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Mind Games Survival Course Manual



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Leisure and Entertainment

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Introduction

Picture a grocery store in your mind. There are many aisles filled with a variety of products. Fresh fruit, vegetables, canned foods, bread, cereal, meat, dairy products, frozen foods, soap, and many other products can be found. When we shop in such a store we need to be aware of certain things. These may include the price, size, weight, variety, brand, quality, and freshness. After analyzing all of this, we are left with the most important part of the shopping trip--*the decision!* We must decide which of the products we will buy.

Our world is a lot like a grocery store. There are a variety of ideas (world views) to be considered. Those ideas can be seen and heard through television, music, movies, magazines, books, billboards, and bumper stickers, as well as many other sources. In a sense, we are shopping in the *grocery store of ideas*. As Christians, we need to be aware of the products. We need to analyze what is being sold. Then we need to decide if we should make a purchase.

Most of us want to be physically healthy. Unfortunately, sometimes we don't eat as if that were true. *The same is true of our minds*. We want to be mentally healthy. But too often we don't "eat" as if that were true! Our minds are often filled with things that are unhealthy. Poor purchases have been made in the grocery store of ideas.

How can we become more aware of the products and make the right purchases? It is our intent to help you answer this question. The result can have a significant impact on your life. A series of questions will help us focus our attention.

I. What is your standard/guideline for living each day?

- ı Is it friends?
- ı Is it teachers?
- ı Is it your parents?
- ı Is it the media?

- i Is it your reason alone?
- i Is it the cultural norm?
- i Is it the Bible?

2. Three questions about the Bible and entertainment

- A. *If you make the Bible your standard for living, do you think that means life will be dull, totally restricted, unhappy?***

Some Christians tend to live as if the answer were "yes." This thinking certainly applies when it comes to entertainment. We are to be so separate from the world that we can't enjoy any part of it.

- 2. *If you were to write a song, a poem, a novel, paint a picture, sculpt a statue, etc., do you think you would know best how it should be sung, read, or interpreted?***

Of course the answer is "yes." It came from your mind and imagination. You "brought it to life."

- 3. *If God created all things and knows everything about you, do you believe He knows how to bring true happiness into your life?***

Again, the answer is obviously "yes." You came from His mind and imagination. He "brought you to life." He knows best how you should be sung, read, interpreted, etc. And He relays that information through His word, the Bible. He wants you to enjoy life, but with His guidelines in mind. When you apply this, true happiness is the result; that is God's intention.

3. With this in mind, what is God's will for your leisure and entertainment life?

- A. *Before that question is answered, it is important to understand that the Bible clearly teaches God's will for much of life.***

These teachings, all of which can be applied to entertainment, are not debatable! (The following passages are just a few of many that could be considered. They are taken from the NASB version.)

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things (Phil. 4:8).

Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart (2 Tim. 2:22).

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry (Col. 3:5).

But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth (Col. 3:8).

Flee immorality (1 Cor. 6:18a).

Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts (Rom. 13:13–14).

You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God (James 4:4).

Do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them; for their minds devise violence and their lips talk of trouble (Prov. 24:1–2).

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way, and the perverted mouth, I hate (Prov. 8:13).

A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is arrogant and careless (Prov. 14:16).

2. *The Bible does not teach us what to do about specific types of entertainment.*

Obviously, television, movies, rock concerts, MTV, etc., are not mentioned in Scripture. Thus we are challenged to make decisions based upon principles.

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father (Col. 3:17).

But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil (Heb. 5:14).

3. *With all this in mind, there are three practical steps you can use to make the right entertainment choices.*

1. Stop!

Stop doing some of the things you normally do while you are listening to music, watching television, etc., so you can concentrate on what is entering your mind. You'll be amazed at the things you'll begin to notice if you take the time to concentrate.

2. Listen!



Now that you've begun to concentrate, it's time to listen to the ideas that are filling your awesome mind.

3. Look!

Look at the consequences of the ideas you have made part of your life through entertainment. Realize that these ideas can influence you each day. Ideas are powerful things!

Consider the following illustration. Think of your mind as a sponge. A sponge absorbs moisture not unlike the way your mind absorbs ideas. In order to remove the moisture, you must squeeze the sponge. If someone were to do the same with your "sponge brain," what would come out? Would you be embarrassed for others to see the ideas you've put there? Would you be embarrassed if the Lord were to be present? He is, you know! Honor him and enjoy life in the process!

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