

Christian's Guide to Media.

What is Media? A means of transmitting information from one group or individual to another group or individual. In the modern world "media" principally has come to be recognised as Radio, TV, Newspapers, magazines and the varied forms of advertising (hoardings, leaflet drops etc.). New forms of media are being experimented with and are developing rapidly. (E-Mail, interactive video etc.)

Matt 28:19-20; Acts 1:8;

Rev 14:6.

Why media ministry? Seventh-Day Adventists have accepted the challenge to proclaim the good news to "every nation, tribe, language and people." (Rev. 14:6) To achieve success we must "meet people where they are".

The average weekly media consumption in Britain is approximately 75 hours per person. Half listen to radio every day, three quarters read a daily newspaper, and about 98% of British households possess at least one television set.¹ The average time spent in Christian thought or church attendance?

If people are no longer attending church, are reticent to attend public meetings, are scared to open their front door to a friendly knock, the media offers an avenue to allow a Christian viewpoint inside the home.

Some wise council from Ellen White:

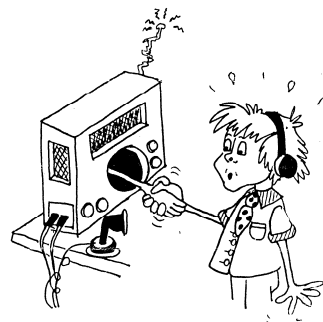
Grave responsibilities rest upon the youth. God expects much from the young men who live in this generation of increased light and knowledge. He expects them to impart this light and knowledge. He desires to use them in dispelling the error and superstition that cloud the minds of many. They are to discipline themselves by gathering up every jot and tittle of knowledge and experience. **God holds them responsible for the opportunities and privileges given them.** The work before them is waiting for their earnest effort, that it may be carried forward from point to point as the time demands."²

Writing about the commencement of the churches publishing work Ellen White wrote:

"From the small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear around the world." *Life Sketches*, 125.

The message of truth is to go to all nations, tongues and people; its publications, printed in many different languages, are to be scattered abroad like leaves of autumn. *4 Testimonies*, 79.

In today's media conscious world these statements indicate that Adventists should be using the media in every way possible to bring the good news of Jesus to the world. That is, not just the printed media as in Ellen White's day with its subsequent developments, but radio, TV, satellite, video, Internet and any other option available or developing. What can be more



Rom10:12-15

¹David Porter, **User's Guide to the Media**, Leicester, Intervarsity Press, 1988, pp.10,13.

²Ellen G White, *Messages to young People*, 41.

important or exciting than using these channels to spread the gospel.

The Challenges. There are sometimes misconceptions concerning media ministry.

Media ministry is not:

- An instant road to baptism.
- The venue for a full 27 doctrine evangelistic campaign.
- The place to point out the errors of everyone else's ways while demonstrating that we have "the truth".
- The province of "qualified" ministry or professional people. It is increasingly open and accessible to all.
- A replacement for preaching or other forms of Christian outreach and teaching.
- It is not a stay at home "arm chair" church.

Media ministry can be difficult as media moguls generally tend not to be pro-religion. However, if you have a good and interesting product the media are hungry for news.

Media ministry is:

- Making friends and breaking down barriers.
- A one-to-one relationship between the speaker/writer and his her audience.
- Creating a pool of good will in which our evangelists can fish.
- Reaching lonely and hurting people with **Good News** in the personal non-threatening environment of their own home or car.
- Raising the profile of your church in the community.
- Encouraging people to think about their choices and increase their knowledge of Christian things.
- Leading them one-step-at-a-time in the direction of Christian commitment.

How to minister with the media:

- 1. Listen and read.** You are not going to make much impression on a station manager if you have never listened to his radio station. Listening and reading will give you ideas as to how to approach a station or newspaper.
- 2. Know Your Audience.** Have a picture in mind of your audience and work with their strengths and limitations in mind. (Acts 17:16-34. 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

Ways to utilize Local Media.

- 1. Advertising.** Current legislation permits religious advertising on radio, TV and newspapers.
- 2. Following up leads.** Take opportunities when the media presents them.
- 3. Letting the media know about events.** Tell the media when something important is happening.
- 4. Letting the media know of interesting stories with a local slant.** If your church can give a local slant to a national or international story, the media will be interested.
- 5. Local heroes.** The media are often interested in human interest stories..
- 6. Thought for today.** Many stations have a spot of one form or another. Listen to the station for format and style before approaching them.