

## **DANGERS OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **I. Social media promotes individualism.**

- A. One of the seemingly neat things about social media is that it allows us to create our own little world, but this is also very dangerous.
  - 1. It allows us to be completely self-absorbed.
  - 2. We tailor our social media experiences for what we like and desire the most.
- B. Think about your smart phone if you have one.
  - 1. Everything on it revolves around the owner.
  - 2. It is completely dedicated to the owner's preferences.
  - 3. It only has the apps on it we want.
  - 4. If we ever get tired of something, we simply delete that app and go find another to take its place.
- C. Think about the things we post on social media.
  - 1. They are generally things that make us look good.
  - 2. We post things and look to see how many like it or retweet it.
  - 3. I have read comments by people who are upset that no one has liked what they posted to Facebook.
  - 4. We get our online egos boosted when people hit the like button and our online pride hurt when they don't.
- D. Everything on our phones and pages revolves around us.
- E. Think about how that has affected Christianity.
  - 1. The faith of many Americans and many Christians as well has become very individualistic.
  - 2. Many have removed themselves from what is called "organized religion" because they have their own beliefs about how worship should be done that ultimately just please them.
  - 3. If they do continue to worship congregationally, the decision about where is often based on the idea of "what does congregation A offer me?"
  - 4. Everything about the congregation has to please me or I will find some other place that does.
- F. The fact is, we need to wake up and grow up.
  - 1. Our online world may revolve around us, but the real world does not.
  - 2. The real world revolves around the Lord who has been given all authority (Matthew 28:18).
- G. Remembers Romans 14:7-8?
  - 1. We have an influence.
  - 2. We are to live for the Lord not for self.
- H. Christianity and a focus on self are totally incompatible.
  - 1. Social media is feeding our egos and making us more self-absorbed than ever before.

2. This is not Christianity.
- I. We are to be humble, serving, obedient and selfless.
- II. **Social media is ruining the concept of friendship.**
  - A. If I don't like what you have to say about me I will just unfriend you.
    1. That is the thought process of many people when it comes to social media.
    2. You can block someone so you don't have to see or hear from them any more.
  - B. There is a time when it is appropriate.
    1. I've known people to be harassed or have someone constantly question or attack them and they unfriended them.
    2. I've unfriended people because of things they put on their facebook page that I don't want to read or see or my kids read or see.
    3. So there are times when it is appropriate.
  - C. However, when someone may challenge us or disagree with us, many simply unfriend them even if there is nothing mean spirited done.
    1. I had someone do this to me when I made a comment about a fellow Christian who posted pictures of a whiskey tasting tour while in Ireland.
    2. After our exchange, I noticed I no longer was receiving updates from this person.
    3. I'd been unfriended.
  - D. This is what makes the real world, and especially the church, so much more difficult.
    1. We are in a period where all we have to do is hit a button to keep people from communicating with us online, but there isn't one of those in real life.
    2. This could be why many have unfriended themselves from the Lord's church.
    3. They got upset at someone and they removed the church from their lives.
  - E. True Christianity can only be lived out in the context of the church and the gospel's concept of family.
    1. We are brothers and sisters in Christ with God as our Father.
    2. We are also human and have imperfections and oddities about ourselves.
  - F. We can't simply stop talking to our spiritual family and be right with one another and God.
    1. The New Testament gives us specific details about how to deal with sin in our brethren (Matthew 5:23-24; Matthew 18:15-20).
    2. It also gives us insight on how we are to treat one another (Ephesians 4:1-3).
    3. No where in those passages is there an unfriend or block button.
  - G. Social media makes it very easy to only have friends who like us, think like

us and talk like us or like everything we post.

1. The real world isn't like that and it wouldn't be good if it was.
  2. We need to be confronted about sin.
  3. We need to be disagreed with if we are wrong.
  4. We need to be challenged to be and do better.
- H. We need to learn to forgive and reconcile with people.
- I. We need to learn to be tolerant of those with whom we have disagreements over matters of opinion.
- J. We need to learn how to be patient with others.
- K. Proverbs 27:6 needs to be remembered by all.
- L. Social media doesn't teach that and, in fact, it is robbing us of those skills.

### III. **Social media allows for illicit relationships to bloom.**

- A. I have a friend who's wife left him over a year ago.
1. She left him for a relationship with another man.
  2. This friend told me that he has no doubt that Facebook caused his divorce.
  3. I am sure there are other factors involved, but her relationship started with a friend request on Facebook and grew from there.
- B. In a recent survey done by the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers indicates that 2/3's of lawyers said Facebook was the "primary source" of evidence in divorce proceedings.
- C. Another report by Pew Research showed that one in five adults use Facebook for flirting.
- D. It generally starts with someone looking up a high school sweetheart just to see what they are now doing.
1. That leads to a friend request, which leads to messaging one another "just to catch up."
  2. Sometimes it is innocent, but oftentimes, it becomes adulterous.
- E. The new catch phrase is "emotional affair."
1. Someone gets caught up in their emotions.
  2. It then leads to a physical affair.
- F. We need to be protecting our marriages, not finding ways out of them.
- G. If your spouse refuses to let you look at his or her page, there is a problem.
1. If you go to look and there are passwords keeping you from looking, there could be a problem.
  2. If there is the least bit of uneasiness about a request from an individual, that is one of those times when unfriending is appropriate.
- H. Facebook is not the cause or only source of potential illicit affairs.
1. Texting, email and other chat sites are just as ripe with such potential.
  2. We must do all we can to protect our marriages and the trust that is present in them.

- I. As Ephesians 5:23 and following reveals, we are to treat our wives, husbands, as the Lord treats the church.
- J. Wives, you are to treat your husbands as the church treats Christ.
- K. We can't allow the lure of social media to come between us and our spouses.

**IV. Social media feeds our entertainment-driven culture.**

- A. Have you noticed that your attention span is getting shorter?
- B. Many times it is because our appetite for entertainment is becoming greater.
- C. Think about what you can do on your smart phone or tablet that is so easy to carry around with you.
  - 1. You can watch movies or TV programs.
  - 2. You can play games.
  - 3. You can see who has liked your last photo.
  - 4. You can find the newest songs.
  - 5. All of that is right there at your fingertips.
- D. Because of that, many become bored with singing hymns, reading the Bible, having spiritual discussions or all the other things that makes Christianity, Christianity.
- E. I heard something interesting at the preachers workshop I went to in April.
  - 1. There is a preacher who does what is called live tweeting.
  - 2. He live tweets main points in his sermon as he is preaching.
  - 3. The reason for that is, there were several in the congregation where he preaches who were looking at twitter while he was preaching.
  - 4. Therefore, he programmed these tweets to go out at specific times while he was preaching.
  - 5. I bet there are some in this room right now who have their smart phones out and looking at them while I'm preaching.
- F. We have a choice to make as congregations:
  - 1. Are we going to feed the entertainment drive and give up the worship that we know in order to appeal to many?
  - 2. Or, we can teach people ways to slide away from the smart phones and entertainment.
- G. We must get back to being a people who love God and His word and ways.
- H. Quite possibly, that will mean we must cut ourselves off from some of the things we have come to rely on so much.
- I. We need to ask ourselves, do I want to know what my friend is wearing today more than I want to go to heaven?

Some of the material in this sermon came from an article by Wes McAdams.