

## The Television

By Jonny White

**Characters:** TV Salesman  
Customer 1  
Customer 2

**Theme:** Exodus 20:3 And God spoke all these words: ... "You shall have no other gods before me." (NIV)

*[TV Salesman and Customer 1 are on stage initially, standing in front of a large TV (or cardboard box representation of a TV)]*

**TV Salesman** Welcome to television, the only true source of happiness known to man.

**Customer 1** Tell me about it, I want to know more. I know very little about television.

**TV Salesman** Well we have many different types of television, but you need to decide what suits you best.

**Customer 1** What do I need to do?

**TV Salesman** Firstly you need to accept that television will change your life.

**Customer 1** In what way?

**TV Salesman** It's not something that you do now and again. It takes commitment. You'll need to spend quality time with it.

**Customer 1** That's quite a commitment. I spend a lot of time with my family, or reading.

**TV Salesman** Reading! Well, let me assure you, that with a television, you won't need to read.

**Customer 1** But I like reading.

**TV Salesman** You won't have time for reading once you have a television. Apart from programme guides of course.

**Customer 1** What are they?

**TV Salesman** They are what will shape your life from now on. They direct your life, and tell you what's important. What you need to see.

**Customer 1** How much time do I need to spend with the television.

**TV Salesman** There's no hard and fast rules, but most people seem to spend a couple of hours a day with it. Some people spend longer, but not many spend less.

**Customer 1** But what can I expect from my television, assuming I decide to get it?

**TV Salesman** You'll get enjoyment and excitement. There will be times when you laugh, times when you cry. Times when you won't feel like television, but you'll have it anyway. Once you've got it, you'll wonder how you ever did without it.

**Customer 1** But where should I put it. Should I hide it away?

**TV Salesman** Certainly not! The very thought of it. Once you have television, you'll want everyone to know you've got it. You need to put in your main living room, so you can see it at all times.

**Customer 1** I don't think I've got room for it there.

**TV Salesman** Television will be central in your life, so you'll need to arrange your room so the television is the focal point.

**Customer 1** But it's such an ugly looking thing.

**TV Salesman** You won't be interested in what it looks like, only what it does for you.  
[Enter Customer 2]

- Customer 2** I couldn't help overhearing. I got a television last year, and it's great.
- Customer 1** In what way?
- Customer 2** Well, before television, my wife and I used to hardly ever see each other, but now we spend hours together in front of the television.
- Customer 1** So do you talk to each other?
- Customer 2** [Outraged] Of course! What do you take me for. We always discuss what we want to watch.
- TV Salesman** That's the great thing about television. It keeps families together.
- Customer 1** But I'm not sure. As a family, we do lots of things together, like going to the zoo, or for walks.
- TV Salesman** With television, you need never go to another zoo. All the wildlife you'll ever need will be brought directly to you in your front room. All the scenery, all the knowledge.
- Customer 2** I agree. There's nothing more fulfilling than watching a good documentary.
- TV Salesman** Or a good soap.
- Customer 1** Soap? What's that?
- Customer 2** They're programmes where you get to know all the characters like old friends.
- Customer 1** But I've got lots of friends.
- TV Salesman** Maybe you have, but the great thing about soap friends is that you can get involved with them, share their loves and their fears, happy times and sad times, but you don't have to help them with their problems.
- Customer 2** I watch lots of soaps, it's so much like real life. I've got television in every room so I don't have to miss a thing.
- TV Salesman** Love it or hate it, you really can't do without it.
- Customer 1** I'm not sure I've got the time.
- TV Salesman** Believe me, you'll find you do have the time.
- Customer 2** I used to have to listen to what my wife had done during the day at dinner time, but now we have television, we eat as we watch.
- Customer 1** So you don't talk to your wife then?
- Customer 2** Look, I told you, we always discuss what programme we're going to watch next. I just don't have to listen to her moaning about her boss.
- Customer 1** Would you say television was important then?
- Customer 2** Important. I couldn't live without it.
- Customer 1** But your wife's opinions aren't important.
- Customer 2** I didn't say that. Anyway, I'd love to stay and chat but I've got to get back. The satellite company is coming to install satellite TV, so I can watch all those golden oldies that I missed the first time round. I only came in for some batteries for my remote.
- TV Salesman** Don't forget to come back to us when you need a better television.
- Customer 2** I won't. [Exits]
- TV Salesman** Now, then, which television would you like?
- Customer 1** I don't think I'm really ready for television at the moment. Maybe I'll get one when I'm older.
- TV Salesman** But you don't know what you're missing.
- Customer 1** Maybe not, but from what I've heard, I don't think it's really for me.
- TV Salesman** Everyone will think you're odd if you don't have one.
- Customer 1** Surely it's a free choice?
- TV Salesman** Yes, but you wouldn't want to be left out, would you?
- Customer 1** [Hesitantly] Well, I suppose not.

**TV Salesman** Look, let me give you a TV guide for you to look at. There's lots in there that would interest you. Have a look at it.

**Customer 1** I don't know really.

**TV Salesman** Just take it and have a look. You can come back tomorrow and get your television when you've seen how much you're missing.

**Customer 1** Well, okay. [Starts to leave]

**TV Salesman** In the meantime, I'll put a reserved notice on this television. It'll be here waiting for you.

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