

Holiness and the Christian Lifestyle: THE EYE

Eccl 1:8 All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

Matthew 6:22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

I. **BIBLICAL FOUNDATION**

- A. The eye is the _____ of the soul.
1. Through the eye perceptions are made, thoughts are provoked, emotions are stirred, & judgments are determined.
 2. Therefore, it's very critical what we willingly set before our eyes.
 3. In Psalm 101:3, David made a _____ with his eyes when he purposed not to set any wicked thing in front of them.
 4. In Psalm 119:37, David asked God to give him power to "turn mine eyes away from _____."
 - a.) _____: refers to anything that is worthless, foolish, empty, & destitute of reality.
 5. Why did David place such a great value on what the 'eyes' saw?
 - a.) READ MATTHEW 6:22-23
- B. The Bible says that the _____ is the _____ of the body.
1. READ MATTHEW 6:22-23; LUKE 11:34
- C. The eye is the primary _____ of external _____.
- D. The eye is the primary _____ for _____ life.
1. Psychologists claim that ____% of our thought-life is stimulated by sight.
- E. The eye is the primary _____ for _____.
1. Experiments show that the mind retains _____% of what it sees & hears simultaneously but only _____% of what it hears alone.
 2. Proverbs 23:7, "As a man _____ in his heart so is he."
- F. The _____ of the eyes is a 'major' source of temptation.
- a.) READ 1 JOHN 2:16 -

- G. What the eyes indulge in & enjoy, the _____ tends to indulge in & enjoy.
1. _____: READ GENESIS 3:6
 2. _____: READ JOSHUA 7:21
 3. _____: READ 2 SAMUEL 11:1

II. BE DILIGENT TO _____ YOUR EYES.

- A. Key scriptures: JOB 31:1; PSALM 19:14; PSALM 101:3
- B. Satan knows that the mind is most easily reached through the _____ & therefore he attempts to bring numerous _____ before our eyes.
1. Firstly, it's a way to bring _____ to our mind that we had not previously considered.
 2. Secondly, these thoughts become _____ in our minds so that they can return to _____ us when we are weak and/or discouraged.
 3. Thirdly, by constant exposure to certain sights & their associated ideas we become _____ to them.
 4. Finally, if they are thought about long enough, they will be _____ upon.
- C. READ MATTHEW 15:19-20
- D. READ ISAIAH 33:15-16

III. WHAT ABOUT PRINTED MATERIAL?

- A. What the eye sees, the mind tends to _____ a picture of.
- B. READ ACTS 19:19
- C. We must be careful what we read. WHY? Because what we read becomes a _____ & then the thought paints a _____; the picture stimulates further _____.
- D. READ ACTS 19:19 AGAIN!
1. The value of those items was approximately \$_____.
 2. The material included books on curious arts, specifically witchcraft & occult.
 3. The Christian should "NOT" read nor should they possess books with the following content:
 - a.) _____
 - b.) _____
 - c.) Books filled with explicit _____ and _____.
 - d.) _____

IV. WHAT ABOUT TELEVISION, MOVIES, SOCIAL MEDIA, and MEDIA DEVICES?

- A. While Television/Media does have the _____ for good (*i.e. learning, history, science, etc*), it has been utilized in a much more negative way than positive one. Also, it is not a good use of your precious time & leads to poor stewardship.
- B. TV sitcoms/movies tend to be _____ by evil, violence, illicit sex, an attack on authority, adultery, fornication, and many other sins.
- C. Dangers of TV, Movies, and other Media:
1. They are a huge source of _____ because they feed lust which in turn defiles the mind. Just not a good use of your time or mental absorption.
 2. They also modify _____ by breaking down a resistance to sin.
 3. They also present false values such as the following:
 - a.) Sin _____.
 - b.) Might makes _____.
 - c.) Sex-_____ is all important.
 - d.) _____ is good.
 - e.) _____ is cool.
- D. TV/MOVIES are poor stewardship – they are a _____ of time.
1. READ EPHESIANS 5:16
 2. COLOSSIANS 4:5
- E. Problems with trying to use T.V./Media in moderation:
1. Anything that appeals to the _____ nature is difficult to control.
 2. The more the mind is stimulated through TV/Movies, the more it _____ similar kinds of stimulation.
 3. T.V. is fascinating & mesmerizing & it's very easy to _____ but very difficult to switch _____.
 4. We tend to _____ our ability to resist its influence.
 5. The positive content compared to the negative content is _____.
 6. There is a difference in being _____ to sin in the world & _____ sin in your home & your mind.
 - a.) **NOTE: Everything you do may NOT be right or wrong, but it does, however, point you in a direction. So with that in mind, which direction are you headed?**

7. It is a great influence on _____ & can be a timewaster & danger.

Someone wrote this great story entitled, "THE STRANGER"

A few months before I was born, my dad met a stranger who was new to our small Tennessee town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer, and soon invited him to live with our family. The stranger was quickly accepted and was around to welcome me into the world a few months later. As I grew up I never questioned his place in our family. Mom taught me to love the Word of God. Dad taught me to obey it. But the stranger was our storyteller. He could weave the most fascinating tales. Adventures, mysteries and comedies were daily conversations. He could hold our whole family spellbound for hours each evening. He was like a friend to the whole family. He took Dad, Bill and me to our first major league baseball game. He was always encouraging us to see the movies and he even made arrangements to introduce us to several movie stars. The stranger was an incessant talker. Dad didn't seem to mind, but sometimes Mom would quietly get up - while the rest of us were enthralled with one of his stories of faraway places - and go to her room read her Bible and pray. I wonder now if she ever prayed that the stranger would leave. You see, my dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions. But this stranger never felt an obligation to honor them. Profanity, for example, was not allowed in our house - not from us, from our friends, or adults. Our longtime visitor, however, used occasional four-letter words that burned my ears and made Dad squirm. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted. My dad was a tee-totaler who didn't permit alcohol in his home - not even for cooking. But the stranger felt he needed exposure and enlightened us to other ways of life. He offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often. He made cigarettes look tasty, cigars manly, and pipes distinguished. He talked freely (too much too freely) about sex. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and generally embarrassing. I know now that my early concepts of the man/woman relationship were influenced by the stranger. As I look back, I believe it was the grace of God that the stranger did not influence us more. Time after time he opposed the values of my parents. Yet he was seldom rebuked and never asked to leave. More than thirty years have passed since the stranger moved in with the young family on Morning Side Drive. But if I were to walk into my parents' den today, you would still see him sitting over in a corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and watch him draw his pictures. His name? We always called him TV.

F. WHAT ABOUT HOME VIDEO/DVD/NETFLIX/OTHER MEDIA ACCOUNTS?

1. Rule of thumb: WHEN IN _____ DO _____.
2. We tend to _____ our ability to control it.
3. It may be alright if it's carefully monitored & used with discipline. Here are some great resources/apps for screening movies: pluggedin.com , kids-in-mind.com, FOCUS ON THE FAMILY, IMBD has a ratings area with some details.
4. Another rule of thumb that's good to live by: let dvds/movies be used for educational, inspirational, & spiritual purposes. Try to keep from stretching those definitions as a family!

G. WHAT ABOUT VIDEO GAMES?

1. Not all Nintendo/Play Station/Xbox, etc. games are bad but numerous ones are so review & research & check ratings. Many now include graphic violence & nudity & adult situations.

2. In one respect, it could be argued that these games are worse than TV in that you actually put the gun/knife/weapon in the hands of the person playing.
3. Many statistics have shown that this is the reason for violence in the lives of numerous children/teens – becoming desensitized by violent movies/video games/television.

H. **WHAT ABOUT THE INTERNET?**

1. There are numerous statistics about the dangers of the internet & the overuse & abuse of a person's time on the internet.
2. Here is some practical pastoral advice to help guide your decisions:
 - a.) I believe the good outweighs the bad but that's not a license for unrestricted use.
 - b.) Parents should exercise parental controls & set up a computer filter.
 - c.) Closely monitor children/teens on their internet use.
 - d.) Parents should exercise caution with chat rooms with their teens and themselves.
 - e.) Youth – shouldn't be communicating with single and/or married older adults.
 - f.) TIME – this is crucial & all forms of media can consume huge chunks of time so closely monitor them. Set a limit.

I. **WHAT ABOUT CELL PHONES?**

1. Same rules apply so read the above section.

J. **WHAT ABOUT FACEBOOK/TWITTER/SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS?**

1. Same rules apply. However, see the **12 Christian Laws of Facebook Conduct**:

2.41 billion people currently use Facebook. It is a phenomenal tool for communication that has surfaced (along with twitter) as one of the leading information and connection sources in North America. This communication tool shows no signs of slowing down. Its potential for good is matched by its frequent and frustrating use for evil.

Pastors are struggling with this new technology and its ability to create conflict within the congregation. Some believe “facebook and twitter are of the devil”.

Pastors frequently hear things like:

“They un-friended me”

“Did you read what they said about me”

“They shouldn’t talk like”

... and the most common ...

“That post wasn’t about them...it was something different(harmless)...I can’t believe they read into that post...etc.”

Before posting, Remember, **this is a public forum**. Think of yourself standing up before a group of several hundred people, or however large your friends list is with a microphone making your status announcement.

This is essentially what you are doing. Don’t look for this problem to disappear anytime soon. Both Facebook and Twitter use is up 82% since this same time last month.

The average American Facebook user spends up to 6 hours exclusively posting and surfing statuses on Facebook. As Christians we must develop practices that keep this free-flowing. Here are some things that I feel could help this tool be a blessing, not a curse.

The 12 Christian Laws of Social Media Conduct

Never Post Negatively - People will almost always assume you were talking about them (especially if you are upset with them at the time of posting). If they haven't had interaction with you recently, do you really want everyone to know how bad your life is? Show everyone your positive side...they've got their own issues without borrowing yours. People will also “fill-in-the-blanks” on “who you are mad at” or “who is a jerk” etc.

Be quick to delete or unfriend or unfollow someone - If someone uses bad language or argues, delete them. If a post on your page “could be” misread then delete it. If you thought it, someone else probably did too. If someone is offended because their post was deleted, explain that you are connected with a lot of people and you don’t want them to be perceived as negative. Explain your sensitive delete key. If they harass you about it, delete them.

If you can’t handle it, GET OFF. - Be honest with yourself and SET time limits - stop obsessing. If your day was going great before you signed onto Facebook it should be great when you sign off. Know yourself and be strong enough to limit yourself.

Use Facebook as a tool to encourage and build faith - Take a few minutes everyday

and post something kind on a deserving person's wall. Be that person that lifts others.

Be careful who you befriend - Never befriend someone who is dangerous to your marriage or walk with God. If someone is rebellious towards spiritual authority, the Bible commands us to leave them alone as they are appointed unto wrath.

If someone questions you about a post, remove it. - There's at least 10 other people that thought the same thing but didn't mention it. Guard your reputation. No one should celebrate being a murmurer, gossip or slanderer. The Bible calls each of these practices "sin".

Never use Facebook to send a "Woe Is Me" message. - It's okay to post needs or better yet, contact someone directly. A child of God is NEVER hopeless, helpless or a failure in life. To say otherwise is to claim God isn't able to work everything for our good. We are told to even rejoice when others speak evil against us.

Know your spouse's sign-on info. - Never keep secrets. Marriages are destroyed when private worlds are created and the person you are supposed to be "one" with has no access to. This is also applicable with parent/child relationships – Parents need to have complete access to their child(rens) account & should check regularly!

Do not assume a negative post is about you. - It may be, but never assume and let it ruin your day without confirmation. Contact the person quickly and ask, "Was this about me" They might not realize how their post appears. If someone contacts you and asks that question, delete or explain your comment.

Sharing too much information is bad - Be careful little mouth what you say. Protect your marriage/family bubble. Hackers are looking for your credit cards right now.

Watch your language (including spell-check) - While it has created some funny moments, spell check can have the vocabulary of a "pagan sailor". Read what you post, after you "post it" to save yourself some embarrassing comments. If you do make a major blunder, delete the whole comment (don't brag about it).

Avoid Debate - Someone is always watching. While they may be entertained the subject matter will define who you are. Few people are debated into a change of mind. Keep conversation light.

Finally we should heed the words of 1 Peter 1:13-16

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

Let's use wisdom and be a reflection of Jesus Christ in our digital conversation.

HOLINESS IN COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA

1. We must continue to uphold our position on holiness of life & holiness in the use of all communications technology. In view of the symbolic nature of media, we must be very cautious not to signal compromise of belief or lifestyle.
2. The decision of our elders in 1954 was correct when they adopted the 4th paragraph on holiness in our *Articles of Faith* in response to the invention of television & other changes in society. Our goal is to enunciate the principles upon which they acted & apply them in light of technological changes & more complex choices.
3. Like the church in Acts 15, we believe that God will give us collective wisdom.