

How Do I Handle Social Media with my Kids?

Lesson 04 of the series "Helpline"

A. Social media is here to stay, so as Christian parents we need to teach our kids how to deal with it as people who love the Lord.

"I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one." John 17:15 (NLT)

"Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people." Philippians 2:15 (NLT)

B. It all comes back to identity.

"One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. As Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens splitting apart and the Holy Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said, 'You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy.'"

Mark 1:9-11 (NLT)

"So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, 'Abba, Father.' For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory." Romans 8:15-17 (NLT)

C. There are some basic things parents need to know about social media.

"Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves." Matthew 10:16 (NLT)

"Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. Avoid all perverse talk; stay away from corrupt speech. Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you. Mark out a straight path for your feet; stay on the safe path." Proverbs 4:23-26 (NLT)

D. Seven things parents can do about social media:

"You say, 'I am allowed to do anything'—but not everything is good for you. And even though 'I am allowed to do anything,' I must not become a slave to anything." 1 Corinthians 6:12 (NLT)

"You say, 'I am allowed to do anything'—but not everything is good for you. You say, 'I am allowed to do anything'—but not everything is beneficial." 1 Corinthians 10:23 (NLT)

1. We can be honest with ourselves.

"And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye." Matthew 7:3-5 (NLT)

2. We can have an ongoing conversation with our kids.

"So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine... Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up."

Deuteronomy 11:18-19 (NLT)

3. We can start by asking questions.

"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry...." James 1:19 (NIV)

4. We can respond with love instead of outrage when our kids mess up.

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord." Ephesians 6:4 (NLT)

5. We can build a safety net, not just a rescue line.

"A prudent person foresees danger and takes precautions. The simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences." Proverbs 22:3 (NLT)

6. We can remind our kids of their identity daily.

“Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.” Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)

7. We can pray.

“Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.” 1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

“For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.” Ephesians 6:12 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions:

1. What is the most positive thing you see about social media? If there is one thing you could change about social media, what would it be?

2. In your opinion, how should a follower of Christ approach being active in social media? In other words, what would Jesus’ social media accounts look like?

3. Read Proverbs 4:23-26. How can we guard our hearts when engaging the internet? What have you seen work?

4. Read Romans 8:5-12. When it comes to social media, blogs, chat rooms, and comment sections, it is fairly easy for raw emotions to come to the surface. Why is it vital for every believer to be led by the Holy Spirit?

5. Discuss the follow issues that social media can stir up in anyone, along with the biblical approach:

- Envy—Proverbs 14:30
- Discontentment—Hebrews 13:5
- Bragging—Proverbs 27:2
- Boasting about righteous living—Matthew 6:1
- Anger—James 1:19-21
- Downgrading—Colossians 3:5-6

6. Read James 1:22-25. Why do you think we struggle living the way God desires us to live? Do you believe God just wants to control us, or do you really believe He wants the best for us? How would living the way God wants you to live impact your life?

7. Read Romans 8:26-27. What are some areas in your life that you need prayer about so that you can begin to conform to the image of Jesus Christ?

Resources:

1. To monitor phones, tablets, iPods, etc.
 - OurPact app – www.ourpact.com
 - Circle (device+app) – www.meetcircle.com
 - Qustodio app – www.qustodio.com

2. Pornography filters and accountability

- Covenant Eyes – www.covenanteyes.com
- X3 Watch from XXX Church – www.x3watch.com
- Ever Accountable – www.everaccountable.com

3. Blogs/books

- Blog: Adam McClane – www.adammclane.com/category/social-media
- Book: “A Parent’s Guide to Understanding Social Media: Helping Your Teenager Navigate Life Online.” by Mark Oestreicher and Adam McClane
- Blog: Common Sense Media – www.common sense media.org/social-media
- Book: “Abba’s Child” by Brennan Manning, a book on identity.