young women living the life of the kingdom of God in the world, is glorious. But even this is more believed than seen. The coming of the Kingdom through Christian education is not spectacular, glamorous, and shewy. The Kingdom cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, “Lo here,” or “Lo there." Nevertheless, it comes. Therefore, Christian education is worthy of our finest efforts, by grace.

The course of thy life will speak more for thee than the discourse of thy lips.
George Swinnock

To have a television set in the house, or not to have one; to watch this or that program on TV, or not to watch it; to limit children’s viewing time to so many hours, or to restrict them even more — all these are questions which no doubt trouble Christian families everywhere. There are in addition questions concerning the effect of television viewing on the viewers. Even the world struggles with this, as they strive to curb the very crimes in society which are portrayed regularly before the eyes of young viewers of today’s sex- and violence-ridden movies. Teachers meanwhile wonder how they can best make of television an ally, rather than a foe, in the business of education. How should the child of God evaluate all of this — that is the question. It goes without saying, I think, that watching television is not in itself wrong. But that we are here dealing with an appliance that has potential for being a most powerful tool of the devil seems clear right on the surface of things. And because the dangers are as subtle as the devil himself, we do well to be very careful about our own and our children’s viewing habits. We’ve asked Mr. Bernie Kamps, of our Grandville Protestant Reformed Church, to address this matter from the point of view of a parent. The concerns he expresses in what follows are worthy of our consideration.
Does Television Interfere with Covenant Instruction?

Bernie Kamps

This is a difficult, or should I say sensitive, subject to discuss. The reason for this is that so much on TV is to be condemned, and none of us likes to hear criticism directed toward that which we tend to enjoy.

When I agreed to write this article, I realized the unpleasants that came along with it. Television seems to be a sacred cow among many and a dead horse for others. Some do not or will not see the danger or the evil, while others are tired of the obvious pointed out.

My intentions are not to illustrate with various statistics the enormous number of hours children and adults in America sit before the TV. Nor do I intend to discuss how psychologists bemoan the effects television has on behavior and on our minds. We all read this often enough to know that even the world shudders about the consequences television has on young and old alike.

The principle of living before God as believers is to serve Him with heart, mind, and soul — our all, all the time, in all we do. This difficult commandment does not allow for a sabbatical from fighting our old man. But the rewards are as great as the commandment strenuous. The Lord blesses a sanctified walk and spiritually rewards faithful servants. The comforting promise to parents is that children will walk as they were taught. (See Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”) There is also a warning to heed. Rear them with unrepentant inconsistencies, and they will continue living that way also.

Our homes must be havens of rest from the ungodliness round about. Parents and children are to be at ease knowing that evil from without cannot attack.

Daily, as the various family members venture outside into the sphere of the world, sin and temptation greet them. The devil hurls storms of evil, buffeting us until we return home and finally lean against the door and bolt it shut, safe at last! Safe from all things outwardly opposed to the kingdom of our Lord.
Now, do we want to invite the world into our family room? Bring all manner of ungodliness into our blessed family fellowship? Absolutely not!

We must guard against undermining Christian education in our schools as well. We demand that our teachers love God's Word and the Reformed doctrine, and diligently teach the antithesis daily, in every subject. We require them, in their teaching of all courses, to instruct through biblical principles over against the evils of the world. Our desire is to glorify our Lord and equip our children as disciples of Christ. Do you think we do them a disservice with our television viewing?

The world is very true to its confession of hatred toward God. They are devoted to promoting their adulterous and man-centered lifestyle. Forever they try to erode godly principles, upholding and esteeming sin.

As children of God, we have no friends in the world, no one desires our salvation. Please bear this in mind before you gather your blessed children around you and fill their eyes and ears with corruption. Guard against having a vexed soul, even as Lot in Sodom.

We must weigh television viewing in our balance of values. List in your mind all the important, compelling reasons for watching. List all the benefits, all the rewards. Note the positive effects it holds for you and your children. Then measure the negative effects, the spiritual dangers, the temptation to live according to the doctrine of common grace which we so abhor, namely, to redeem evil in the name of art.

These children are the future church — future elders, deacons, and ministers as well as the body of believers. (See Psalm 127: 3a, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord.") They are redeemed in Christ and given to us to instruct. May we lead them on the narrow pathway to the strait gate. Oh, if we could stand at the foot of Mount Sinai, before our Holy God, listening to the thunder, smelling the smoke, and feeling the Lord shake the earth under our feet. Seeing our spiritual ambassador return with his face so brilliant, we dare not gaze on him. Maybe then we would be more sensitive to our pilgrimage here below.

As New Testament believers we know, with the Holy Spirit being poured out, we experience the revelation of Jesus Christ in a better way than the saints of old. May we prayerfully consider our television viewing in that light of Scripture and ask the Lord's blessing on our instruction.