

Jamie Buckingham on Media Madness

The morning after a recent ministry scandal broke, I woke to the internal words, “Beware of the tumblebugs.” It’s been a long time since I thought of tumblebugs. Lying in bed, I remembered kneeling as a child in our barnyard watching those tiny beetles at work.

A tumblebug finds a pile of manure. With its front claws it pulls out a small amount, mixes it liberally with its spit, works it into a ball, then rolls it across the barnyard, pushing the bundle with its nose.

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As I look out over the kingdom, I realize God has given His church a gigantic dose of laxative. The secular media—the tumblebugs of society—smelling the results of God’s purgative, have rushed out from under their rocks. They’re not looking for the hand of God, much less His face. They’re not even interested in the type of purgative the Holy Spirit administers to cleanse and purify His church. All they are nosing for is expelled waste. Once found—and God’s people never have excelled at digging latrines—they roll it into a neat little TV spot, serving it up on the 6 o’clock news.

No one is a stronger proponent of freedom of the press than I. But it is truth that sets us free, not twisted, slanted, one-sided, incomplete facts. Such stories land us in more bondage than any journalistic censorship imposed by government regulations. A free press in the hands of irresponsible journalists is as dangerous as a vindictive man who shouts “Fire!” in a public theater. The journalists whose primary intent is to catch people in wrongdoing (or who edit film to

create the impression of such) are instruments of their father, the devil.

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Why does the press continually ask questions of prominent pastors that attempt to set them up to look like buffoons? Remember what the news reporting media did to former Secretary of Interior James Watt? Once the newspapers discovered he believed in the return of Christ, they warped his words to sound like Watt felt it was OK to destroy our natural resources since the world would be burned up when Jesus returned—the exact opposite of what he believed.

Following my brief foray into the world of the secular media during the PTL scandal, I quickly realized no good can come from Christians being interviewed on programs such as “Larry King Live,” “Nightline” or “60 Minutes.” But following the most recent scandal, I saw publicity-hunting preachers by the score drooling to have their pious faces making nonsensical statements on the tube.

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