

ACCESS, 9/22 - Is Technology the New Drug?

Read:

Colossians 3:2 // ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

Matthew 13:22 // ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

Matthew 6:24 // ²⁴ "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

1 Corinthians 6:12 // ¹² "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything.

Big Questions:

- Is technology good, bad, or neutral?
- How should we approach technology in our lives in a healthy way?

Teaching Points:

- Technology as an idol itself in our lives, or revealing other idols
- Escaping reality: the physical vs the cloud
- Technology provides endless distraction to a distracted generation

Discussion Questions:

- What is your personal technology usage? Are you addicted? Does that concern you?
- Why do you use technology/social media? Possible reasons: escapism, boredom, distraction, enjoyment. Good and bad reasons?
- How does it make you feel? Positive and negative reactions.
- How does technology change or affect you (physically, emotionally, psychologically) and your relationships? Your relationship with God?
- What would change if you lived without technology for a day? A week? A year?

Further Resources:

- <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/03/health/teens-cell-phone-addiction-parents/index.html>
- https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/13/health/teenagers-drugs-smartphones.html?mcu_bz=3
- <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/six-ways-your-phone-is-changing-you>
- <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/ten-questions-to-diagnose-your-smartphone-usage>

Rate each item on a scale of 1 ("completely disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree") and tally up your total score to find out. Be honest!

1. I would feel uncomfortable without constant access to information through my smartphone.
2. I would be annoyed if I could not look information up on my smartphone when I wanted to do so.
3. Being unable to get the news (e.g., happenings, weather, etc.) on my smartphone would make me nervous.
4. I would be annoyed if I could not use my smartphone and/or its capabilities when I wanted to do so.
5. Running out of battery in my smartphone would scare me.
6. If I were to run out of credits or hit my monthly data limit, I would panic.
7. If I did not have a data signal or could not connect to Wi-Fi, then I would constantly check to see if I had a signal or could find a Wi-Fi network.
8. If I could not use my smartphone, I would be afraid of getting stranded somewhere.
9. If I could not check my smartphone for a while, I would feel a desire to check it.

If I did not have my smartphone with me ...

10. I would feel anxious because I could not instantly communicate with my family and/or friends.
11. I would be worried because my family and/or friends could not reach me.
12. I would feel nervous because I would not be able to receive text messages and calls.
13. I would be anxious because I could not keep in touch with my family and/or friends.
14. I would be nervous because I could not know if someone had tried to get a hold of me.
15. I would feel anxious because my constant connection to my family and friends would be broken.
16. I would be nervous because I would be disconnected from my online identity.
17. I would be uncomfortable because I could not stay up-to-date with social media and online networks.
18. I would feel awkward because I could not check my notifications for updates from my connections and online networks.
19. I would feel anxious because I could not check my email messages.
20. I would feel weird because I would not know what to do.

How You Score:

20: Not at all nomophobic. You have a very healthy relationship with your device and have no problem being separated from it.

21-60: Mild nomophobia. You get a little antsy when you forget your phone at home for a day or get stuck somewhere without WiFi, but the anxiety isn't too overwhelming.

61-100: Moderate nomophobia. You're pretty attached to your device. You often check for updates while you're walking down the street or talking to a friend, and you often feel anxious when you're disconnected. Time for a digital detox?

101-120: Severe nomophobia. You can barely go for 60 seconds without checking your phone. It's the first thing you check in the morning and the last at night, and dominates most of your activities in-between. It might be time for a serious intervention.