

“Amusing Ourselves to Death”

Most preachers realize they preach in an age of entertainment. Neil Postman has written a book about this entitled, *Amusing Ourselves To Death*.

This is a book that presents a powerful argument that television has crippled our ability to think for ourselves and reduced our aptitude for any real communication. Postman argues that TV has not made us the most literate generation in history; rather it has flooded our minds with a bunch of irrelevant and meaningless information.

Some examples of commercials saying nothing about the products they are advertising: a jeans commercial shows the painful drama of the woes of adolescence, but says nothing about the jeans. Perfume ads portray a collage of sensuous images, but says nothing about the perfume. Beer commercials show people having a good time, etc., but nothing about beer. (In fact, they know better than to show what beer does on the highway, to the home, and to individuals.)

The same is true with the sermons some preach. The emphasis today is superficial compared to years gone by. Today, instead of an emphasis on scripture, logic, and depth of content, the emphasis is upon entertainment. A “good” sermon must be amusing and brief, with emphasis on brief. Many preachers are featuring a 20 to 25 minute sermon with many amusing anecdotes, but little doctrine. In fact, one preacher is on record as saying, “I never preach on some doctrinal subjects, because my congregation doesn’t want to hear it.”

The scriptures teach that we are to “preach the word.” (II Tim. 4:2) We are to “Speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.” (I Tim. 6:2) If this is what will meet man’s needs, and it is, and if this is what will take us to heaven, and it is, then we must have men and women in the pew who will demand scripture preaching, and be supportive of those who are committed to Bible preaching. We must preach what people need, not what they want. After all, the gospel is the power of God to salvation, and that is the bottom line.