

Rules For Communicating On Social Media Sunday PM 06/06/21

Introduction:

In an earlier lesson I gave some numbers pertaining to internet sites and usage. A big part of internet usage is “social media”. Christians have the responsibility to act like followers of Jesus, even on social media sites. "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ***“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”*** **Matthew 5:14-16** Social media can be good in it allows us to communicate with people (share baby pictures, keep in touch). Often we are communicating with people we do not see, may not really know (how many “friends” do you have on FB), in distant places (Canada, South Africa, England, etc.) It can give us a sense of freedom, power, and obscurity all at the same time. It can also be a source of contention, anxiety, hate, and belligerent behavior.

I) Perils of Social Media

1. Common sense and decency often dies on FB, twitter.
 - a. As someone said, on Facebook your friends tell you, you are an idiot; on Twitter strangers tell you, you are an idiot.
 - b. Even the mildest manner old lady or man can become the most brash out mouth.
2. People often spew out hatred and rash thoughts.
3. Resulting in hurt feelings, strife, division.
4. See this especially in the area of politics where the other side is automatically the enemy, wanting to harm people, destroy the nation, and are close to being the anti-Christ.

5. There isn't a way to erase the harm done once harm is done.
6. One has to remember typed words do not show tone and other important things as with verbal communication.
7. Sarcasm and humor can be misunderstood.

II) Rules For Social Media Communication

A) Practice restraint.

Proverbs 10:19 *In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips is wise.*

1. Hold back, silence is often golden, keep track of the number of post and words in post.
 - a. There was a discussion list at one time I was on and I was some what impressed and alarmed at the number and length of some preacher's post.
 - b. It got to the point I wouldn't and couldn't read them due to time it took.
2. Apply ***James 1:19*** *So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;*
3. Leave your post on your computer for a while before sending it, reread it before sending.

B) Be humble instead of prideful.

Proverbs 11:2 *When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.*

1. Nobody knows everything on every subject.

2. Be willing to listen to others, listening and agreeing are two different things.
3. Who knows you might learn you are right!

C) Don't belittle others by showing contempt.

Proverbs 11:12 He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.

1. Some people are quick to be critical and negative.
2. Impugn impure motives.
 - a. They hate me, they really don't care, they don't believe what they are saying.
 - b. Some people are sincerely misinformed and wrong, some people are not seeking the truth, but give the benefit of the doubt.

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

D) Be prudent

Proverbs 12:13 The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will come through trouble.

1. Don't tell people everything you know or think you know.
2. The faster you post, the more you post, the less restraint and less

prudent we become.

E) Practice self-control and don't act out of anger.

Proverbs 14:29 He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, But he who is impulsive exalts folly.

1. Wise saying, act in haste, repent in leisure.
2. Some people intentionally try to get people angry. Why? Then they have the advantage. Much like in sports with trash talking.

F) Answer firmly but softly.

Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

1. Be the peace maker.

Romans 12:18 NKJV 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

2. You don't have to apologize for differing but you don't have to escalate the tension.
3. There may be a time to stop the communication, unfriend someone.

G) Don't let a fool make a fool out of you.

Proverbs 23:9 Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, For he will despise the wisdom of your words.

1. Fools don't listen, don't show good logic, will not admit being wrong.
2. They will despise the truth if you give it to them.

Matthew 7:6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

3. The fool asks foolish questions.

2 Timothy 2:23 But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.

4. Not every question has or deserves an answer.

H) Mind your own business.

Proverbs 26:17 He who passes by and meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a dog by the ears.

1. Even a friendly dog will bite if provoked.
2. Stay out of arguments you don't understand or know all the facts.
3. Eventually you will be despised by those involved.

I) Some conversations just need to die.

Proverbs 26:20 Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.

1. Conflicts die as soon as there is no more fuel added to the fire.
2. This goes back to some earlier principles but it can be hard to let some conversations end.
3. Do this especially if you have nothing new to say or add.

J) Show discretion at all times.

Proverbs 29:11 A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.

1. Have a filter! Don't reveal things told you in confidence.
2. Fools talk a lot and cannot be silent.
3. Keep post simple, to the point, truthful, and for full viewing.
4. Some conversations should not be on social media but private.

III) Ten Commandments For Social Media

1. **THOU SHALT NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT YOU ARE NOT A GOD.** In social media, it's easy to get lost in a completely man-made, digitally driven world. Every social media manager has worlds of varying sizes. There are empires of people broken up by tribe. It is easy to get a God-complex and let the perceived power go to your head. Don't let it happen to you.
2. **THOU SHALT NOT WORSHIP SOCIAL MEDIA.** Your life is more than the screen you keep in front of you. Take breaks. There are people in your life that need you in theirs. Don't let the wonderful tools of social media turn you into a tool.
3. **THOU SHALT NOT NAME DROP.** It's obnoxious when people are name-dropping in tweets. If you are really that good of a friend with someone, why aren't you just text messaging them or calling them on the phone? Name dropping makes you look like a poser. Every once and awhile and it's okay, but you'll know when you've crossed the line.
4. **THOU SHALT TAKE A DIGITAL SABBATH AND KEEP IT HOLY.** Even if you aren't religious, having a day of rest built into your weekly rhythm is just smart. Multiple studies have come out recently that show the damaging effect social media and

spending your life online can have on you. (See 1, 2, 3) Chose one day a week to completely unplug. Put your smartphone in a drawer and live your life without it. Be fully where you are. Your relationships are only going to get better.

5. **HONOR PEOPLE.** If someone does something you like, give them a shout-out and let people know. If you have gotten good service from a company, give them some social media love. An attitude of gratitude and respect will be rewarded. Use your social media powers for good! Isn't that how you would want to be treated?
6. **THOU SHALT NOT KILL ANOTHER PERSON'S REPUTATION.** Don't tweet, post, or write anything that is disrespectful, degrading, or downright mean to someone else. There are jerks in this world and we are all well aware of it. Social media is not the place to vent your frustration or start a public battle. There are things to take stands on (and do!) but choose your battles wisely.
7. **THOU SHALT BE HUMAN.** Your content has to sound like a real person.
8. **THOU SHALT SAY "THANK YOU."**
9. **THOU SHALT GIVE COMPLIMENTS.**
10. **THOU SHALT SPEAK WITH KINDNESS AND CAUTION.**

Conclusion:

What if Jesus asked to be your friend on social media? Would you go back to delete some conversations, pictures, subjects? Would you be changing your wording? How about post you share? If so, then change what you are doing? As I said earlier social

media can be good and even encouraging. Post can be heartwarming, touching, emotional, funny, informative. We just have to make sure we are on the good side and be the salt and light of the world.