

How Secular Media Is Manipulating Minds and Destroying America

“Don’t believe everything you see on TV,” he exhorted me in his slow Texas drawl. “These reality shows are not always so real.” These were the words of an individual Sue and I had seen the night before on one of the popular reality shows called *Mystery Diners*. He was the owner of the restaurant that had been featured in the show and here I was face to face with him. His words confirmed what I had suspected—that the reality shows are “not so real,” but are actually planned and scripted theater. I believe our meeting was providential.

A Planned and Scripted Reality Show

This particular show featured this man’s barbecue restaurant in Fort Worth, Texas. In the show, this owner shared his deep concern that someone had stolen the secret family recipe for barbecue sauce that had been passed down to him. This had come to light when someone told him that a food truck in Fort Worth served up barbecue sauce that tasted just like his.

When he had the sauce from the food truck chemically analyzed, it turned out to be the exact same recipe. Someone on his staff had obviously sold him out. This is where *Mystery Diners* came in.

Mystery Diners set up hidden cameras in the kitchen and throughout the restaurant to catch the recipe thief. They also sent in actors posing as restaurateurs interested in purchasing the rights to the barbecue sauce. In the control room, the owner watched his nephew, who was the manager of the restaurant, sell the recipe to the actors for \$5,.

The owner was aghast. “I can’t believe that my own flesh and

blood would sell me out," he lamented. They called in the nephew to the control room where he was confronted for his theft and duplicity. There was an angry exchange between the owner and his nephew and he fired the nephew on the spot, who angrily departed and slammed the door on his way out.

Don't Believe Everything You See on TV

After seeing this program, Sue and I decided to visit this restaurant the next day and take with us friends who were visiting from Ireland. It was a Texas type barbecue restaurant with hickory smoked meats and long community tables on which to eat. After enjoying our meal and leaving the restaurant, our friend from Ireland, Carmel, realized that she had left her camera behind. I returned to the restaurant and that was when I encountered the owner whom I had just seen on TV the night before.

He was a man of about 60 and wearing a cowboy hat. I said to him, "Hey, I saw you on TV last night." In his Texas twang, he replied, "Yeah, I have a face for radio." I told him about the missing camera and he took me to his office where he retrieved it. As we walked along I expressed concern for his troubles and said, "I hope everything works out OK for you."

In his slow Texas twang and with a touch of incredulity in his voice, he replied, "Don't believe everything you see on TV." He paused and then said, "These reality shows are not always so real." His words confirmed what I already suspected, but were also a reminder of how we are continually being mentally and emotionally manipulated by the images and messages with which we are bombarded every day from the media and the world of entertainment.

The Unreal World of Hollywood

As I have contemplated these words of the owner, I have come to realize that "don't believe everything you see on TV" is a message that America and the Church needs to hear. This is

because our nation has adopted a belief system based on a make-believe world produced by Hollywood script-writers and actors.

In this fictional world of Hollywood, sin does not exist and there are no consequences for our behavior. In this unreal world, which is the product of someone's imagination, sexual deviancy and immorality are the norm and "fun" with no negative outcomes or aftereffects. Drunkenness, crudeness and vulgarity are presented as acceptable and even "funny." Good is depicted as evil and evil as good.

But in the real world, it is a different story. It's like the old country song that says;

But here in the real world,

It's not that easy at all;

Cause when hearts get broken,

It's real tears that fall.

In the real world, the values of Hollywood have resulted in untold sorrow, heartbreak and pain. As a result of the values of Hollywood, over a half of babies born in the white community of America are being born to unwed mothers. In the black community it is over 70 percent. This has resulted in the breakdown of families, with irresponsible men who know how to produce babies but do not have a clue, or even the desire, to be a husband and father. This has resulted in single mothers resorting to welfare and raising children in poverty who then become vulnerable to drugs, gangs and the resulting tragedies.

Our nation is imploding in flames as our children follow the pied piper of Hollywood. I will never forget an elderly, grey-haired black man on the verge of tears lamenting the crime, violence and murders taking place in his community. "It's like

Afghanistan," he cried.

We Were Warned

A terrible thing has occurred in our nation. While we slept, time-proven Christian morals on which this nation was founded were outlawed from the public venue and replaced by the make-believe morals of Hollywood. Our first president warned of this very situation. In his Farewell Address, after serving two terms as president, George Washington warned the new nation to guard against the subversion of "religion and morality" which he said are "indispensable supports for political prosperity." He also warned against the supposition "that morality can be maintained without religion."

When Washington and the founders spoke of "religion" they were speaking of Christianity, which is why he also said, "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible." Every Founder, without exception, wanted Christian principles taught in every public venue because they believed it would restrain evil and lead to a more stable and prosperous society. Even the alleged Deist Benjamin Franklin, after looking over a manuscript sent to him by Thomas Paine, in which Paine attacked Christianity, urged him to burn it because, Franklin said, "If men are so wicked with religion [Christianity] what would they be if without it."

We are now beginning to suffer the consequences of not following their advice.

The Answer Lies With Us

There is an answer and it is not another government funded social program. The answer is a change in our values as a nation and as a people; and if there is to be such a change, the church must lead the way. In Matthew 5:13-14 Jesus said to his followers (that's you and me today), You are the salt of the earth and you are the light of the world. First Peter 4:17 says, God is calling us, as Christians and Christian leaders,

to allow ourselves to be examined by the Word and the Spirit of God to determine how far we have been unwittingly led astray by this make-believe world of Hollywood and its fictional values. We must renounce this false, unreal value system and embrace the values of heaven. This is what the Bible calls repentance and it always leads to true Spiritual awakening as is written in Acts 2:17, Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.

It's time to get real and live in the real world! It is time to give ourselves afresh to God! It is time to be salt and light in our generation! Our future and the future of the next generation depends on it!

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