

## Be Careful Little Eyes

THE CHURCH OF  
Jesus  
Christ

By Sis. Erin Light

Once upon a time, I heard someone say, “Worldliness is anything that makes sin look normal”. Unfortunately, the truth is that being a follower of Christ does not shield us from unsightly scenes in our everyday walk. Blatant media advertisements, sexualized movies, and violent video games are laid out on billboards and in magazines like a fine feast for us to explore everyday. So does it really matter what we look at, as long as we are still faithful to God?

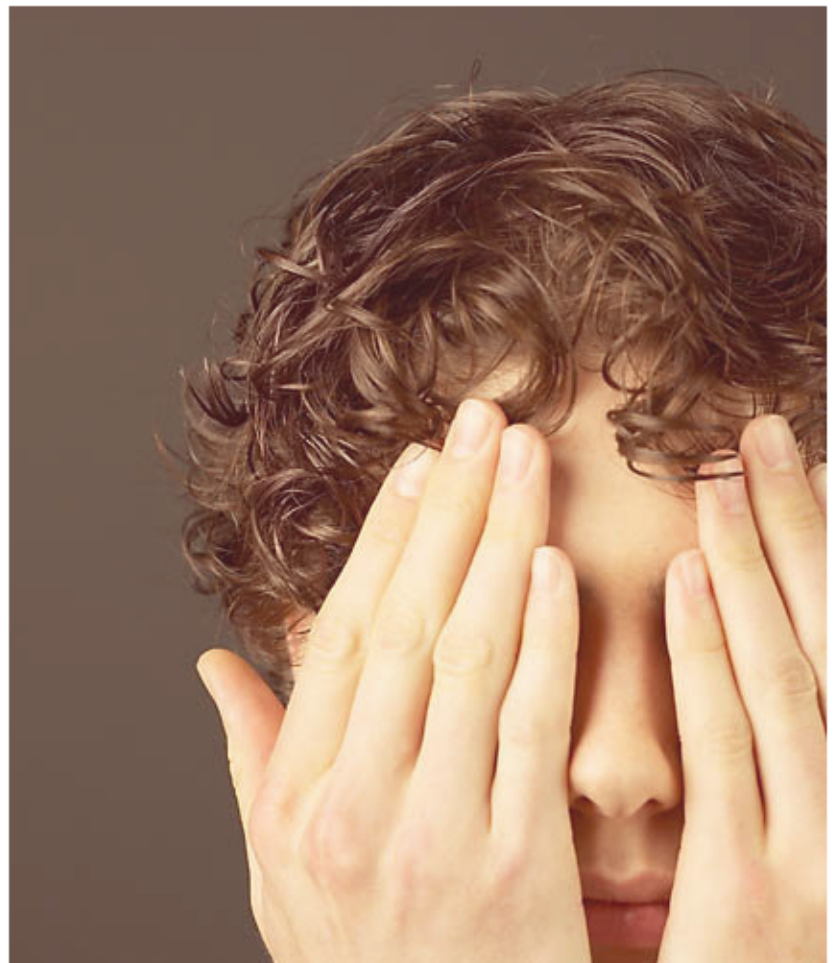
Whether you realize it or not, your eyes are the filters for your heart, mind and soul. In Ephesians chapter 5, the Apostle Paul reminds us to walk as “*children of light*” (v. 8), “*...not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time... understanding what the will of the Lord is*” (v. 15-17). In other words, we are called as children of Christ so we must pay attention to our surroundings so that we aren’t pulled unknowingly in worldly directions.

Every viewing opportunity comes with a choice to do one of two things: consume or reject. It’s quite easy to trick ourselves into believing that how we entertain ourselves doesn’t actually affect our relationship with God. “So what if it’s an R-rated movie? I know that it’s fake blood and I know the sex isn’t real. I can handle this”. Think again.

Imagine if you grew up in a household that didn’t use heavy spices in food. Now imagine that you started hanging out with your friends at the nearest Thai restaurant and started eating spicy chilies on a regular basis.

You only added small amounts at first, but after a while you grew accustomed and no longer noticed the tingling pain. Eventually you discovered that you enjoyed really spicy foods regardless of how much your eyes watered, your mouth burned or your stomach ached.

Just as one can build up a tolerance to spicy foods (and I like spicy food, don’t get me wrong), we can likewise accustom ourselves to viewing scenes that tear



us away from Christ. Exposing ourselves to ungodly material over and over again numbs us against what should be viewed as shocking, disgusting or evil. It tells our mind, heart and soul that these sights are normal and this is the “way of the world”. For instance, in recent studies, individuals accustomed to watching violent films or playing violent video games demonstrated more aggression and less compassion than those who did not.

As we follow Christ, it's important to focus on what is pure, lovely, noble, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8). When we watch violent or sexual images, we are deriving enjoyment from the very sins that Jesus sacrificed his life to save us from. Let's not be fooled by the world's acceptance of evil. A beloved rom-com with one or two explicit sex scenes that only last

a few seconds? That's pornography. It delivers an unrealistic portrayal of love that stands in direct contradiction to God's design for men and women. What about shooting down a few hundred villains in a favorite video game, or watching a TV series full of hate and revenge like “Sons of Anarchy” or “American Horror Story”? If you wouldn't invite Jesus to sit and watch with you, then it's best to steer clear.

“It's not fair!” One might argue. “It's much more difficult now with all these temptations around us! The brothers and sisters in the past didn't have TV or movies or video games to entice them!” Perhaps not. But there were plenty of other “old school” entertainment temptations. King David, for example, should have protected his eyes when he stumbled upon Bathsheba bathing nearby. His lust for her triggered a spiral of

bad events including murder and adultery. “Sure,” one might argue, “But committing adultery is WAY worse than watching a raunchy PG-13 comedy.” To this, Jesus replies, “*But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*” (Matthew 5:28). Even the Israelites, while waiting for Moses to return with a message from God, made poor entertainment choices to satisfy their boredom. They began dancing and worshipping a golden calf. You can read Exodus 32 to see where that led them.

So how do I avoid seeing ungodly sights? After all, my friends are all going to go see the latest juicy flick (50 Shades of Grey, anyone?), or watch a movie trilogy full of slaughter (what about The Hunger Games?) or play shoot-em-up



## Here's a #throwback for you!

Be careful little eyes what  
you see,  
Oh, be careful little eyes  
what you see,  
For the Father up above,  
Is looking down with love,  
So be careful little eyes  
what you see

Do you remember this song? Did you sing it in Sunday School a lot? Well, what we learned as children from this song still applies today. This little rhyming song has a very important message that Sis. Erin stresses in this article: our eyes are so incredibly powerful.

What we see doesn't just affect our hearts, it also affects our minds and how we process information. The more we see something, the more normal it becomes.

Keeping this in mind, we encourage you to be very aware of your surroundings. Take note of what you're listening to on your ipod, what you're watching on TV, or even what perfume ads you're staring at in the mall.

Is this still really hard for you? Then we encourage you to talk to another brother or sister for support and help. Remember, we are all part of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12) and when one member hurts, the body does too!

video games (Call of Duty: Black Ops, perhaps?). How do I avoid innocently getting pulled along?

It's best to figure out what entertainment is planned beforehand rather than walking into a group activity unprepared. Take note of ratings! Search [www.dove.org](http://www.dove.org) for movie details regarding sex, violence, drugs and bad language, or take a look at [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org) for ratings on movies, books, apps, games and more. These websites are not only useful for parents with young kids, they're also useful for teens and adults who'd rather not waste their time on trashy entertainment. And when you still just aren't sure if something is worth your time, consider hitting the gym, studying the scriptures, calling up an old friend, or the many other enjoyable and productive uses of your spare time.

So don't get discouraged, and don't ever feel like you're "missing out" because you choose to take the high-road with your entertainment choices. When we make a small sacrifice for God, He blesses us in ways far exceeding the latest media fad or short-term buzz. So next time, before you pick up the remote, ask yourself the question:

Should I choose to "consume" or "reject"?

