

Oh, Our Modern Age!?!

by Tom Wacaster

I suppose every age has its advancements in technology, communication, transportation and science, but perhaps there has never been a generation that has witnessed as many changes as has ours (unless it be the industrial revolution). I can still remember when a computer was something you saw on television on some science fiction show, and a "window" was what mom had us clean every Spring so as to allow more summer sun into our homes. A "ram" was the cousin of a goat, "meg" was the little girl who lived down the street, and an "application" was something you filled out when you applied for a new job. Some words have taken on entirely different meanings than they had when I was growing up. For example, a "program" was a TV show, a cursor was someone who used profanity, and "memory" was something that you lost with age, not space on a computer.

We are about to witness a dramatic change in television viewing as well. The new "digital" television is becoming increasingly popular, with pictures so sharp it has been billed as the biggest change in viewing quality since we moved from black and white to color. The irony of it all is the undeniable truth that while we are making gigantic strides in accessing knowledge, we are losing ground when it comes to the quality of material that we are able to access. As Paul Harvey says, "TV turns the sky into a sewer." A recent study has proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that the entertainment industry in general, and the television industry in specific is an "influence" rather than a "mirror" of society. According to that survey conducted by Public Opinion magazine, 65% of television's creative community admitted that TV was a major influence on social behavior. Of the "cream of the crop" among television's "most experienced and respected members," 93% said they seldom ever, or never, attended religious services. The devil got his claws into the television industry some three decades ago and has not let go yet, nor does it look like he will do so anytime in the near future. The movie industry is no better.

And now comes our modern age of personal computers, and our unlimited and unrestricted access to the "super highway." So far it is "no holds barred," and while we argue with ourselves over what constitutes censorship, or how to define pornography, young and innocent minds are being overwhelmed by the evil side of that promising means of communication. Some years ago I had an occasion to visit with a sister in Christ who was then facing the sunset years of her life. Preceded in death by her husband of more than 60 years, Mary would soon depart this life to be with her Lord. As we visited and reflected upon the years of wisdom and experience now behind her, she commented, "Tom, you would not believe the changes I have seen in my lifetime, and most of them are not for the good." Yes, sister Casey, I would believe the changes. I have seen enough in my lifetime to make me hang my head and blush at the sins of our beloved America. At times it almost seems to overwhelm me. It would be easy to become discouraged at it all.

And then I think: The only thing that has really changed is man's capacity and not his propensity to sin. Modern technology simply provides the avenues by which sinful man can exercise his evil desires. There may be more opportunities for sin, but as Solomon reminded us, "there is nothing new under the sun." And as I anticipate the possibilities for good, I think to myself, "Oh, our modern age!"