

Lesson 3: How We Got Hooked on Social Media

Romans 12:1-11: I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

⁹ Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. ¹⁰ Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.

Primary Objectives:

1. **Finish Last Week: Develop a Framework for Engaging Entertainment Responsibly.**
2. **Explore Why Social Media Is So Powerful**
3. **Consider Entertainment Time and Trade-offs**

1. Develop a framework for engaging entertainment responsibly.

1.1. Summarize what the passages below taken together make imperative about how we consume entertainment.

Proverbs 4:23: Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22: But test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.

2 Corinthians 10:5: We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

Romans 12:2: Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Summary: _____

1.2. Form a question from each of the following passages that can be used to help make God-honoring entertainment choices.

1 Corinthians 10:31: So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Question: _____

Philippians 4:8: Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Question: _____

Genesis 3:6: So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate,

Psalms 101:3: I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me.

Question: _____

Ephesians 5:15-16: Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

Question: _____

1 Thessalonians 5:18: give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Ephesians 5:4: Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

Question: _____

2. Explore Why Social Media Is So Powerful

2.1. What are the most valuable things social media platforms provide to you?

2.2. Compare how Social Media platforms implement the following design elements differently to compete with one another?

1. Psychological Triggers:

Dopamine Rewards
Fear of Missing Out (FOMO)

3. Social Validation:

Approval & Comparison
Instant Gratification

2. Algorithmic Feeds:

Personalization
Endless Scroll

4. Gamification:

Rewards and Badges

2.3. Identify specific beliefs or values in the following passages that run counter to those social media platforms are designed to instill and reinforce.

1 Thessalonians 2:4: But just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.

See also John 5:44, Col 3:23-24, Matt 6:31-33

Beliefs & Values: _____

1 Peter 3:3-4: Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.

See also 1 Pet 5:5-6

Beliefs & Values: _____

1 Timothy 6:6-8: But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these, we will be content.

Beliefs & Values: _____

Psalm 37:7: Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!

See also Psalm 27:4, Col 3:1-2

Beliefs & Values: _____

3. Consider Entertainment Time and Trade-offs

3.1. Study the “Time in Life” diagram by Dino Ambrosi in his TEDx Talk, *The Battle for Your Time: Exposing the Costs of Social Media*. What grabs your attention most?

3.2. Calculate your social media ROI (Return on Investment).

Dino states in his talk that “Social media isn’t free because you pay for it with your time.”

How much is your time worth: \$ _____ per hour

How many hours weekly: X _____ # of hours

Cost:

What is the Return on Investment you get for your investment in social media?

3.3. Reflect on Ephesians 5:15-16. How do you determine what is a healthy percentage of “Free Time” directed at social media and entertainment?

Ephesians 5:15-16: Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

3.4. With Ephesians 2:10 in view, what are some potential “opportunity costs” for time invested in entertainment?

Ephesians 2:10: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Opportunity Costs: _____

Marshall Segal, *The Blissful and Trivial Life: How Entertainment Deprives a Soul*

If the way we’re using entertainment erodes our ability to reflect, reason, and savor truth, it erodes our ability to know and enjoy Jesus. “Blessed is the man . . . [whose] delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night” (Psalm 1:1–2). If we lose the ability to think, we lose the ability to meditate. And if we lose the ability to meditate, we lose our path to meaningful happiness. The life of the mind, and heart, is a pivotal battleground in the pursuit of real and abundant life.

What, if any, of your entertainment habits need to be curbed or redirected for the sake of your soul? What are ways you are seeking to cultivate the spiritual gift of your mind — slower Bible study or memorization, reading substantive books, meaningful conversation with friends, more time in unhurried reflection and meditation?

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-blissful-and-trivial-life>

Homework: Take time before God to reflect on the question: What of your entertainment habits need to be curbed or redirected for the sake of your soul and the sake of others?

Next Week: Movie Ratings & Our Moral Compass