



CASE REPORT

1. Complaint reference number	111/06
2. Advertiser	Bible Society in Australia (Jesus - All about life)
3. Product	Other
4. Type of advertisement	TV
5. Nature of complaint	Discrimination or vilification Religion – section 2.1
6. Date of determination	Tuesday, 11 April 2006
7. DETERMINATION	Dismissed

DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVERTISEMENT

This is a series of television advertisements in the “Jesus. All About Life” campaign, featuring various people relating their thoughts on life and the future.

Parents are heard considering the values they would like to instil in their children, and in thinking about the spiritual side of life realised that many of their own values agreed with what Jesus taught and that a lot of it made sense. Teenagers are relating what life means to them and commenting “a lot of what Jesus said makes sense, and “I’m not into religion, but a lot of what Jesus taught is pretty amazing”. Older people who consider their lives a success relate how the definition of success is changing and as one gets older “it’s less about the material and more about the spiritual”; “I’m not religious but I know there must be something more to life”; “Some of the best wisdom I ever heard was in Sunday School. Love your neighbour. Care for others. All that stuff that Jesus said.”

Details are given on how to receive an information pack.

THE COMPLAINT

Comments which the complainant/s made regarding this advertisement included the following:

Religion is a private family decision and I am offended to see the TV channel trying to brainwash our children into believing in Jesus without our consent.

The entire concept of Jesus is religious ideology...

The fact that they can say it’s not about religion but be advertising one is ridiculous.

THE ADVERTISER’S RESPONSE

Comments which the advertiser made in response to the complaint/s regarding this advertisement included the following:

The television commercials present a number of people’s perspectives on “what Jesus said” and invites people watching to ask for a free information booklet.

By no measure could these commercials be accused of “trying to brainwash our children”. They simply invite people to find out more”. Rather than “brainwashing” these commercials invite people to think about the claims of Jesus... They may well choose to reject them, but they could not be classified as “brainwashing”.

THE DETERMINATION

The Advertising Standards Board (“Board”) considered whether this advertisement breaches section

2 of the Advertiser Code of Ethics (the “Code”).

The Board was of the view that, although the advertisement alluded to Christian religion providing good beliefs and values, the material depicted did not discriminate against people or a section of the community on account of their religion (or lack thereof). The Board also considered that the advertisement did not assert that Christian values were the only values that shaped and developed morals.

The Board determined that the material depicted did not breach the provisions of the Code relating to the portrayal of people (religion).

Further finding that the advertisement did not breach the Code on any other grounds, the Board dismissed the complaint.