

- ***Read Proverbs 10:19*** We live in a day and age where communication is at an all time level of ease and accessibility. At no time has this been more evident than just this past Wednesday. Wednesday was a big night in the world of basketball, and even if you don't like basketball, I wouldn't be shocked if you know exactly what happened in the NBA this past Wednesday night. I wouldn't be shocked at all, especially if you are clued into Social Media. If you have a Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, anything of the sort, you probably read, heard, or saw something about Kobe Bryant scoring 60 points in his final game, or the Golden State Warriors winning their record breaking 73rd win of the regular season. Mind you, these things took place about 2,000 miles, 2 time zones, and over 30 hours away by car. Yet, in an instant, we all knew that those things had taken place. What a time to be alive! Especially, when we consider the fact that just years ago, we wouldn't have known about any of it until the next morning or afternoon when we look at the newspaper...whatever that thing is.
- Social Media has absolutely changed the landscape of our world. With the click of a button we can communicate with hundreds if not thousands, if not millions of people all within just a few seconds. The same is true for pictures and videos that we might produce. Our words, thoughts, actions are more accessible by more people than at any time in the history of mankind. While Social media is very beneficial in a lot of ways, I also need to add a word of caution. The writer of Proverbs thought it wise to include this proverb within his writings to make sure to remind all people that the more we communicate, the more chances there are for mistakes, and oh how true this has been shown to be. This morning, I would like for us to have a nice discussion about the Social Christian. This lesson is directly applicable to any Christian who is involved in any sort of Social Media. However, these principles readily apply to any individual, regardless of SM involvement or not. There are some things that are good for us to be reminded of from time to time that will help us to do be what we ought to be even in our dealings on SM. I hope that you will give a good ear to some Biblical truths that will help those of us who are on SM to be more like our Savior Jesus Christ.

I. The Social Christian must be wise.

A. Scripture demands that God's people be wise in all things that we do.

1. The Proverbs were written to instill wisdom within the reader. **(Prov. 1:1-7; 2:1-13)**
2. James teaches us that we ought to seek out wisdom if we find ourselves lacking in it. **(James. 1:5)**
3. We must seek to possess a clear and wise mind so that we can withstand against Satan. **(I Pet. 5:8)**
4. Possessing and using wisdom allows us to be able to use things like SM in an appropriate way, and helps us to avoid mistakes that might make us look foolish.

B. We must seek to be wise in all things that we do with Social Media.

1. Wisdom teaches us to be aware of the things that we post of Social Media and the impact/influence they might have on others. **(Matt. 5:13-16; Eph. 5:15)**
 - a) Pay close attention to the source of something you might be sharing.
 - b) Pay close attention to pictures that might be attached to something that your sharing.
 - c) Pay close attention to only share those things that are true.
2. Wisdom helps us to recognize if SM has overtaken us **(I Cor. 6:12)**, and it helps us to put it away if the need be so. **(Matt. 5:29)**
 - a) Don't allow SM to dictate your life. Life isn't all about me!
 - b) We must be willing to give SM up if it is causing problems in our lives.
3. Wisdom helps us to recognize if we are wasting away our lives on SM when we could be using our time for more profitable endeavors. **(Eph. 5:16)**
 - a) There are many things more important than things on SM.
 - b) Don't compromise yourself in order to be more popular on SM.
4. Wisdom helps us recognize if we are being influenced by the things on SM so that we are conformed to the world instead of being transformed to be like Christ. **(Rom. 12:1,2)**

II. The Social Christian must mind his/her influence.

A. As disciples of Christ, we must make sure that our actions and words reflect Jesus living in us.

1. Again, we must remember the fact that we are to be different than the sin and wickedness that fills this world. We are to transform ourselves into something different. **(Rom. 12:1,2)**
2. Through this transformed living, it ought to be plain to those around us that we are striving to be like our Savior Jesus Christ. **(Gal. 2:20)**

3. We must strive daily to walk worthy of that calling by which we were saved. **(Eph. 4:1)**
- B. We must always remember that Social Media is an extension of our character.
 1. Our character (who we are, what we stand for) ought to be in line with Jesus's words in **Matthew 5:13-16**. We are to live in such a way that those around us see the better way of Jesus and are moved to live that way as well.
 2. Sometimes we are disillusioned and we think that our life on SM is separate from our real lives, but that just simply isn't the case.
 3. We would be foolish to think that we can speak, dress, behave, or do anything on social media in a different way than how we do these things in our everyday lives and think that this is ok.
 4. Social Media is not a free zone for me to do everything on there that I don't get to do in real life. If I speak crudely and unbecomingly on SM...that is still me speaking crudely and unbecomingly. If I dress provocatively and post pictures or videos to SM...that is still me being inappropriate and leading others minds to places they ought not go.
 5. My virtual life on SM must be consistent with the life that I live in tangible reality. God doesn't compartmentalize where we do bad things. A bad thing is a bad thing, and a good thing is a good thing where on SM or in real life.
 6. We must remember that people will see our behavior on SM and they will apply that to our person. Our influence reaches our world of SM. May our SM presence cause others to glorify our Good God.

III. The Social Christian must seek to be a blessing and not a curse.

- A. In all things, we are to seek to glorify God and bless our fellow man.
 1. Our first duty in this life is to insure that God is glorified in all that we do. **(I Cor. 10:31)** This was the whole reason that Jesus came to die for and establish His Church. He came to do these things so that God may be glorified. **(Eph. 3:21)**
 2. To glorify God is to love Him with all that we are. Therefore, it makes sense for Jesus to say that this is the greatest commandment of all. **(Matt. 22:36-38)**
 3. But right behind that command, coming in second as far as greatest commands go is the command to love your neighbor. **(Matt. 22:39,40)**
 4. Everything we do, including our involvement on SM, should be dictated by our love for God and our love for our fellow man.
- B. The way we use Social Media can either help or hurt/harm those we interact with.
 1. There are many ways in which we can harm others through SM.
 - a) Constant complaining. **(Phil. 2:14 "Do all things without grumbling...")**
 - b) Constantly getting into verbal altercations and foolish arguments. **(Phil. 2:14 "Do all things withoutdisputing; Prov. 18:2 "A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own mind.")**
 - c) Bashing those who disagree with us **(Prov. 11:12 "he who despises his neighbor lacks sense, but a man of understanding keeps silent")**
 - d) Posting before we think things through **(Prov. 12:18; 14:29; 26:4)**
 2. There are also many ways in which we can be a blessing and help others through SM.
 - a) Speak about the good that God is doing in your life.
 - b) Share Scripture, lessons, articles, or anything that might encourage others.
 - c) Encourage others through happy thoughts and kind messages. Focus on those wholesome things.
 - d) Be better than your average SM troll. If you have a discussion, be polite, patient, and understanding.
 3. Just like so many other things in this life, SM can be used for good or bad. Be resolved to be a blessing to others every time we are involved in SM.

With the advancement of technology comes many opportunities for good, but we must acknowledge that it also gives way to some bad things from time to time. Social Media is neither a good or a bad thing in and of itself, but the way we use it makes all the difference. May God help those of us who are social Christians to keep these many principles in mind. If you're not a social Christian, then still keep these things in mind as you interact with others face to face. May God help us to be bright shining lights in a dark world that strives to tear us down, whether that be face to face, or behind the screen and keyboard. No matter the avenue, may God be praised, and may our neighbor know our love for them.