

Harmony Ministries - Social Media

Considerations For Healthy Use

Introduction

Social media – you either love ‘em or hate ‘em! It’s difficult to stand on middle ground especially when people make extreme political and offensive comments. Like most things it can be a good thing for keeping in touch with friends and family, or a bad tool where people vent their frustrations and personal opinions to the world with apparently no regard to the effect or offense they may cause. The attitude to always “put it out there” is questionable since once said, it cannot be taken back

As with many other facets of life, social media are morally neutral. People can express themselves in a manner consistent with their faith, or not. These guidelines are offered to help anyone decide how to manage their social media involvement. They are not official church policy. People are free to follow or disregard them as they choose, but please read and consider for yourself.

Faith Factors

Some relevant scriptures to consider.....

1 Tim 4: 12. Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

Colossians 4: 6. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Galatians 5: 14 – 15. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

Proverbs 13: 3. Those who guard their lips preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin.

James 4: 11. Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.

Ephesians 4: 29. Let no harmful language come from your mouth, only good words that are helpful in meeting the need, words that will benefit those who hear them.

- Is my post constructive or destructive?
- Am I being gracious or judgmental?
- Could I stand before God and justify the content of my posts?
- Am I confident of the truth and integrity of my posts?
- Does what I write glorify God?
- Does my opinion need to be shared when I may be plain wrong?

Personal Factors

- What will it achieve?
- How important is it?
- Am I writing out of anger, hate, hurt, vengeance or fear, or pure motives?
- Am I trying to score points or appear superior?
- Would I be happy to say the same things face to face with people?
- Might it be wise to run my post by someone I trust before posting?
- Am I being abusive, dismissive, critical, condemnatory, discriminatory, insulting?

Impact Factors

- What might be the impact on a reader?
- What emotion might a reader pick up from my post?
- What might a reader feel like after reading my post? (i.e. someone who may have a different viewpoint on the subject)
- What attitude or tone is being communicated? (Try reading your post out loud. How does it come across?)
- Is the likely impact consistent with how Jesus might communicate with a reader?
- Is my post suitable for public viewing, or might it be better to communicate privately?