

# THE CHRISTIAN AND SOCIAL MEDIA (1)

## Introduction

- 1) **Ecclesiastes 1:4** – “One generation passes away, and another generation comes”
- 2) With the passing of time and generations, there are many changes that happen around us, some good and some bad (*see recent generational divisions on back*)
  - a) God, who does not change (Jas. 1:17; Heb. 13:8), will see us through these “changes” with the divine guidance provided through His word (Deut. 31:8; Prov. 3:5-6; Psa. 32:8)
- 3) Changes in electronics and the internet have drastically changed the world we live in today, just like the printing press, telegraph, telephone, radio, television, computers did in the centuries leading up to our present day
- 4) Social media is a phenomenon that is here to stay as a part of our lives – Christians need to understand it, knowing the advantages it gives and the dangers it presents

## I) **What is the Internet and Social Media?**

- A) The **Internet** was developed to make possible world-wide broadcasting, information dissemination, collaboration, and interaction between individuals and electronic devices
  - 1) A constant flowing “stream of information” that you can access at any time – be cautious!
  - 2) One can visit websites with information, send texts and email, read blogs and listen to podcasts, download apps that give you access to a product (watch videos, play games, get current information and news, order products, read books, make documents, etc.)
- B) **Social Media** is the creation of social interaction through electronic means, primarily using the internet, for communication with friends, family, acquaintances, and more (*see back*)
  - 1) Popular social and media sharing networks – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, Snapchat, WhatsApp (*see back*)
- C) **“The Global State of Digital 2022”** ([www.hootsuite.com/resources/digital-trends](http://www.hootsuite.com/resources/digital-trends))
  - 1) Use of global social media users rose 10.1% over last year to 4.62 billion users around the world (424 million new users; more people will likely join this year)
  - 2) Average person spends about 2.5 hours a day on social media (17.5 hours a week)
    - a) Compare to only 1-3 hours a week in Bible class and worship
    - b) Compare to just one hour of Bible reading and prayer each day
  - 3) 7.5 is the average number of social media platforms someone uses in a month
- D) The Internet and social media are neutral in themselves, but how they are used and what we do with them is what matters (like how we use our money)
  - 1) Can encourage friendship, interpersonal connections, education, assistance, and aid
  - 2) But there are negative effects – anxiety, addiction, bad behavior, bullying, creating negative self-esteem and image issues, dissemination of evil and deceptive information
  - 3) Many social media platforms become avenues for worldly sinful influences on young people
  - 4) Good can be accomplished, but evil is ever present – are we careful and watchful?

## II) **Who and What is the Christian to Be in this Age of Social Media?** (the same as in any age!)

- A) Be holy in all conduct (1 Pet. 1:14-17; 2:9-12)
- B) Deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and live soberly, righteously, and godly (Titus 2:11-12)
- C) Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33)
- D) Able and willing to test all things, hold fast what is good, abstain from evil (1 Thess. 5:21-22)
- E) Set mind on virtuous and godly things, while hating evil (Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:2; Rom. 12:9)

## Conclusion

Be aware of the blessings and dangers of social media today and be ready to apply God’s truth

Next lesson: *Applying godly principles to our use of the internet and social media*

## ***Additional information:***

### ***Recent generational divisions by birth years:***

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1) Lost Generation (1890-1910)        | 5) Generation X (1965-1980)             |
| 2) Greatest Generation (1911-1927)    | 6) Generation Y/Millennials (1981-1995) |
| 3) Silent Generation (1928-1945)      | 7) Generation Z (1996-2010)             |
| 4) Baby Boomer Generation (1946-1964) | 8) Generation Alpha (2011-2025)         |

### ***Types of social media platforms:***

- 1) **Social networks** (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) – used by individuals and businesses to interact online and share data and thoughts in developing productive relationships
- 2) **Media sharing networks** (Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube) – used to find and share photographs, live video, video and other kinds of media on the web
- 3) **Discussion forums** (Reddit, Quora, Digg) – used for finding, sharing, and discussing different kinds of information, opinions, and news
- 4) **Bookmarking and content curation networks** (Pinterest, Flipboard) – used to find out, share, discuss, and save a variety of latest content and media that are trending
- 5) **Consumer review networks** (Yelp, Zomato, TripAdvisor) – used to find out, share, and review different information about a variety of products, services, or brands
- 6) **Blogging and publishing networks** (WordPress, Tumblr, Medium) – used for publishing, discovering, and commenting on articles, social media blogs, and other content on the web
- 7) **Social shopping networks** (Polyvore, Etsy, Fancy) – used to find the latest trends and shopping tips to follow different brands, share interesting things, and make a purchase
- 8) **Interest-based networks** (Goodreads, Houzz, Last.fm) – used for connecting with other people who have the same sorts of hobbies or interests
- 9) **Sharing economy networks** (Airbnb, Uber, TaskRabbit) – used to advertise, buy, find, sell, share, and work with a variety of products and services
- 10) **Anonymous social networks** (Whisper, After School, Ask.fm) – used generally for venting, gossiping, and snooping types of activities

### ***Most popular social and media sharing networks:***



**Facebook** – allows users to connect with friends, family, co-workers, and others, including groups of people who share similar interests who can share pictures, videos, articles and opinions



**Twitter** – designed to connect people and allow people to share their thoughts with a big audience



**Instagram** – allows users to edit and upload photos and short videos through a mobile app



**TikTok** – used to create and share short videos; one of the fastest growing entertainment platforms



**Snapchat** – used to share short, temporary pictures and videos while adding filters or other effects



**WhatsApp** – used to exchange text messages, videos, images, locations, and other media files free



**YouTube** – used for watching videos and interacting with creators through comments and replies



**LinkedIn** – professional networking site to help with business connections, sharing experiences and resumes, and finding jobs