



BE THE CHANGE: Your Influence thru Social Media

Week 5

Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. (Col. 3:16–17 NLT-SE)

- THE IMPACT OF THE “IPHONE” ON OUR DAILY LIVES

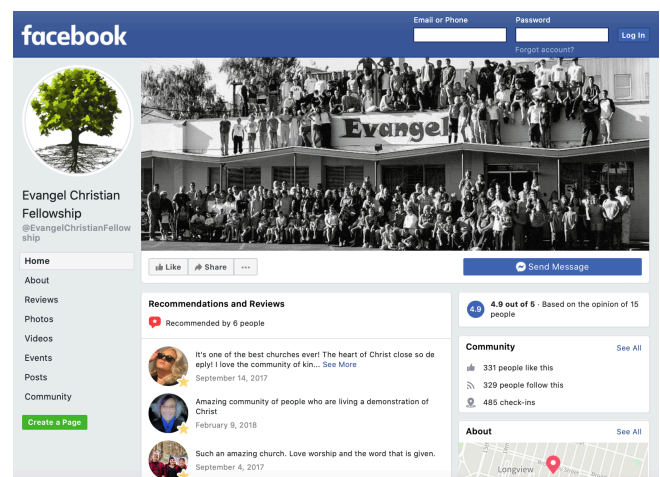
- **A ten-year cultural explosion that fits in the palm of your hand!**
 - **This is no passing fad...**The number of smartphone users worldwide today surpasses three billion and is forecast to further grow by several hundred million in the next few years. China, India, and the United States are the countries with the highest number of smartphone users. The leading smartphone vendors today are Samsung, Apple, and Huawei. Taken together the three technology companies account for about half of all smartphone shipments worldwide. Samsung lead the way with 72 million phones shipped in 2019, followed by Huawei with 59 million and Apple with 36 million phones shipped.
 - **Cross-cultural...**Let’s just put it this way. The United States, at 310 million, has only the 3rd highest mobile phone subscription numbers in the world (*China with 1.1 billion, India with 894 million, and Indonesia with 282 million subscribers*). The banking systems of most African nation’s, most considered Third World countries, conduct transactions almost exclusively on their mobile phones.
 - **Multi-generational...**According to the latest research, on average, a child gets his or her first smartphone at 10.3 years old. That same study shows that by age 12, a full 50 percent of children have social media accounts (primarily Facebook and Instagram). Is it any wonder that effectively raising kids today is a mystery to most parents? At the other end of the spectrum, a recent study from the Pew Research Center found that among seniors ages 65 and above, about 85% owned a cell phone. Of those seniors, 46% used a smartphone and 40% used a regular cell phone.
 - **A true “technological disruption”...**The first iPhone was released in June of 2007. While it wasn’t the first smartphone, it leapfrogged far beyond the competition, disrupted the industry and launched the mobile revolution. Few industries or societies have been left unchanged. Here are just a couple areas impacted:
 - The iPhone put the internet in everyone’s pocket
 - The iPhone transformed photography from a hobby to a part of everyday life
 - The iPhone App Store changed the way software was created and distributed
 - iPhone apps changed everything, even how people work
 - **So, what’s next?...** Smartphones have come a long way, isn’t it? Back in 1995, we were using phones with tiny screens and a snail-paced internet. After a series of cool and rapid technological evolutions, smartphone technology has witnessed an exponential rise and paved the path for feature-rich devices. But, what’s next in smartphone technology? The list is growing, including: Foldable phones, “waterfall screens, wide-angle selfies, improved batteries, 5G capabilities, and all things AR. All these glitzy improvements are expected in the new 2020 phones.

- PANEL DISCUSSION: LET'S START HERE, "WHAT INFLUENCES YOU?"

- **What feeds you?...** Where do you get your news? Entertainment? Education? To understand more about how to influence others, you can start by looking in the mirror and asking yourself, "What am I most influenced by?"
- **What stirs you?...** What type of Social Media posts bore you? Make you mad? Make you laugh? Stirs you to action? Cause you to re-evaluate your priorities?
- **What inspires you?...** What kinds of posts tend to move your attention *towards* as opposed to away from God? In what ways do SM posts inspire you to want to respond with an uplifting comment?

- PICK YOUR POISON: PROS AND CONS OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

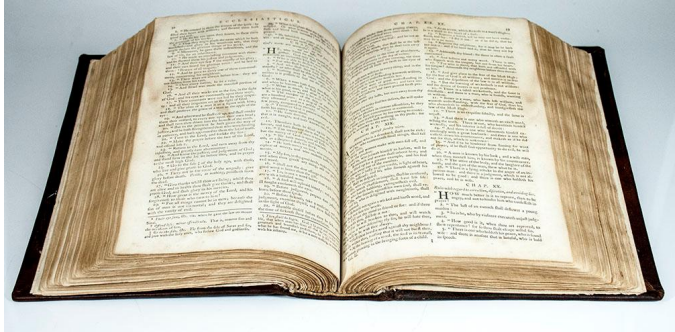
- **The Internet of all things...**Browsing the internet is great for shopping, gathering information and finding things that seem to be hidden in plain sight. Unfortunately, it's also easy to open the door to very destructive images and content that can quickly pollute the mind and heart of the most diligent believer.
- **Email...**One of the simplest and most easy to access ways to send small to moderates amount of information, documents and images to multiple addresses. Typically, video files are too large to send by email. Although, once someone has your email address, you can get inundated with junk mail, SPAM and digital infections (viruses).
- **Messaging...**Or, texting, works well for communicating brief messages, images, links and files. Most people have some kind of notification on to know when someone has sent them a text. This can be disruptive and annoying when you're trying to focus on doing something. Even with emojis, texting can be a difficult way to communicate anything that depends upon communicating feelings or emotions, especially for those who have the need to share their heart without warning.
- **Phone calls...**Here's the age-old standby. Yet, even making a simple phone call is not what it used to be. The downside is that phone calls are cumbersome and time-consuming.
- **FaceTime or Skype...**These are phone calls with video. If you are a grandparent with kids who live all over God's green earth, video chatting is a lifeline to your family. The technology behind these calls is getting better, but it is still highly dependent upon a solid WiFi connection. Again, take it from a FaceTime dependent grandparent, it's no replacement for face-to-face relationship!
- **Blogs and Vlogs...**Blogs are widely considered the "base" of any social media campaign. Blogs and Vlogs (video blogs) are you, telling the world who you are and what you think, in your own words. The downside is, people can take your words and do anything they want with them, often causing bloggers to be cautious and maybe a little less willing to take risks.
- **Instagram...**This very popular and visually pleasing SM platform is mostly about photos and comments about those photos. Many families use Instagram to stay connected within the scope of their family and close friends. It's easy to keep your photos private and only make them available to a personal short list of people.
- **Facebook...**This is the Grand-daddy (It was started in 2004) of social networking platforms. It has endured, evolved and continues to innovate. What that tells you is that FaceBook is an extremely popular way to connect large groups of people. It has become the Influencers playground, allowing you to create a personalized image of yourself for the world to see. The downside is the



difference between who you would like people to think you are and who you really are. Still a staple for Boomers and Gen X, but Millennials and Gen Z prefer other platforms.

- **Twitter...**When you say “Twitter,” most people think, “The President.” In a few short years, Donald J. Trump has made this SM platform a major form of communication of ideas. It’s quick. It’s efficient. (*Pres. Trump currently has 73.1 followers, that’s around 20% of the adults on Twitter!*) And it’s growing fast. If you want to know what someone is thinking, good or bad, Twitter is the place to go. Twitter even has real-time video streaming...Periscope.
- **Pinterest...**Are you creative? Do you love details? Pinterest is used mostly by women who enjoy sharing ideas, although men are joining more and more. It has an added benefit of hitting the “buy” button and picking up what you’re looking at, allowing this platform to move more into commerce and marketing. The downsides are lack of simplicity and men on the site. But, if you’re putting together a wedding, live here!
- **Snapchat...**Upside, attractive to teens. Downside, attractive to teens! Snapchat is quick, easy and different. You can post pic or vids and, once viewed, disappears! With Snapchat, you start with an image or video, to which users may decide to add content like captions, mentions of other users, or filters that make you look like a bunny.
- **YouTube...**Like Instagram and Snapchat, YouTube is a media sharing network. You go there to find music, photos, videos and live! videos. Each “view” on YouTube is categorized and a personal algorithm is created for you. The next time you visit the YouTube site you are welcomed by content that has been suggested for you based upon your viewing history.

- WHAT IS IT THAT GOD WANTS COMMUNICATED?

- **God wrote a book...**The undisputed, best-selling, most-effective social media platform of all time is The Holy Bible. The Bible is clearly the most influential book the world has ever known. Abraham Lincoln called it “the best gift God has given to man.” Patrick Henry said, “It is worth all other books which were ever printed.” Noted British statesman William Gladstone wrote that “an immeasurable distance separates it from all competitors” while the famous philosopher Immanuel Kant declared, “The Bible is the greatest benefit which the human race has ever experienced.”
 
 - ¹⁶ *All Scripture is **inspired by God** and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.* ¹⁷ *God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.* (2 Tim. 3:16–17 NLT-SE)
 - *Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And **the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement** as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled.* (Rom. 15:4 NLT-SE)
- **God has something to say...** One of the greatest deceptions of the Devil is trying to get us to believe that God has “gone dark,” that he is silent and has nothing he wants to communicate to his people other than what is revealed in the scriptures. How do we know he wants to speak to us? It’s all about the relationship he desires with us. What kind of relationship endures and grows without significant, ongoing communication?
 - *When the LORD finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, **written by the finger of God.*** (Ex. 31:18 NLT-SE)
 - ²⁵ *At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: “O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for **revealing them to the childlike.**”* ²⁶ *Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way!* (Matt. 11:25–26 NLT-SE)

- ¹¹ *Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning. ¹² I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by **direct revelation from Jesus Christ.** (Gal. 1:11–12 NLT-SE)*
- **God leads and guides his people...** Don't we want to be guided? To be taught God's ways? To know the path we are to take? To be shown the right way? We are a people hungry for guidance. We long for direction. We are like wanderers in the desert crying out to God, "Show me the way! Give me a sign!" As you are on your journey, remember this: God is a **"Territorial Spirit."** (Graham Cooke) He has always made it a point to take territory on behalf of his people. He wants to dwell with his people. He wants us to know that **"He's here!"**
 - *The LORD **directs the steps of the godly.** He delights in every detail of their lives. (Psa. 37:23 NLT-SE)*
 - *That this is God, our God forever and ever. **He will guide us forever.** (Psa. 48:14 ESV)*
 - *When you turn to the right or turn to the left, **you will hear his voice behind you to guide you,** saying, "This is the right path; follow it." (Is. 30:21 TPT)*
 - *When the Spirit of truth comes, **he will guide you into all truth.** He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. (John 16:13 NLT-SE)*
- **HERE ARE SOME "RULES FOR THE ROAD" WHEN IT COMES TO SOCIAL MEDIA ETIQUETTE**
 - **Image**
 - **It's just foolish to self-elevate...** Adam & Eve fell to the serpent's lies desiring to elevate themselves and be "like God," and the same serpent is quietly hissing in our ears today. Avoid the temptation to use social media as an avenue to make yourself look great.
 - ²³ *This is what the LORD says: "Don't let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. ²⁴ **But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me** and understand that I am the LORD who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that **I delight in these things.** (Jer. 9:23–24 NLT-SE)*
 - **Don't Humblebrag...** "I'm so humbled that my latest YouTube video went viral! #humbled #blessed" Translation: "Look at me! I'm amazing AND I'm humble!" Instead of humblebragging, just celebrate! "I got my dream job!" "Thankful for my new car!" It's OK to celebrate and people want to celebrate with you, but don't ruin that with a humblebrag.
 - **Stay away from the Spiritualbrag...** "Our budget has been tight lately but we're so thankful to have a loving family and a roof over our heads." Translation: "Look how spiritual we are because we are thankful even though we aren't rich!"
 - ⁵ *"When you pray, **don't be like the hypocrites** who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶ But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. (Matt. 6:5–6 NLT-SE)*
 - **Resist the temptation to brag about the fact that you're NOT on social media...** There seems to be this obligation for Christians to announce, "I'm been spending too much time on social media lately, and I'm going to take some time off to spend more time with God. If you need to contact me, you can contact me by email or text."
 - ¹⁷ *But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸ Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And **your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.** (Matt. 6:17–18 NLT-SE)*

- **Attitude**

- **Try not to be so negative...** Here's a fact. There's a lot more negative content on social media than positive. When Christians are more well known for what they are against than what they are for, we all lose. On your social media accounts, be sure to share truth, beauty, and goodness.

- *And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. **Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable.** Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.* (Phil. 4:8 NLT-SE)



- **Don't get caught in every outrage wave...** Every day the world is up in arms about something. We debate new laws, point fingers in the aftermath of tragedy and feel the need to defend or attack every presidential tweet. Christians would be better off representing Jesus with dignity and charity than having a meltdown over whatever the headlines were that day.
- **Remember...** Social media is like money, it's useful, even necessary, but it can also take you out! SM is not the problem, the condition of the heart that matters.

- **LET'S SIMPLIFY ALL THIS: HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN REPRESENT JESUS WELL AND BE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ONLINE**

- **Be honest, humble and full of grace**

- There is a broken thing inside me that really wants to gather a huge crowd because it makes me feel good about myself. There is also something inside me that truly wants people to get saved and pursue a deep, passionate relationship with Jesus. Both of these motivations exist within me!
- *¹⁵ I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. ¹⁶ But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. ¹⁸ And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. ¹⁹ **I want to do what is good, but I don't.** I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. ²⁰ But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹ I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. ²² I love God's law with all my heart. ²³ **But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind.** This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. ²⁴ Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?* (Rom. 7:15–24 NLT-SE)

- **Be kind, no matter what the cost**

- Kindness has converted more sinners than zeal, eloquence, or learning. ~ Frederick W. Faber
- *³² **Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.** ¹ Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. ² **Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ.** He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.* (Eph. 4:32–5:2 NLT-SE)

- **Love with a heart for redemption**

- There's going to come a tipping point when the entire world comes back and says, "**Dear God, I just need real relationships!**" Our hope is that, in the middle of this moment, as Christians who are so rooted in what real relationship is, that the world realizes this is exactly what they're aching for and **we'll be the experts at it.**
- The power of **redemptive love** takes the focus off the selfish mindset, which often motivates giving and receiving. One walking in redemptive love isn't consumed with what they receive in return when they choose to forgive someone. They view their willingness to release love as an offering or investment, leaving the return on their investment to God. God is the giver, not the other person. It's a love perspective that does what it does for a response from God, not people.
- *Then those who feared the LORD spoke with each other, and **the LORD listened to what they said.** In his presence, **a scroll of remembrance was written** to record the names of those who feared him and always thought about the honor of his name. (Mal. 3:16 NLT-SE)*

¹⁶ *Let the word of Christ live in you richly, flooding you with all wisdom. Apply the Scriptures as you teach and instruct one another with the Psalms, and with festive praises, and with prophetic songs given to you spontaneously by the Spirit, so sing to God with all your hearts!* ¹⁷ **Let every activity of your lives and every word that comes from your lips be drenched with the beauty of our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One. And bring your constant praise to God the Father because of what Christ has done for you!** (Col. 3:16-17 TPT)