

View

DECEMBER 13, 2009

"Heaven above is softer blue, earth around is sweeter green;
something lives in every hue, Christless eyes have never seen."

Calendar

Group 8 Meeting at Hank Wilson's home
Tonight at 6:30-8 PM

New-Millennium Challenges

Respectable Thieves

"Don't be naive. There are difficult times ahead. As the end approaches, people are going to be self-absorbed, money-hungry, self-promoting, stuck-up, profane, contemptuous of parents, crude, coarse, dog-eat-dog, unbending, slanderers, impulsively wild, savage, cynical, treacherous, ruthless, bloated windbags, addicted to lust, and allergic to God. They'll make a show of religion, but behind the scenes they're animals. Stay clear of these people."

II Timothy 3:1-5, *The Message*

If a burglar broke into your house and stole your most valuable possessions, the last word you would think of using to describe the thief is "respectable." "Disgusting," maybe. "Sick," perhaps. But never "respectable."

"LOOK CAREFULLY THEN HOW YOU WALK, NOT
AS UNWISE BUT AS WISE, MAKING THE BEST USE
OF THE TIME, BECAUSE THE DAYS ARE EVIL."

EPHESIANS 5:15-16

You would never knowingly allow one of these criminals into your house, would you? Yet, are there are some "thieves" that you not only allow but *invite* into your home every day?

The most obvious thief is the time-thief. Each one of us is equal in terms of how much time we are allotted each day — 1440 minutes to spend. Many of those minutes are spent on the necessities of life: eating, dressing, sleeping, working. Time experts call the minutes left over after the necessities are paid for discretionary or "disposable" time; the amount of time, of course, is different for each of us.

Take a minute to calculate how much "discretionary" time you have, on average, each weekday (presumably, weekends provide more "disposable hours," but that varies wildly from one weekend to the next, especially if you have younger children).

The church of Christ

meeting at 900 E. Natoma
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Folsom, CA 95630
916/608-4866

Elders

Forrest Brown: 530/295-9230
Randy Clark: 916/939-5066
Rich Ladd: 916/774-9048
David Posey: 530/676-9514
Dennis Reagan: 916/797-5539

Deacons

Brent Agee: 916/786-0436
Bryan Byrd: 916/351-9320
David Byrd: 916/985-6564
Barrett Cain: 916/351-0774
Michael Caisse: 530/672-2902
Jeff Clark: 916/985-8689
John Daniels: 916/985-3090
Jerry Deschler: 916/285-9115
Steve Dickey: 916/983-1071
Eric Fields: 916/817-6495
David Main: 650/292-5417
Terry Raposa: 916/782-1140
Dane Scott: 916/631-7221
Russ Tarrant: 530/672-1748
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Jeff Warshaw: 916/933-9399

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David Posey: 530/676-9514
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Service Times

Sunday Morning Assembly
9:30 AM
Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Study
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.

Private classes arranged at your convenience.

www.folsomchurch.com

For drill, let's suppose you have five hours of extra time each weekday, which comes to 25 hours for the Monday-Friday work-week.

About four of those hours are used in getting to Bible class on Wednesday night, including getting ready and drive time. That leaves 21 hours that are yours to spend.

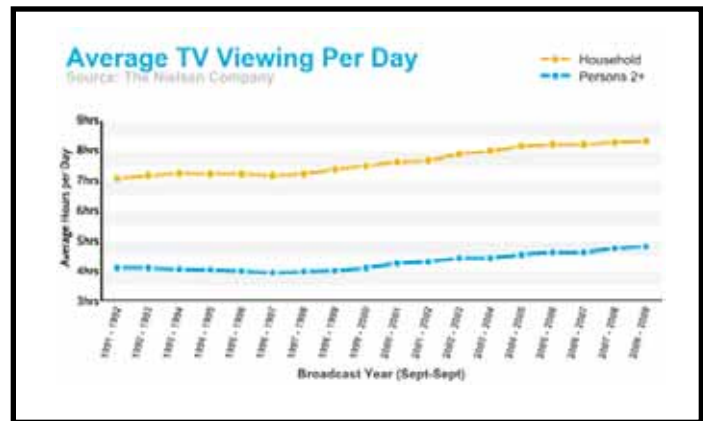
Here's where thieves may break in where angels are not allowed to tread. According to Nielsen Media Research (and they should know), in 2007, women spent an average of over five hours watching television each day. Men spent four-and-a-half hours watching TV each day, while kids spent over three hours.

Did you ever think of that talking box as a "thief"? A *respectable* thief, perhaps, but still a thief. Sure, there are some profitable programs to watch on TV; they may even be educational. But in most households, the majority of time is spent watching TV for entertainment, not education. It may be a sports program, a sitcom or a drama and none of those do anything to enhance one's spiritual development. In fact, the content may erode your spirituality, since most of these shows are filled with profanity, violence, sexually suggestive scenes and innuendo (or even overtly explicit scenes).

But even if the fare is morally benign, the time devoted to staring at the screen is gone forever. And if you view TV near the average number of hours, you are spending nearly all of your extra time watching it (based on our five hours a day extra time scenario).

But there are other "respectable" thieves besides TV. Reading is one. Some brag that they don't watch TV, but read books instead. But what are they reading? Not the Bible, at least most of the time. They are reading novels that are filled with the same stuff that is dramatized on TV. What's the difference? You got me.

Then there are video games. This thief's most common, but by no means *only*, target are teenage boys. The time burned on these is amazing. According to a 2007 study, almost 30% of those who play video games played an average of 10-20 hours per week. But 21% played 20-40 hours, 14% over



40 and 11% over 100 hours! Adolescents who play video games spend 30% less time reading and 34% less time doing homework. *Bad thief!!*

Are there other "thieves" that we allow into our homes, our children's rooms and our minds? Facebook can be fun and put to great use; but it can also become a major time-thief, if we are not careful. Such common activities as talking on the phone, texting or e-mailing are all fine and sometimes necessary. But before we know it, an hour or more can pass and we haven't really accomplished anything.

There are even some "noble" time-thieves. For example, exercise is a good thing, but it's a thief if we allow "getting in shape" to become an obsession that eats away precious hours. Paul warned Timothy: "For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way" (1 Tim. 4:8, ESV).

The point of all this, of course, is to ask how much of our "discretionary time" is given to the things of God such as Bible reading and study, attendance at classes and services, helping those who need help?

Listen to Paul, then use your "extra" time wisely: "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16).

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