

## A Different Disney

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Our VCR cabinet is stocked with Disney movies; we have a Disney mug collection; our children wear Disney clothing; I have friends who have worked for Disney; and I have enjoyed numerous visits to the Magic Kingdom. I confess to all the above knowing that I will be labeled a hypocrite in what I am about to write.

But the Disney image that has captured so many of the hearts and imaginations of Americans from the days of their youth has been tarnished. While the name “Disney” may still suggest a Snow White aura of clean family fun, a more sinister and decadent agenda lurks beneath the surface. Perhaps it is time for each of us to reevaluate our conception of this company and our unquestioned loyalty to it.

First, the extent of Disney’s reach into your life may surprise you. The following are Disney subsidiaries: ABC network, A&E cable network, ESPN, Buena Vista Pictures, Hollywood Pictures, Miramax Films, Touchstone Pictures, and Childcraft, Inc. While Walt Disney Pictures is careful to release family friendly movies, its stepchild production companies issue a steady stream of immoral, anti-Christian trash.

Over half of the regular homosexual characters on network TV are on ABC programs. Disney extends company insurance benefits to unmarried homosexual partners of employees but not heterosexual partners. Homosexual celebrations are encouraged in the theme parks (“Gay Day” at WDW is June 7 with 80,000 expected to attend – just in case you have a trip to Orlando planned).

“Well, Jim,” some might ask, “just what do you want us to do with all our Disney movies – burn them?!” “Are you saying it is a sin to shop at the *Disney Store*?” “No” to both of the above. I recognize that this issue involves judgment and that consumers are not responsible for the diverse activities of the companies they patronize. My concern is that we are not blindsided by dangerous wolves disguised in Mickey Mouse ears.

Consider the choice of Oprah Winfrey as the therapist in *Ellen*’s “coming out” episode. Dava Savel, one of the executive producers of *Ellen* said, “I suggested Oprah ... She’s so well liked by the American people, it was perfect to have someone like her who connects with Middle America, where if Oprah said it was OK, then it was OK” (AFA Journal, 5/97, p. 23).

Michael Boatman, who plays a homosexual on ABC’s *Spin City*, said “The best way to slide these controversial issues under America’s doorstep, into their living rooms, is to have them start laughing first. Suddenly they find themselves, if not accepting new ideas, certainly more willing to discuss them” (ibid).

Just when do we draw the line and say, “I will not support the wickedness of XYZ Company with my consumer dollars”? I don’t know. It’s a judgment call. But let’s not be lulled into a false sense of trust by an outdated reputation. And let us not lose sight of our goal: “*children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world*” (Ph 2:15).