

Column – God and radio

Ever since I was a little boy, I have been fascinated by radios . . . sometimes to my family's chagrin. Once I brought a molded Bakelite set back from my grandmother's house, fiddled with the tubes, plugged it in and threw the multi-breaker which operated the kitchen range. What followed was that my mother had to grill the steak planned for that evening's supper in an iron skillet over coals in the fireplace. The steak, by the way, was excellent!

Much earlier, I remember being put in my crib at night. Near the bed was a console radio that had been in the front room prior to the family getting a television. I remember – or at least in retrospect I think I remember – the radio exuding a warmth and presence. A green light on the front glowed softly as did the tubes in the back. The music kept me company as I went to sleep.

I still like radios and have an assortment of vintage ones. The oldest in my collection is a 1937 RCA floor model. It has been restored several times and continues to play. My most exalted I picked up

at an antique shop in Blairsville over a decade ago. It is a 1947 Magnavox Belvedere. An advertisement in a magazine of that era lists it costing \$430, more than many people in those post-war years made in a month. I prize both as I do several others in my collection.

The positive thing about the dramas that played over these radios was that they enhanced your mental creativity. Without a screen before your eyes, you had to create your own stage and develop your own image of the characters. Surely something has been lost in our image-saturated world today.

More than that, radio brought the world into your living room. Picture a farm family in the 1940s sitting around their set listening to the war news. Faraway places were brought near. As Edward R. Morrow described an enemy air attack on London, sirens could be heard going off and bombs exploding. More than that, the voices of such world leaders as President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill became as familiar as those of your barber or butcher.

It seems to me a comparison could be drawn, though undoubtedly an incomplete one, between what happened with the advent of radio and the coming of Jesus. The unseen Maker and Ruler of all things was brought nigh and made visible at the incarnation.

In the days of Moses, the God of the Hebrews was an awesome presence. Cloud and fire both revealed and concealed that presence. Remember on the way to the Promised Land the children of Israel were led by a cloud by day and a ball of fire by night. Likewise, when Moses went up Mt. Sinai to receive the tables of the Law, the people down below saw smoke and fire and heard thunder.

In the Tabernacle and later in the Temple in Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies, the innermost part of these structures, was the place of presence, but only the priest, once a year on the Day of Atonement, could enter.

But all that changed with the coming of Jesus. Just as the President of the United States was brought into the living room of Americans

everywhere on radio, so has the invisible God been made known to us in Jesus Christ.

More than that, if we are united to Christ by faith and baptism, this God remains with us by the power of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity. May we open our ears and hearts to Him and daily seek to serve Him in all we think and say and do.

ALMIGHTY God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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