9 Ugly Truths about Social Media

Icebreaker Question: How many of you are driving? (Show of hands). Have you ever noticed that there are a lot of things that you learn about driving that you didn’t learn from the handbook? What are some of the things that you have learned about driving that you didn’t learn from the driver’s manual, but learned out on the road?

*“When it starts raining, everybody forgets how to drive.” —High school boy*

*“When a girl gets pulled over, if they will start crying they won’t get a ticket.” —High school boy*

*“Police cars are everywhere.” —High school boy*

*“Barbed wire fences hurt your car.” —High school girl*

*“How much damage that deer can do.” —Another high school student*

I want to talk to you this morning about something that we could beat to death, but it’s just good to be reminded (as 2 Peter 3:1 would state) of. It’s sort of been on my heart this week.

Discussion Question: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram—they don’t come with a user’s guide. What are some of the things that you’ve learned about social media out there on your own, maybe the hard way?

God’s Word is like a manual, where God tells us everything we need to know about how to make it on the road.

-Read Colossians 3:8-10. As we read I want you to imagine the kind of person that would have this Facebook account, Twitter account. What kinds of things would fill the feed?

8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

How many times did we read about Twitter? How many times does the Bible talk about Facebook or Instagram or the Internet?

That would be never. They weren’t invented!

But, then again, didn’t we just read about Twitter and Facebook and so on? It’s there, isn’t it? How much did we just learn about that kind of stuff from that passage?

You see, it teaches us about life on the road.

Read on. Colossians 3:12-14.

12 Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do.* 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

This morning I want to share with you 9 Ugly Truths about Social Media. Maybe this will help you guys out there on the road.

1. Just because you have a voice doesn’t mean everybody needs to hear it all the time.

(Anybody want to retweet that this morning?)

Just because you’ve been given a laptop, just because you’ve got a phone, juts because you’ve got the freedom of speech, doesn’t mean you need to open up your mouth.

Proverbs 13:3 Whoever guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.

James 1:19-20 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Do you know people like that? They’ve always got an opinion about everything? How do you feel about them? It’s a great way to annoy people, that’s for sure. =)

1. Just because someone is acting like an idiot doesn’t give you the right to treat them like one.

Colossians 3:12-14 Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do.* 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

Verse 14 is especially beautiful there. It’s the bond that holds the person of God together perfectly. Be kind.

1. Retweeting is repeating.

I remember the first time I got in trouble for cussing when I was a little kid. I repeated some choice words said by Buzz to Kevin from the movie Home Alone.

It didn’t matter that someone else said them. It didn’t matter that I was just repeating what someone else said. It was still wrong.

Be careful what you retweet. It’s like you are saying exactly what they are saying. There are a lot of things that I like and agree with, but I don't share, or like, or retweet because it would be unwise.

*And, as someone in our class pointed out, even be careful about the usernames that people have. They might be quoting a Bible verse, but their Twitter handle might be something you don’t need to retweet (I’m pretty sure James talks about this by the way about a salt water and fresh water spring. It makes zero sense to talk that way.)*

Another good thing to consider: what would Jesus retweet?

1. Some people are addicted to drama—don’t be!

Amen?

Proverbs16:23 A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends.

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

In the book of 1 Timothy, Paul, an older, wiser minister is writing to a younger minister, Timothy and is giving him helpful advice. Giving him wisdom. By the way, Paul is inspired of God in writing these things. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write these things. So these are not little helpful hints about ministry. These are non-negotiable.

And this is cool, because you guys are young like Timothy. And you may not be preachers, but you’re all ministers. You all have ministries. You are all servants.

1Timothy 6:3-5 3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a *means of* gain. From such withdraw yourself.

A beautiful verse jam-packed with content.

Hebrews 12:14 Pursue peace with all *people,* and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

1. Your feelings can be so, so wrong.

Proverbs14:12 and Proverbs16:25 say the exact same thing (maybe God really wanted us to get this!)

“There is a way *that seems* right to a man, But its end *is* the way of death.” You can’t always just do what feels right and good to you. Because as this verse teaches, that can lead you down the wrong path.

1. Is it really all about you?

*Selfie!*

You’ve got to love the principle from John the Baptist’s life as we apply it to the here and now where we live.

“He must increase, but I must decrease.”

I don’t know if you know this, but David Shannon has a Twitter account. Did you know this?

It’s kind of funny. He set one up (and now he can’t remember his login credentials so he can’t even use it anymore, which sort of reveals a little bit about the heart that he has toward “self”) and said, “How cool would it be if I made an account and everything that I tweeted was about other people?” And so I set one up for him and the Twitter handle is @allaboutothers.

And for a couple of weeks (he hasn’t tweeted in like a year or two) he posted things like, “Brett Dillard hit a grand slam in the pulpit tonight! What can this guy not do?”

For several weeks now I have witnessed individual elders shepherd so many individuals. It makes us feel safe and loved. Thankful for them.

Stuff like that.

You see, it’s not really about you or me. It’s about Christ. And about being humble and showing other people who He is.

1. Just because you read something doesn’t mean it’s true.

*Clickhole.com is a new website put out by “The Onion” (fake news site) that states “We strive to make sure that all of our content panders to and misleads our readers just enough to make it go viral.”*

It’s hilarious. They literally make up ridiculous stories just to show us all how people will share and believe anything as fact.

This Beanie Babies story popped up on my news feed a few weeks ago. So awesome.

*If you were obsessed with Beanie Babies in the ’90s, get ready to fall in love all over again, because the spider eggs they used to fill your favorite Beanies are beginning to hatch! Collectors all over the country have been reporting that the long-awaited day has finally arrived, with brown recluse spiderlings bursting through the seams of Beanies everywhere! Awesome!*

1. Everybody (EVERYBODY) sees it!

You guys do know this, right? (Even future employers check your social media accounts to see what kind of person they are hiring)

I’m not a perve, but I can’t tell you how many times I’ve had stuff come up on my News Feed and I’ve thought to myself, “You know, I might as well press print and make 100 copies and hang these pictures up all over the auditorium as people are walking into worship.”

*Because it’s the exact same thing.*

Your parents are on Facebook. Your grandparents are on Facebook. The elders are on Facebook (and by the way, I’ve been inside elders meetings where people’s Facebook accounts have been brought up). Creepy people are on Facebook.

Everybody sees what you post.

And so here’s what happens when some of us realize that. We go “Oh, no. That’s right! Everybody sees that!”

And so what do we do? We think, “I know! I’ll block them. I’ll hide that post. I’ll make sure nobody sees it. Then I’m good.”

But you know what? You can block your parents, you can block me (your youth minister), you can block your grandparents, but you know what you can’t do?

1. You cannot block Jesus. You can’t hide it from Him.

He sees all.

Listen, I didn’t give you this message to beat up on you guys. I just think we all need a little reminder sometimes. I’ve posted things I shouldn’t have posted before.

The good news is, you can change. You can do better. You can fix it. (Well, some of it)

A key word to all of this that we’re talking about this morning is WISDOM. The Bible talks about it constantly. And something we read about over and over again in the book of Proverbs is that it fools have a tendency over opening up their mouth and doing harm, while a wise person keeps their cool, let’s things play out, waits things out and responds in a great way.

There are a lot of things that I like and agree with, but I don't share, or like, or retweet because it would be unwise.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Maybe these things will help you guys out there on the road. =)