



FIVE TECHNOLOGY QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

It is rare to find an aspect of society today which is not influenced by technology. With such pervasiveness, it is wise to reflect on how technology is influencing and affecting each of us. We can take comfort in knowing that even in the midst of this changing world, God's Word remains a constant standard by which to live (*Is. 40:8*). Whether you are an avid user of technology or a bystander in this realm, below are five key questions to consider.

1) **Can I still get quiet?** *"Be still, and know that I am God:" Ps. 46:10a*

From Christ withdrawing himself a *"great while before day"* (*Mark 1:35*) to Elijah hearing God through the *"still small voice"* (*1 Ki. 19:12-13*), God's word is clear in its encouragement toward the need for solitude and stillness. In a world where there is constant activity, it can become increasingly difficult to practice this basic Christian discipline of quietness. It is healthy to examine your ability to get quiet before the Lord:

- What does it mean to you to *"be still"* before the Lord?
- How long can you sit in silence before it becomes uncomfortable to you?
- Do you spend quiet time with God before checking your phone, email or social media?
- How often do you check your phone throughout the day?

2) **Do I know the difference between public and private?** *"Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:" Prov. 2:11*

Smart phones and social media continue to increase our interactions. It has become easier to let others into both our public and private worlds. Certain communication barriers have been broken down. Sharing instant prayer requests or certain needs globally is a great example of using this increased interaction for good. Yet along with this communication ease, the question must be asked as to what is and is not appropriate to share. Simply because we can share every detail of our life, should we? What standards of discretion need to be put in place? As the above *Proverb* teaches, *"discretion"* shall *"preserve"* you and help determine the boundary of what is public and what should remain private. Ask yourself some basic questions before posting online:

- Can I edify and encourage through this?
- Is this a moment to protect and keep private?
- Is this necessary?
- Does this feed an insecurity of mine?

3) **Do I know the difference between real and not real?** *"Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil." 1 Thes. 5:21-22*

The integration of technology into our daily life has become very seamless, yet this integration can bring a blurring of lines between reality and fantasy, truth and fiction. It can be easy to take everything we see online as truth, or subconsciously, we can give a higher level of credence to something posted online. These tendencies can prove unwise and can potentially loosen our standards of discernment. We begin to believe all we see in others' lives online is how it *"should"* be instead of how it *"might"* be. It changes the expectations we hold for

ourselves and others as we compare among ourselves (2 Cor. 10:12). Use the Word as your standard of truth and “prove all things.” Ask yourself some of the same basic questions you would ask of anything you see or hear:

- Does this post portray a real picture of who I am and what I believe?
- How am I discerning?
- Does this line up with the full counsel of biblical principles?
- Is this a fad or is this timeless in nature?

4) Are your relationships being affected? *“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” Rom. 12:5*

Technology provides wonderful avenues of connection in our relationships. We can connect with those across the miles, rekindle relationships lost over the years, and have near instantaneous sharing with each other. However, we must also be aware of how technology is affecting our relationships in other ways. Technology can be used as a replacement for face-to-face contact, choosing to discuss critical issues in the perceived “safety” of technology. Likewise, an inaccurate image of ourselves can often be portrayed, creating superficial relationships. In addition, the ability to quickly respond to each other hastily before the Spirit may temper our words can violate *Ephesians 4:29* and allow for “*corrupt communication*” in our exchange. Finally, we can sometimes lose healthy inhibitions in the seeming freedom of social media and disturb healthy boundaries which should be in place. Self check questions are important as we examine our relationships with each other:

- Do I still have healthy face to face relationships? Who is my critical support network which I can turn to when needed?
- Am I using technology to avoid difficult issues or hide from crucial conversations I need to have?
- Do I find myself taking liberties with relationships online which I would not in face-to-face conversations?
- Am I being kind in what I am sharing/saying?

5) What has become most valuable in my eyes? *“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Mat. 6:21*

Often how we spend our time and resources reflects what is most dear to our heart. What is the most important thing in your life? It seems like an easy question with an obvious right answer, and yet, Christ’s teachings continually push us to examine ourselves in light of this question. Do my actions portray the proper alignment of what I value? Ask yourself these convicting questions:

- What is the first thing I think of when I get up in the morning and the last thing on my mind when I fall asleep at night?
- What brings me peace?
- Am I able to cut back on my technology use as a show of discipline before the Lord?
- What evidence exists to myself and others that Christ is most valuable in my eyes? Does evidence exist that technology is creeping into this space?

The key questions above have only begun to scratch the surface of the impact technology can have on our daily lives. There is much more one can reflect on. For further discussion, study, and application in the appropriate use of technology, readers are encouraged to review the further resources available at www.accounseling.org/technology.

The appropriate use of technology is of increasing focus today. ACCFS has developed numerous resources to assist individuals, parents, and the church family in this area. This article, a paper on *Technology Principles*, a guide to a *Family Technology Plan*, *Technology Discussion Aids*, and other quick reference resources can be found on our website at www.accounseling.org/technology . In addition, the more exhaustive *Guidance on Using Technology* paper is available on the Apostolic Christian Church website in the Resources section. If you would like more information, please contact ACCFS at (309)263-5536 or info@accounseling.org.