



Sermon Title: "Stewardship of Technology: Loving People"

Scripture: Ephesians 4:25-32

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INTRODUCTION

Lie #1 - "When it comes to loving God, digital distractions are no big deal."

Lie #2 - "Life is all about me, and so it doesn't really matter how I spend my time."

Lie #3 - "I can crave and live for the approval of others and still honor God at the same time."

Lie #4 - "If I don't stay digitally connected 24/7, I'll miss out on something really important."

I. CONFRONTING THE LIES WE ARE TEMPTED TO BELIEVE

Lie #1 - "It's healthy to present on-line a false, highly edited version of myself."

Ephesians 4:25, 31-32 -

Note: As relational creatures, made in the image of God, we desire to be known, loved, and accepted.

Note: As sinful creatures, we are tempted continually to exaggerate and lie about ourselves in order to earn approval and elicit envy from others.

1 John 1:9 - "...if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Lie #2 - "It's good to use technology to shield myself from authentic interaction."

Ephesians 4:25 -

"Isolation is both the PROMISE and the PRICE of technological advance."

Romans 12:15-16 - "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight."

Note: It can be easy for us to communicate superiority to others through our use of tech.

2 John 12 - "Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete."

Lie #3 - "It's just words on a screen. What I type/write/post/tweet doesn't really matter."

Ephesians 4:26, 29, 31 -

Note: When we are more likely to vent anger and rage toward others "screen to screen" instead of "face to face", researchers call this "anonymous rage".

Note: When we indulge in "anonymous rage", we forget that there is a priceless human being, made in the image of God, on the receiving end of our angry, uncontrolled words.

James 1:19-20 - "...let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak [tweet, post, text], slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God."

Note: We are all accountable to God for all our angry, slanderous, gossipy words.

Matthew 12:36; Matthew 5:21-22; Proverbs 12:18 -

Lie #4 - "I can achieve sanctification and maturity on my own, away from other believers."

Ephesians 4:30 -

Note: We all need real, honest, face-to-face, friction-producing interaction!

Proverbs 27:17 - "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another."

Note: Whenever possible, handle disagreements and hard conversations face-to-face.

Galatians 2:11; Hebrews 10:24 -

Note: Sanctification is a community project.

Note: We need face-to-face fellowship AND we also need alone time for personal growth.

Psalms 90:14; Psalm 143:8 -

Isolation + feeding on vanity = soul-starving loneliness

Isolation + communion with God = soul-feeding solitude

Lie #5 - "My personal convictions on technology are perfect and good for everyone."

Ephesians 4:28 -

Note: One day all things (including technology) will be fully submitted to Christ and His glory.

Hebrews 2:8b - "At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to Him."

Take Home Questions for Further Study & Reflection & Application...

1. Should you take a "digital fast" in order to evaluate how technology helps or hinders you?
2. Do you find yourself thinking less about God and more about your online presence?
3. Do you find yourself bored with God, worship, evangelism, and serving others, but very excited to download the latest App, update/upgrade a device, or surf social media?
4. Do your tech habits reveal freedom in Christ or bondage to a device?
5. In what ways are you using technology to love, serve, and care for others?
6. Are there ways you are using technology to shield yourself from authentic relationships and fellowship with other believers? Are you presenting online a false, highly edited version of yourself?
7. Have you simply grown addicted to your device(s)? If so, can the problem be solved with moderation, or do you need to just cut it off?
8. If you're a parent, do you want your kids to see you gazing at a handheld screen so much as they grow up? What does this habit project to them and to others around you?