

RELIGION AND TELEVISION INSTRUMENT  
ANNOTATIONS  
Religion and Television Study  
Cultural Indicators Project, Annenberg School

Item 10: PRAYER

If it is not obvious to you when prayer is taking place, follow the following rule--to be counted as a prayer, activity must satisfy any two of the following conditions:

1. The person must say "let us pray" or similar words
2. The person must seem to be addressing God or Jesus directly
3. The person must kneel and/or close their eyes
4. The word "amen" must be said

Make an exception to this rule for Catholic Mass, where prayers are not as obvious and more ritualized. In that one case, count only the "amens".

Items 64 and 65 Spiritual illness and sense of sinfulness

These items refer to different ideas and will usually be fairly clear to you. Spiritual illness is any feeling described as a defect in spiritual matters, such as a person doubting God, or their relationship to God, or doubting their faith. A sense of sinfulness relates more to a person's moral life on a day-to-day basis, and will usually be clued by phrases such as "...I was a miserable sinner..." etc.

Item 67: Materialism

For this item, see glossary for definition. Note that it refers not to a moral or social philosophy, but to a type of sin or behavior which places belongings above people or spiritual values.

Items 90 thru 98: Bible References

These should be fairly straightforward. Code the phrase "...the Word of God..." "...or God's Word..." only when it is obvious that the book itself is the subject of the sentence, as in "...I read to you from the Word of God..." Refer to the Bible list in order to identify whether a specific passage is Old or New Testament.

References to Jesus, his activities, parables, and sayings are always New Testament. References to Paul, Paul's letters, or the "Letters of the Apostle" are always New Testament. Other common New Testament

figures are: Simon Peter, Peter, James, John, Luke, Matthew, Mary, Mary Magdalene, Joseph (Jesus' father) Stephen, Paul (also called Saul of Tarsus or just Saul), the Good Samaritan, the woman taken in adultery, the woman with the issue of blood, Martha, the woman at the well. Other references which are New Testament include: the fig tree, the feeding of the five thousand, the beatitudes ("...blessed are the \_\_\_", the Damascus Road, any story called "the parable of...")

Old Testament figures include: Abraham, Jonah, Moses, Israel, Ishmael, Solomon, King Saul, Joseph, Benjamin, King David, Daniel, Lot, Lot's wife, Rebecca, Esther, Miriam, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Ezra, any reference to "...the Prophet \_\_\_\_\_" or "...the Prophets..." or to any prophecy except that explicitly associated with the end of time (which could also be from Revelation which is NT, just listen closely) or that associated with prophecies of Jesus' birth, etc., which could be from the NT (again, just listen very carefully.)

All Christians of course believe that the Bible is very important. The essential question addressed by items 91 and 92 is how it is used and referred to by the program. Item 91 is satisfied if, besides citations of the Bible and allusions to it, specific reference is made to how it is somehow a plan for life, and that it can answer all basic problems of life if people will just follow it. Item 92 is satisfied if mention is made of specific prophecies of the Bible which are literally true. This will most often occur in discussions of eschatology, where it is held by some that prophecies of tribulation, etc., are true and are literally coming to pass every day.

#### Item 101: The Second Coming

All Christians believe in the second coming of Christ. The traditional attitude toward it has been that it may be somehow allegorical or metaphorical, and not necessarily a real event. Differences appear over whether beyond the allegorical meaning, people expect the second coming to be a "real" event which will actually occur in human history. You can depend on those who feel this way to be fairly explicit about it. They will say "...I know Jesus will come again and walk on the earth..." or "...I expect to see Jesus when he comes again..." A third school of thought agrees that Jesus will come again, but goes farther, suggesting that this actual event is imminent. They will give you a clue by being fairly explicit about a time, such as "...I expect to see Jesus before I die..." or "...within a generation Jesus will come again...we are in the final generation..." Some faith groups also set specific dates.

## Item 102: State of Israel

Make sure that the program is talking about the actual, political entity of Israel as it currently exists. There will be much talk of Israel as an ancient political entity and much talk of Israel as a metaphor for all of God's chosen people (including Christians) so be certain before you code this item.

## Item 103: Funds

For all of the funds questions, you will need to make a judgement about whether funds are implied by what is said, in that often the word "support" or some other euphemism will be used. Viewers are often asked to "support" when what is meant is prayer, etc., but there are other times (which should be obvious) when the support is actually intended to mean money. It should be clear, but be alert on this one.

## Item 133: References to Denominations and Religious Organizations

On this item, be certain that you are clear that such organizations or institutions are being referred to. Some organizations which are likely to be mentioned are: The National Council of Churches, and the World Council of Churches. Also include the special case of "ecumenical" organizations, which are always religious organizations. Some denominations you are likely to encounter include: The Southern Baptist Convention, the Reformed Church in America, The Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, (including the United Presbyterian Church), the Disciples of Christ (also called the Christian Church--be careful that it is the denomination being referred to) the Episcopal Church, and the Roman Catholic Church. You do not have to be specific about which church or organization is mentioned, only that one is.

## Items 173 thru 180: Miscellaneous Theological Issues

Think of these things as issues. They are ideological controversies within Christianity. Therefore, one supports or opposes the issue of "Biblical Inerrancy" without prejudice to his/her own feelings about or use of the Bible. In order to be coded here, references to these issues must be fairly unambiguous. These terms are defined in the glossary.

## Item 181: Perception of viewers

This item asks for some judgment on your part regarding the overall sense of the program. Look for clues such as the preponderance of time devoted to discussing the sins of the world as opposed to the sins of those in the audience, etc.

## Item 182: Purpose of Program

Depend here on statements actually made by the host or others about what the program is actually intended to do. What outcome of the program is claimed? Do not infer this from the activities depicted. For instance do not code a "1" for a program which spends its time saving souls, unless someone says something like "...this program saves thousands of souls...."

## Item 185: The Philosophy of the Program

Again, this item asks you to make a judgment given the preponderance of the evidence. Do not resort to counting the mentions of one thing or another, or the time spent on a given topic as opposed to another. This code should be selected based on an overall impression of the program.

## Item 186: Personal vs. Public Theology

This question asks whether the overall direction of the program stresses "self-centeredness" (in a neutral sense--not "selfish") or "other-directedness". Just because a program talks about other people's salvation does not make it "other directed" if the intent is to illustrate to the viewer as an individual how good his/her own salvation could be. Just because the importance of personal salvation is mentioned does not make a program "personal" directed if the program stresses that the real work of the Christian should be in saving or helping others.