

PK's Perspectives ... The Company That We Keep!

A few months before I was born, my Dad met a stranger who was new to our small Tennessee town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer and soon invited him to live with our family. The stranger was quickly accepted and was around to welcome me into the world a few months later. As I grew up, I never questioned his place in my family. In my young mind, he had a special niche. My parents were complementary instructors: Mom taught me the Word of God, and Dad taught me to obey it.

But the stranger? He was our storyteller; he could weave the most fascinating tales. He would keep us spellbound for hours on end with adventures, mysteries, and comedies. He could hold our whole family spellbound for hours each evening. He was like a friend to the entire family. He took Dad, Bill, and me to our first major league baseball game. He was always encouraging us to see the movies and he even made arrangements to introduce us to several movie stars. If I wanted to know anything about politics, history, or science, he always knew the answers about the past, understood the present and even seemed able to predict the future! He made me laugh, and he made me cry. The stranger never stopped talking. Dad didn't seem to mind, but sometimes Mom would get up quietly — while the rest of us were shushing each other to listen to what the stranger had to say — and she would go to her room to read her Bible and pray. I wonder now if she ever prayed for the stranger to leave.

Dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions, but the stranger never felt obligated to honor them. Profanity, for example, was not allowed in our home — not from us, our friends, or any visitors. Our longtime visitor, however, got away with four-letter words that burned my ears and made my Dad squirm and my mother blush. To my knowledge, the stranger was never confronted. My Dad was a teetotaler who didn't permit alcohol in the home, not even for cooking. But the stranger felt we needed expanded horizons and enlightened us to other ways of life; he offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often, encouraging us to try it on a regular basis. He made cigarettes look cool, cigars manly, and pipes distinguished. He talked freely (much too freely!) about sex. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and generally embarrassing. I now know that my early concepts about the man/woman relationship were influenced strongly by the stranger. As I look back, I believe it was the grace of God that the stranger did not influence us more. Time after time, he opposed the values of my parents, yet he was seldom rebuked...and NEVER asked to leave.

More than fifty years have passed since the stranger moved in with the young family on Morningside Drive. He has blended right in and is not nearly as fascinating as he was at first. Still, if you were to walk into my parent's den today you would still find him sitting over in his corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and watch him draw his pictures. His name? We always called him TV. *(an online reflection posted by Keith Currie @ hsbgi.org)*

In Psalm 101:2-4 we read, "I will be careful to live a blameless life— when will you come to help me? I will lead a life of integrity in my own home. I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar. I hate all who deal crookedly; I will have nothing to do with them. I will reject perverse ideas and stay away from every evil." Now I don't believe there is anything wrong with owning a television, computer, tablet, or smartphone. However, just because we allow these "strangers" to live with us does not mean that we should let them dominate us and pollute our minds! Allowing these strangers to serve as de facto baby-sitters for our littles should not even be a consideration. May we all have the discipline and the drive to not tolerate subversive content in our homes that challenges and contradicts the teachings of Scripture! Technology can be used for great good; it can also be used as a tool of Satan. The question is: **how is it being used in your home?** Grace & peace, love you. PK