

Technology and the Family

Questions for reflection

- * Do you grab your phone or tech device first thing most mornings?
- * If not the first thing, do you check email/social media or news within the first few minutes of waking?
- * Is the last thing you see a bright screen just before going to sleep?
- * Should we be concerned that if we are in these habits, we have allowed the world to shape our nights begin shaping our day - prior to direct human contact - or any spiritual discipline as we prepare our hearts for the day?
- * Have digital distractions had ill effects on our prayer/spiritual life and disciplines?
- * Are you too distracted to even know how to answer?
- * Do my smartphone habits expose an underlying addiction to untimely amusements?
- * Do I have filters and accountability for the content I and my family see?
- * Do my smartphone habits distract me from genuine communion with God?
- * Do my smartphone habits center on what is necessary to me and beneficial to others?
- * Are my smartphone habits harmful to others?
- * How does my online persona reflect my heart?
- * How have online interactions and or habits hindered your face to face relationships?
- * Has an online thread of interaction been taken out of context and was difficult to repair?
- * Have you said something in a text or online that has disrupted a relationship that needs mending personally?
- * Do you live for likes?
- * How much time do I spend on devices? How much time does my family spend?
- * Do you think altering those habits would be beneficial?
- * Have we set goals?
- * Are you stuck in a cycle of at any bored moment grabbing the easiest entertainment distraction?

Practical suggestions to consider

- *Turn off all nonessential push notifications.
- *Delete expired, nonessential and time wasting apps.
- *Personally and as a family have a “bed time” for devices prior to your bedtime.
- *Keep your phone out of the bedroom.
- *Use a real alarm clock, not your phone alarm, thus keeping it from your hands in the morning. Wear a watch.
- *Guard spiritual morning disciplines and evening sleep patterns.
- *Use self-restricting apps, for content and use
- *Be accountable to others (spouses, family, friends)
- *Structure time off devices and fill that time with family life in the home
- *Most things can wait - be deliberate in responding to texts and emails rather than whenever they hit your account
- *Eat meals together and leave your phone away from the dinner table
- *Invite and enjoy meals together with others - leave your phones
- *Invite your spouse, friends and family to offer feedback on your phone habits.
- *When spending time with family and friends, leave your phone elsewhere
- *Plan for time away from the electronics - (Crouch suggestion - 1 hour per day, 1 day per week, and 1 week per year).
- *Don't try this alone - talk to your spouse, family about any or all of these things, be accountable to one another - again about time and content
- *Fill your home and central space in your home with nudges that create rather than consume, things that reward skill and active engagement such as musical instruments, books, games, art
- *Enjoy God's creation outside with your family
- *Run content and all aspects of life through this verse from Philippians 4:8

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable whatever is just whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”