

1. Navigating the Culture of Social Media (Often I hear folks looking back to and longing for the days before social media--well that is obviously not going to happen. SM is here to stay--for better and usually for worse--it affects us all. Are you hooked on it? **Here is how to know--read article.** Finding stats about the often-harmful consequences of social media--particularly for teens and preteens is not difficult. **Here are a few to consider--read.** And here is how all of that played out in the life of one teen--**Read story.** So with all of this--it would seem rather important for us as children of God to learn how best to navigate this beast. Just think about all we have discussed previously--outrage, cynicism, narcissism, and moral ambiguity--all are very present and encouraged in SM. So just how do we tackle this thing? First let's look at some of its most prevailing challenges)
2. Social Media Dangers (this list is a compilation from several resources)
 - a. Addiction
 - b. Seeking validation (to the point of compromise)
 - c. Comparison/Envy
 - d. Cyberbullying
 - e. Isolation/Loneliness (all of these lead to social anxiety)
 - f. Stranger danger (never interact with strangers)
 - g. Oversharing (all kinds of problems here--pics/fraud)
 - h. Exposure to inappropriate material
 - i. Wasting time
 - j. Outrage
 - k. Depression
3. (As seen--the dangers are numerous and layered--and so are the responses to the danger--obviously no one biblical text can speak to all of this--awareness is a key to responding as is good ole common sense--bc if we are not careful SM can suck into this unhealthy alternative way of life that squeezes out both commitment and passion to following God--so here are some idea on) Handling Social Media Responsibly
 - a. Value ourselves God's way--1 Peter 1:18-19
 - b. Redeem the Time--Ephesians 5:15-16 (**Matt Prior quote**)
 - c. Protect your heart--Proverbs 4:23 (capture thoughts-- 2 Cor. 10:5)
 - d. Guard your eyes--Job 31:1
 - e. Speak truth in love--Ephesians 4:15 (via the SM outlets--this is the proactive way to use this vast communicative tool. Just as it is a powerful way to spread ungodliness, we can tap into that power to spread godliness--but only wisely and in a healthy fashion--not shouting back at the voices shouting at us--truth in love--love does not harm to its neighbor--follow the advice found in **James 1:19**--slow to speak, quick to hear, slow to anger)
4. (One of the best ways to navigate SM is to unplug from it. We all need to shut down that noise often and escape its influences. As scripture says we regularly need to) Be Still in God's Presence--Psalm 46:10 (**Bonhoffer quote!** unless we do how can discover all of the joys of God and find help from him and honestly evaluate where we stand before him--so don't be afraid to shut it down and tune into God. Also be afraid to hang out with God's people--actual folks and not cyber folks--in this place we call church--it is God's design for social activity--healthy and good. Remember Brooke's story and if needed--become something completely different--no better way to do that then through the grace of God)