

Taming The Technology Beast

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The blessings of a digital world

- Wealth of information
- Ease of use and aide
- Ways to work more effectively
- Ability to maintain connections
- New ways of work, education, effective communication

The dangers

- A felt need to always be connected
- Anxiety/fear over missing out
- Creating and re-creating ourselves
- Losing who we are to an online persona
- False sense of personal privacy/safety
- Addictive quality: loss of time, sleep, interests
- Risk of victimization

What are we portraying?



Reclaiming conversation

“I saw that computers offered the illusion of companionship without the demands of friendship and then, as the programs got really good, the illusion of friendship without the demands of intimacy.... As middle schoolers began to spend more time texting, they lost practice in face-to-face talk. That means lost practice in the empathic arts—learning to make eye contact, to listen, to attend to others. Conversation is on the path toward the experience of intimacy, community, and communion. Reclaiming communication is a step towards reclaiming our most fundamental human values.”

-Sherry Turkle

Take action

- Value time as a family. It is quality and quantity.
- Commit to doing less. We are an overscheduled people
- Reserve Sundays, or any day as a day of rest
- Foster conversation: table talks, reading, dinner games, time in the car
- Limit media. Technology is not problematic, but how it is used is problematic.
- Go on “dates” with your children. Spend time one on one.
- Ask your kids questions.... then simply listen.
- Be it and model it in your adult relationships. A younger generation is watching.

What research reflects

1. Sleep is disrupted.
2. Bullying, slander, and blackmail happens at breakneck speeds.
3. We are becoming highly individualistic
4. Emotional states and behaviors are altered. Teen depression and suicide have skyrocketed since 2011. It is considered a mental health crisis (The Atlantic, “Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?”)
5. The nature of social interactions is corrupted—less satisfied, more distant, less connected.
6. Physical changes: poor posture, neck problems, headaches, etc

Public and permanent

- We must realize that everything we put online is both public and permanent.
- There is no such thing as “privacy” or “deleted” in the online realm.
- Parental controls have holes. Controls can complement, but not replace, teaching good practices.

- Talk to family in an effort to prevent an issue.
- Help the younger generation to be responsible digital citizens.
- Be informed about appropriate and responsible use of digital tools and technologies.
- Communicate a preventative mindset.

What Scripture reflects

1. This is a stewardship issue: What do we do with our time, money, possessions, and relationships?
2. This is a worship issue: What are our hearts drawn to?
3. This is a relationship issue: Would I rather live behind screens and have pseudo-relationships than have to deal with the messiness of real people with real struggles?
4. This is an identity issue: Where do I find comfort, security, meaning and value?

Resources

Digital Kids Initiative: www.digitalkidsinitiative.com

The Center for Parent and Youth Understanding: www.cpyu.org

Covenant Eyes: www.covenanteyes.com/parenting-the-internet-generation/

Internet Keep Safe Coalition: <http://www.ikeepsafe.org>

The Institute for Responsible Online & Cell Phone Communication (IROC2)

Public and Permanent by Richard Guerry

Circle by Disney

Bark App