buy into what the world is selling, or do we look at it from a different perspective?

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Have students look at the log at the end of this week's student lesson. On separate paper, have them do their best to fill it out for last week. If you have a small group, create a composite log for the whole class as well.

Say: What did you learn about yourself from this log of last week's television viewing? What have we learned about ourselves as a group? How much time did you watch?

Further discussion questions:

1. How did you decide what you were going to watch? (Did you do it before you sat down, or did you allow the remote control to just move to whatever station you ended up with?)
2. Did you plan on spending that much time in front of the TV and/or computer?
3. Do you spend more or less time watching TV and/or things on your computer than most people in the house?
4. Do you read books (outside of school-work)?
5. Do you watch the news?
6. Did you buy anything this week you saw on a commercial?
7. Did you create a schedule around a particular show or event (movie, series

premier or finale)?

8. Do you think a log you keep next week might be different?
9. Do you talk about the things you watch with your parents, friends, or siblings?

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What do the verses found in the student's lesson tell us about our lives today in a media age? (Discuss them one at a time.)
2. How does the following verse relate to what we have just discussed? "Practically everything that goes on in the world—wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important—has nothing to do with the Father. It just isolates you from him" (1 John 2:16, *The Message*).
3. In a world in which a universal culture is being shaped by the media, what chance does a Christian have of not being pressed into its mold, and yet of being an attractive and relevant part of that society? Share the following: " 'No chance at all,' Jesus said, 'if you think you can pull it off by yourself. Every chance in the world if you trust God to do it' " (Luke 18:27, *The Message*).

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

God has given us eyes to see, ears to hear, and a brain to understand. It is important that we understand what we put into our minds. Whatever we feed on will determine the quality of our thoughts, and our thoughts lead to actions. However, as Christians we have a greater responsibility than just to seek the things we like. We have to remember that Christ is there with us in all that we do. This is what

makes our lives different from the lives of those who don't know Christ.

We must become knowledgeable consumers of the media, in that we must understand the purpose for everything to which we are exposed. Even if it is entertainment for entertainment's sake, let's know what the media is trying to say. In this way, we are not caught up in the direction that popular culture would have us go; rather, we are constantly heading in the direction of Christ.

Second, there may be times that what we watch has a kernel of moral value. We need

to ask ourselves this question: "Does the good outweigh the bad?" It may not be the greatest question, but it is a start. Christ is interested in His people affecting the world, but not becoming the world. We need to seek an understanding of both what the media does to us, and how we control it in our own lives. This week we have begun to understand the media from a different perspective.



STUDENT LESSON

MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT, Part 2

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Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Therefore ‘Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty’ ” (2 Corinthians 6:17, 18, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior:** “We are to engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholesomeness, joy, and goodness.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 24-27

HOW GOOD IS YOUR FILTER?

Sean and his parents love one another and their neighbors. In fact, they are outstanding members of their church. Everyone seems to love them. Sean and his parents like to do things together, and each night they make sure they gather around the TV and watch the most popular and entertaining shows. They have even talked about trying out together for one of those shows in which you do crazy things, like eat bugs, to get a cash prize.

Interestingly, because Sean and his parents

watch TV together, they kind of know what the others like. For instance, when Sean wanted a new MP3 player, they knew exactly the one to get. The same thing worked for Sean when it was time to purchase gifts for his parents. Actually, they were so good at knowing what the other family members wanted, they had a tendency to indulge in gifts too often.

After a while Sean and his family were in a pretty serious situation when it came to their finances. It turned out that they were watching so much media, and being exposed to so much stuff they thought they “had to have,” that they started to make poor decisions about what they really needed. They were seeing the “latest and greatest” thing and deciding that they had to have each thing that was advertised.

They decided that they had been sort of tricked into it because they had become so familiar with the people on the shows that the characters seemed like “friends.” And friends wouldn’t try to sell you something you didn’t need. Would they?

After taking a hard look at their situation, Sean and his folks decided that very little that came out of their television was anything but advertising and trying to sell them something. Even the shows were trying to sell an image or an idea of the way things should be. This family decided to fast from the media for a while. Good news! They are now doing much better than they were before when buying too much stuff.

Does any of this sound familiar?

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read 1 John 2:15-17.
- » You are in the music store, and you see the newest CD by your favorite artist. You have been waiting for a long time for this artist to come out with a new CD, and you can't wait to listen to it. You have heard the first single from the CD, and you really like it. You have made the decision not simply to download the CD—even though it is readily available online.
- » So, with your US\$15 plus, you go to pick it up. However, you find out that there are questionable lyrics included on the CD. What would you do?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- » Read 1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:6.
- » God asks us to be different from the world in order that we may reflect His character. Life is precious; and we are to make a difference in the way we live. Our habits, our choices, our attitudes, everything we do and say, needs to be in harmony with the life of Christ.
- » How do the things you do, listen to, and watch reflect the life of Christ?

- » Fill in the blanks. The text is from the New King James Version.

"Therefore be _____ of _____ as dear children. And _____ in _____, as Christ also has _____ us and _____ Himself for us, an _____

and a _____ to God for a sweet-smelling _____" (Ephesians 5:1, 2).

Tuesday REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 10:23.
- » You are constantly being faced with choices. From what food to eat for lunch to what show to spend your time watching. Obviously there are shows that are not worthy of your time. Often we don't think of our time as valuable. That is seen when we spend a majority of our time watching and listening to things that are not uplifting.
- » Just because something is entertaining does not mean it is something we should be watching. Most of the time the good doesn't outweigh the bad when sifting through different media in order to find the redeeming qualities. Yet what is objectionable is toxic even if taken in very small quantities. Have you ever asked yourself if it is worth risking your salvation in exchange for a little entertainment?
- » "The true followers of Christ . . . will shun places of worldly amusement because they find no Jesus there—no influence which will make them heavenly-minded and increase their growth in grace" (Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 328).

Wednesday BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the following text with the verse. All verses are from the New King James Version.

1.	Matthew 13:14-16	
2.	Philippians 1:9, 10	
3.	2 Corinthians 10:7	
4.	Romans 12:2	
5.	Hosea 4:6	
6.	Colossians 3:17	
7.	1 Corinthians 10:23	

A.	"Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father."
B.	"Do you look at things according to the outward appearance?"
C.	"Not all things are helpful."
D.	"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."
E.	"That you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense . . ."
F.	"Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear."
G.	"Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect . . ."

Thursday CONNECTING

- » Read Colossians 3:17.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Take your three favorite CDs, go to where your parents are, and open up the covers and show them the lyrics. Better yet, go listen to the CDs with your parents. Can you honestly do that? Can you truthfully give them the music you listen to so that they can evaluate it with you rather than without your ideas about it? This is where the rubber meets the road, so to speak. This is where

you see if what you are listening to is something that you feel you should listen to.

- » It has been said that as Christians we approach this world with the eyes and ears of Christ. That is a great responsibility. Television, movies, music—they impact our lives every day. You may not think they are all bad. But how do we as Christians evaluate the media? We have to become aware of what God is saying to us. His Word gives us the basis on which to form our values. Then our values guide us in deciding what we should watch and what we should not watch; what we will and what we won't expose ourselves to. What does it have to do with you? They are your eyes and ears, but they also belong to Christ. Think about it . . .
- » "There is great need of temperance in amusements, as in every other pursuit. And the character of these amusements should be carefully and thoroughly considered" (Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 512).

Friday APPLYING

- » Read Philippians 1:9, 10.
- » Log the hours and shows that you watch on TV on any given week. How does this chart help you see how you spend some of your time?

Shows and Times	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

