



### Series Workbook

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### **O** INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking the time to "Rewire." Technology is an inescapable part of our lives. Although technology has always been part of human history, the current rapid increase in the availability of technology in the developed world is creating new challenges. In addition, the seemingly all-encompassing nature of technology can be overwhelming.

"There has been more technological improvement in the last 50 years than in the previous 5,000," according to Patrick Cox, co-editor of Technology Profits Confidential. "Since you and I have been trained to think in linear terms, this isn't necessarily intuitive. However, a careful examination of history reveals that the rate of technological change...accelerates over time. Due to this exponential rate of improvement, we are actually only seeing the beginning of disruptive, transformational changes in technology."

However, God knew about all these developments long ago and I believe that the Bible has a lot to say about technology, which is what we will be discussing during this series as we attempt to rewire our lives to God's truth.

The Rewire series is designed to provide you with a theological foundation for technology. In addition, the notes and discussion questions in this guide will provide you with questions that will help you begin to work out the practical implications in your own life. The guide is designed for use in community groups so that you can discuss these issues with trusted friends as we strive together to bring all areas of our lives under the authority of the Bible and the control of the Holy Spirit.

Since this is a spiritual issue, I also encourage you to be praying throughout this series that God will allow you to hear what He is speaking directly to your situation. Together we can live faithfully in a technological world.

Jim Samra

### USING THIS STUDY GUIDE •

This study guide provides all the information you need to participate in the Rewire series in one compact booklet.

For each session, you will find an outline with notes to complete as you listen to the teaching. Following the notes are discussion questions for you to use in your community or small group.

In addition to these tools, you will find "Parent Corner" and "#TechTalk" sections each week. Parent Corner is intended to provide practical ideas, additional questions and resources for parents and young children while #TechTalk is especially for teens and young adults. These supplemental pages are designed for you to do on your own to assist you in the unique situation of life in which God has placed you. While these sections will not be referenced during the teaching sessions, hopefully they will be a source of encouragement as you seek to use technology wisely.

Finally, at the end of the booklet you will find a resource section that includes additional tools such as books and helpful websites.

We hope that this booklet will be a blessing to you. In the area of technology, it is impossible to create definite rules for every person. However, we hope that the information found in this booklet will help you and your family to live faithfully in a technological world.

#### THE REWIRE COMMITTEE

David Alcook, Lee Content, Shelly Lamport, Chris Lohroff, Sarah Merrill, Mason Sherrill, Sara Tibbe, Mike Reiffer, Lisa Samra, Jen VanEck, Karen VanHolstyn, Kristen White



## Session One FIVE TECHNOLOGY PRINCIPLES

### **Session Notes**

When someone mentions technology, what comes to mind?

### **Definition of Technology:**

"Technology includes all and the skills by which we produce and use them."

Definition from Read Barton, "Technology and the State Government," American Sociological Review (1937).

### **Technology Principle #1:**

Technology is possible because

Scripture passage:

Positive and/or Negative Example?

### **Technology Principle #2:**

Technology often hinders

Scripture passage:

Positive and/or Negative Example?



Technology can free us
Scripture passage:
Positive and/or Negative Example?
Technology Principle #4: Technology is used by God
Scripture passage:
Positive and/or Negative Example?
Technology Principle #5: Technology is inherently and
Scripture passage:
Positive and/or Negative Example?

Technology Principle #3:



## Session One DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Name at least one time in the past week when you used technology to accomplish something good. Name at least one time in the past week when technology kept you from doing something good.
- 2. What about the definition of technology surprised you? Did you initially believe that the Bible had much to say about technology?
- 3. Like Adam, in what ways do you "hide" from God with technology?
- 4. As with Cain, how does technology hinder your ability to recognize your need for God?
- 5. Similar to the story of Lamech and his son, Tubal-Cain, how have you used technology in your life as a weapon to hurt others?
- 6. In your life, how has technology tempted you to sin?
- 7. How has God allowed technology to help you alleviate some of the effects of the curse?
- 8. What are your reactions to technology principle #5?
- 9. How have you been changed by modern conveniences? How do modern conveniences impact your practice of faith?
- 10. How do you view technology differently because of this teaching?

As we begin to look at technology in our lives, this digital usage quiz is one tool that may help you evaluate your current media usage:

### DIGITAL USE ASSESSMENT QUIZ

### Answer yes or no

- 1. Do you text and drive even though you know it's not the safe thing to do?
- 2. Do you get the urge to use your smartphone when someone else is talking to you?
- 3. Do you ever feel something hasn't really happened until you post it on Facebook?
- 4. Does your family sit in the same room but not talk to each other because you are all interacting with your digital gadgets?
- 5. Do you find a ringing or vibrating cell phone interrupts and trumps everything else?
- 6. Do you ever lie about your Internet or online gaming use?
- 7. Are you experiencing a loss of interest in other activities you used to enjoy?
- 8. Do you neglect yourself (sleeping/eating) because of time spent in the digital world?
- 9. Do you feel anxious if you are offline for a period of time?
- 10. Do you ever think about how you could focus better in real life without all these gadgets invading your space?

### **Number of yes answers:**

### Interpreting the score

- O: Perfect score. You are doing very well in managing your digital world
- 1 to 3: Your digital usage is good.
- 4 to 6: You have a problem, so caution is needed.
- 7 to 10: Your digital engagement is excessive, so take immediate steps to bring it under control.

Used with permission. Dr. Sylvia Hart Frejd,  $\it The Digital Invasion$  (Baker Books, 2013) p. 151.

Remember that the material in this series is the result of Pastor Jim's journey of thinking through technology from a biblical perspective over several months and even years. Ask the Lord for an open heart and willing spirit to hear what God wants to teach you on your personal journey over the course of this series as we seek to bring all aspects of our lives under the authority of the Bible and the control of the Holy Spirit.



### **Read the Following Blog Posts**

#### "The Danger to Your Faith of Being Liked"

Last year I was traveling with a small group of college seniors through Europe teaching history and a biblical worldview. After a worship service in Paris, we exited the hotel where they were meeting and started walking toward the Eiffel Tower.

As we approached the tower one of the guys had an idea. "Why don't we have a contest? Each of us take a photo of the tower on our phone, Instagram it and see who gets the most number of likes on Facebook. Some of the guys had more "friends" than others, so after working out a handicap system, they went to work.

What happened was fascinating. I watched their spirits rise or fall based on the number of "likes" coming in, or not. Some of the more confident guys, ended up with the fewest likes, and were obviously frustrated and disappointed. Of course, the winner was elated.

#### Clare DeGraaf

Used with permission. claredegraaf.com/2013/10/21/the-danger-to-your-faith-of-being-liked/#more-2899

#### "5 Reasons Teenagers Are Fleeing Facebook"

It's vapid. "Everything on Facebook is to gain likes," another of my daughter's friends complained. "It's like a popularity contest. It requires a lot to maintain, like having a good profile picture that will get a lot of likes." My son said one of his biggest aggravations, after parents, is people—OK, girls--continually asking him to like their status as part of "truth is" requests, whatever those are. "It just fills up your timeline with really stupid stuff," he said.

#### Rick Newman

finance.yahoo.com/blogs/the-exchange/5-reasons-teenagers-are-fleeing-facebook-182756430.html

- 1. Have you ever experienced anything like the contest or the pressure to receive a lot of "likes" in these blog posts?
- 2. How do you handle the feedback you receive online?
- 3. What do you think the Bible has to say about this issue?





### **Overview of Parent Corner**

Thank you for taking time to think about issues related to technology both in your own life and in the lives of your family members. Each Parent Corner will have three sections. The first section, "Parenting Principle," will help us look at our parenting through the theme of the teaching session. The second section, "Engaging Your Child," will provide some ways you can have a conversation with your child(ren) about technology. Finally, the third section, "Parent Heart Questions," provides probing questions to help you think about how you use technology in your own life.

As we begin this series together, remember that the number one way you can influence your child's technology behavior is by your own example.

### Parenting Principle: HOPE AND COMFORT

As parents, we seek to teach our children that ultimately the only trustworthy source of hope and comfort is Jesus.

- 1. How does technology impact how you soothe or comfort your children?
- 2. How does technology allow you to prevent the consequences of poor choices your children make (example: downloading forgotten homework for them)?
- 3. How does technology impact how we reassure teenagers and try to maintain a relationship with them?

"From a counseling perspective, I find that this topic is THE parenting subject for our generation. My sense is that for the first time in history, it is a subject where parents have the sickness in common with the children; whereas, when we think back to previous generations and their parenting topics, those were topics where kids had different interests from their parents."

Mike Reiffer, family therapist

### **Engaging Your Child**

This booklet asks adults to complete a scale regarding their use of technology. Consider using the scale on this page with younger children. Instruct kids to circle or tell you the number that states how they would feel in regard to each question, 1 is very sad and 10 is super happy. Use these questions as prompts to talk with your kids about their use of technology and their feelings about it.

How do you feel when . . .

•	You ha	ve to sto	p playinç	g a game	e and yo	u don't w	ant to.					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
•	You do	n't get yo	our choic	e for a s	how or r	movie; ins	tead you	ır brother	or sister	gets firs	t choice.	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
•	Some	ne tries t	to talk to	you in t	he midd	le of a sh	ow or ga	ame.				
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
•	You ha	ve to wai	t somew	here (lik	e a resta	urant), an	ıd you ca	annot use	technolo	ogy while	you wait.	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	$\odot$
•	Your parents ask you to tell the truth about how much screen time you've had.											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	$\odot$
•	You've been asked to stop playing or watching so you can go outside and get some fresh air.											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	$\odot$
•	You ha	ven't pla	yed gam	es or wa	atched T	V ALL DA	Y?					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	$\odot$

### **Parent Heart Questions**

- 1. How do you feel about using monitoring technology for home safety or to track the whereabouts of your children? Does this technology bring you hope and comfort?
- 2. When was the last time your children saw you cry out to God when you needed help rather than reach for a device as your first response to a difficult situation?

### **General Information**

### TOP 50 INVENTIONS IN HISTORY

In the November 2013 technology issue of *The Atlantic*, the magazine listed the top 50 greatest inventions since the wheel (according to a panel of 12 scientists, historians and engineers). Many of these ground-breaking inventions are second nature to us in today's world, but as we consider how our use of technology shapes our lives, they are helpful to remember. They are:

- 50. The combine harvester, 1930s.
- 49. The assembly line, 1913.
- 48. The lever, third millennium B.C.
- 47. The nail, second millennium B.C.
- 46. Anesthesia, 1846
- 45. Television, early 20th century
- 44. Air-conditioning, 1902
- 43. The abacus, third millennium B.C.
- 42. Paper money, 11th century
- 41. Rocketry, 1926
- 40. The sailboat, fourth millennium B.C.
- 39. Oil drilling, 1859
- 38. Scientific plant breeding, 1920s.
- 37. Cement, first millennium B.C.
- 36. The steam turbine, 1884
- 35. Oil refining, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century
- 34. The Gregorian calendar, 1582
- 33. Pasteurization, 1863
- 32. The cotton gin, 1793
- 31. Archimedes' screw, third century B.C.
- 30. The moldboard plow, 18th century
- 29. Photography, early 19<sup>th</sup> century
- 28. Radio, 1906
- 27. The mechanized clock, 15<sup>th</sup> century
- 26. The telegraph, 1837

- 25. Alphabetization, first millennium B.C.
- 24. The telephone, 1876
- 23. The sextant, 1757
- 22. The green revolution, mid-20<sup>th</sup> century
- 21. Nuclear fission, 1939
- 20. The pill, 1960
- 19. Industrial steelmaking, 1850s
- 18. The automobile, late 19<sup>th</sup> century
- 17. The compass, 12th century
- 16. The personal computer, 1970s
- 15. The airplane, 1903
- 14. Gunpowder, 10<sup>th</sup> century
- 13. Refrigeration, 1850s
- 12. Sanitation systems, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century
- 11. Nitrogen fixation, 1918.
- 10. The steam engine, 1712
- 9. The Internet, 1960s
- 8. Vaccination, 1796
- 7. Internal combustion engines, late 20th century
- 6. Paper, second century
- 5. Optical lenses, 13th century
- 4. Semiconductor electronics, mid-20<sup>th</sup> century
- 3. Penicillin, 1928
- 2. Electricity, late 19th century
- 1. The printing press, 1430s

Used with permission. James Fallows, "The 50 Greatest Breakthroughs Since the Wheel," *The Atlantic*, November 2013. http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/11/innovations-list/309536/

# Session Two DIGGING DEEPER INTO TECHNOLOGY PRINCIPLE FIVE

### **Session Notes**

In this session, we will expand on technology principle #5.

Technology Principle #5:

Technology is inherently and

Examples:



What does the Bible say is the root of technology principle #5? Genesis 11:4-6

### Summary:

Technology is because

invented it and use it.



## Session Two DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Explain the difference between these two statements and why is it important to understand the difference?
  - a. Technology is inherently dangerous.
  - b. Technology is inherently evil.
- 2. How are you processing the implications of this technology principle in your own life? What are some dangers you have felt in your own life and heart?
- 3. Was there ever an event in your life when you intended to use technology for good but it was used for evil instead?
- 4. Which example of the dangers of technology was most illuminating to you?
- 5. What are some of the "cumulative negative effects" technology has on you?
- 6. Genesis 11:4 says in pride, people built the tower in order to "make a name for ourselves." Describe a time in your life when you used technology to "make a name for yourself."
- 7. Since technology is an extension of our fallen human nature, how does that affect your view on using technology to accomplish "good"?
- 8. How can technology corrupt your spiritual life? Is there any danger in Bible apps, verses of the day, subscriptions to blogs, sermon podcasts, Christian radio or television?
- 9. How might your current use of technology reveal areas of pride, laziness, lust, love of money (idolatry) or other sin in your life?



### Take some time to complete the following spreadsheet.

Start by writing down how much time or how many times you think you use digital media (your best guess). Then, actually keep track this week by logging your technology usage.

Category / Question	Estimated technology use	Actual technology use
How many times per day do you use your phone for a phone call?		
How many times per day do you check your phone without making a call or a text?		
How many hours per week do you play a video or online games?		
How many times per day do you post on Facebook, either status updates or comments?		
How often do you Tweet?		
How often do you upload or comment on Instagram?		
How much time is devoted to making videos with your phone or devices such as GoPro?		
How many times per day are you on sites such as Pinterest or Houzz?		
How much time do you spend thinking about or checking your "likes" on an upload or status on your favorite social network?		

Before our next meeting, take some time to reflect on your technology usage to discuss with your group.



### Parenting Principle: MODERATION

When our children are young, we begin setting limits in all areas of life, even with good things. We allow our children dessert, but not at every meal. We allow them to swim but not without completing swimming lessons or wearing a lifejacket. Parenting requires the ability to set and enforce limits.

Even for young children, technology usage requires moderation.

- 1. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends no TV- and video-viewing for children under the age of 2 years. For children older than 2 years, the AAP recommends limiting media time to 2 hours per day. Additional recommendations can be found on the AAP's website at *aap.org*. Search for "Media Education" policy statement. How do you feel about these recommendations? Do you think your children are close to these recommendations?
- 2. Have you spent time praying and discussing some guidelines for when to purchase certain devices and at what ages your children can begin using them? Consider taking some time to create or revisit these guidelines.
- 3. Have you also discussed time, content, and usage limits with your spouse or a trusted friend? Have you communicated these limits to your children?
- 4. Have you decided how you will enforce these limits? If so, what challenges do you face in enforcing these limits? What might be helpful?



### **Engaging Your Child**

a) Oven

b) Car

As you talk with your children, the goal is to help them understand that technology can be used to accomplish good things, but that it is also inherently dangerous.

1. How can the following technologies be used for good but also be dangerous:

as intended? Are the changes in its use positive or negative (or both!)?

### Consider asking your children the following questions:

	c)	Swimming pool
	d)	iPad
	e)	Smart phone
2.	Thir	nk about your very favorite piece of technology—your computer, TV, iPod, etc. Research to-

gether who invented this piece of technology and what its initial purpose was. Is it still being used

### **Parent Heart Questions**

- 1. How have you considered putting time limits on your own usage of technology? Consider what God may be asking you to do in this area.
- 2. What sort of intentional measures can you take to show your children that technology isn't mastering you?

# Session Three THE MOST IMPORTANT TECHNOLOGY STORY IN THE BIBLE

### **Session Notes**

What is the most important technology story in the Bible?

Technology is

to

Luke 20:9-19

because it tempts us



Technology is

because it tempts us

to

John 19:14-16

**Additional Examples:** 



## Session Three DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Read Luke 20:9-19. What is the significance of these verses in light of technology and its ability to make us envision our world differently?
- 2. Imagining a world different than the one we have is a main selling point of most technologies. They often promise to solve all your problems, make you feel important, look your best, organize your life, etc. In your life, do you think that technology has delivered on its promise?
- 3. What have you been tempted to covet as a result of technology? What technologies are the most dangerous for you in this area?
- 4. Psalm 20:7 says, "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD." In what ways do you struggle with placing your faith in God rather than in something else? Also, read Psalm 40:4-5.
- 5. How is technology a prime candidate for idolatry in your life?
- 6. Think of a piece of technology you frequently use in your life.
  - a. How would the absence of that technology cause you to rely on God differently?
  - b. What would you do if that piece of technology were not available when you faced a challenging or difficult situation?
- 7. What convicts you when you think about the patterns your family has developed related to technology?
- 8. How has this teaching challenged, changed or increased your view of the cross and the work of Jesus Christ?





The Bible and society often tell us very different things about where we find value as Christians. Technology can sometimes shout louder than the Bible.

Here are three lies that the world wants to tell us and often uses technology to announce it:

### **Three Big Lies:**

- 1. Superstar performance + great accomplishments will make me feel accepted and valued.
- 2. Good looks + admiration of others will make me feel secure.
- 3. Status and popularity + recognition of others will make me feel significant

Look up each of the following passages in your Bible. Make it personal by inserting your own name in each verse, where applicable.

VERSE	Write the verse here and insert your own name where you can.	What God has to say about you
Colossians 2:10		Your life is complete
Romans 8:28		I will work all things together for good
Romans 8:35-39		I will never allow anything to separate you from My love



2 Corinthians 1:21-22	I will make you stand firm in Christ. The Spirit I gave you is My guarantee, your future is secure.
Philippians 1:6	I will complete to perfection the work I began in you
2 Corinthians 5:17- 21	I appoint you as an ambas- sador of reconciliation
2 Corinthians 6:1	I have chosen you to work with Me
Philippians 4:13	You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you

Adapted from The Sensation of Being Somebody by Maurice Wagner (Harper Collins, 1991).

- 1. Why do you think we often seek acceptance from people more than from God?
- 2. How can you use these Bible verses to help remember how God views you?





### Parenting Principle: IDOLATRY

The Bible encourages parents to help children know and obey the greatest command: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37). Yet Satan can use technology to tempt us to believe that we need certain devices to meet our needs, provide comfort, and solve our problems. As a result, we end up trusting them more than God. Take some time to consider what this might look like in your family.

- 1. What do your kids "have to have"/"will just die without"?
- 2. How strong is your children's pull towards technology? (It can be very different for each child.) If you have a child with a stronger pull toward technology, how might you help them?
- 3. How much complaining do you face when your family has time with no TV/movie/video games? If you face a lot of complaining, what are ways you can address this reaction, and underlying causes, with your children?



### **Engaging Your Child**

We've learned that technology is inherently dangerous. One reason is technology often tempts us to covet, to want something God hasn't blessed us with yet.

Consider discussing with your child:

- 1. How often do you wish that you had something you don't yet own? A different piece of equipment? The next game? Toys you see in commercials? Where does that desire come from?
- 2. Read Psalm 20:7 together. What is a chariot?
  - a. A chariot is a form of military technology. Technology tempts us to trust it instead of God. Just like a military general would believe that a chariot would help bring him victory, we can be tempted to think that technology will solve our problems. What problems do we try to solve with technology (like cars or TV)?
  - b. When we trust something other than God, when we love or put our faith in something other than God, this is called idolatry. How might you make technology an idol?
- 3. Is there a piece of technology that you place a lot of faith in to help you—maybe something for school, something for learning or making schoolwork easier? Or is there a game or device that you count on to make you happy, to entertain you?
- 4. How can we learn to trust God more than technology?

### **Parent Heart Questions**

- 1. Which technologies cause you to covet the most?
- 2. Would your children (or your spouse) say that you have made technology or a certain device an idol? Why or why not?
- 3. How do you talk to your kids about the latest technology gadget? What might this communicate to your children?



## Session Four HOW DOES TECHNOLOGY AFFECT US?

### **Session Notes**

To see how technology affects us, we will look at the five closing sections of James 4:11-5:20.

#### **PASSAGE ONE**

Technology encourages us to

James 4:11-12

### **PASSAGE TWO**

Technology encourages us to

James 4:13-17

#### **PASSAGE THREE**

Technology encourages us to

James 5:1-6



### **PASSAGE FOUR**

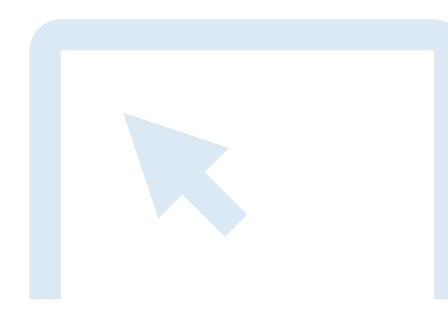
Technology encourages us to

James 5:7-12

### **PASSAGE FIVE**

Technology encourages us to

James 5:13-20





## Session Four DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Read James 4:11-12, Psalm 101:5 and Matthew 12:36. Describe how technology encourages you to slander others. Do you think we view slander as seriously as God views it? Why or why not?
- 2. Read James 4:13-17. How does technology make you less likely to submit your plans to God? Can you think of a time when technology caused you to increase your dependence on God?
- 3. Read James 5:1-6. In what ways does technology encourage you to be more financially generous? In what ways does technology encourage you to be less generous?
- 4. As mentioned in the teaching, "time-saving" technology has the tendency to make us impatient. How have you seen this bleed over into your spiritual life? What are practical ways we can combat this impatience?
- 5. What are some ways you can combat the problem of technology creating a culture of spectatorship when it comes to the needy, poor and oppressed?
- 6. Think of a piece of technology you desire right now. What prompted that desire? What are ways you can move toward a more conscious understanding of knowing whether a new piece of technology is a need or simply a want?
- 7. How will this teaching move your life toward a reflective and intentional use of technology?

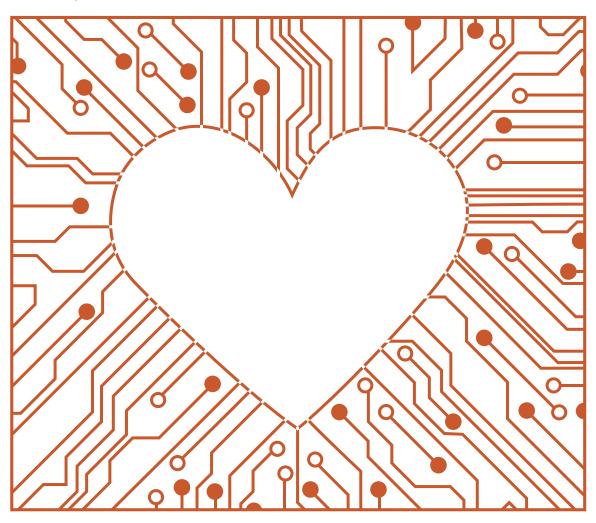




### What makes a "real friend?"

Without looking, write down the number of "friends" you have on any one social network:

In the space provided in the heart below, write down as many names of your friends on that social network as you can.



1.	Look at the syou have on	social network you chose and write down the actual number of "friends" the site:
2.	Write down	the number of names you were able to list above:
3.	How do you	account for the difference?
1	What conclu	usions can you draw?
4.	WHAT COHOL	ısions can you draw?
**	CHALLEN	GE**
		hoose one friend per week off a social networking site of your choice that you know
		a hard time or does not know Christ. Set up a coffee, lunch, etc. to connect in person g to that friend. Pray about whom God would have you ask.
,	Week One:	
,	Week Two:	
W	eek Three:	
١	Neek Four:	
,	Week Five:	
	Week Six:	



### Parenting Principle: INCARNATION AND COMMUNITY

As we teach our children about the nature of God's character, we tell our children truths that show God values incarnation (Jesus means "Emmanuel," God with us), relationship (God desires a personal relationship with each person through His son Jesus Christ), and community (the church).

On the other hand, sometimes without even being aware of it, certain technologies are used to replace the importance of incarnation and relationships.

- 1. How does technology impact how well we truly know our young kids? Our tweens and teens?
- 2. Discuss both the positive and negative aspects of Skype, FaceTime, or other video conferencing options.
- 3. For children who have phones, what are your limits on texting/phone use in general and then around other people?
- 4. How can we teach children to be relationally/emotionally/mentally available when in the presence of other people?

### **Engaging Your Child:**

Jim highlighted several negative effects of technology. Considering asking your children these questions to help them understand those effects:

- 1. Technology encourages us to speak unkindly of others. What might this sound like when deciding whose turn it is to use a particular device? Or deciding who will choose a game or TV show?
- 2. Do you have a certain piece of technology, maybe a device or game, on your "wish list"?

  Why would you like it so much? If you are saving money to buy it, what would you do if you felt God leading you to give away that money? Would it be easy or hard to obey God?
- 3. Think of some devices or appliances that allow us to complete jobs faster (i.e. dishwasher, microwave, printer, vacuum, car). Technology can save time, but it can also cause us to expect that we never have to wait. This might overflow into how we think of God. Can you describe a time that you were impatient with God? Can you think of a time when your prayer wasn't answered right away? How did that make you feel?

### **Parent Heart Questions:**

- 1. In what ways do you model to your children the idea that you should be relationally/emotionally/mentally present when physically present with other people?
- 2. What sort of boundaries do you have in place to ensure that your kids have your full attention when you are physically with them?



### Session Five

## BIBLICAL SOLUTIONS TO LIVE FAITHFULLY IN A TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD

### **Session Notes**

In this session, we will return to the book of James as we look at four biblical solutions to live faithfully in a technological world.

The first biblical solution to live faithfully in a technological world is to approach technology with .

James 4:6-10

Seven factors that determine how technology affects us:

- 1. Technology affects us depending on
- 2. Technology affects us depending on the
- 3. Technology affects us depending on the level of
- 4. Technology affects us depending on how
- 5. Technology affects us depending on how much
- 6. Technology affects us depending on how much it
- 7. Technology affects us depending on what



to	to God.
James 4:11-12 Exodus 20:8-11 Romans 14:5-8	
The third biblical solution to live faithfully in a technological world trun	l is nps technology.
Exodus 20:4 2 John 12	
Examples:	
The fourth biblical solution to live faithfully in a technological wor	ld is to come
James 4:8 James 5:13-18	

The second biblical solution to live faithfully in a technological world is



## Session Five DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Discuss how abstaining from technology is not the solution to the problem.
- 2. Of the seven ways technology can affect people, which one stood out or spoke to you personally? What do you think God is encouraging you to do with this new information?
- 3. Some effects of technology are not as obvious as others. What are some examples of negative effects of technology that are obvious to you? As discussed in this series, or things you have discovered on your own, what are some effects that are not as obvious?
- 4. What were the four biblical solutions and why are they important? Which one do you think is most important for you?
- 5. Read James 4:6-10. In what ways does humility influence your view of technology?
- 6. What are the ways that technology is inherently limiting? How does this relate to the power of incarnation?
- 7. How is prayer the opposite of technology?
- 8. Do you see the possible danger of seeing technology as someone else's problem rather than your own problem?
- 9. What step(s) can you take to increase your intimacy with Jesus? How has technology hindered your relationship with God?
- 10. Brainstorm some ways that can help you tackle issues regarding your reliance on technology. Discuss practical ideas for humbling oneself and limiting technology in order to remind ourselves that we belong to the Lord.



## Session Five #TECHTALK

"... for wise men of old, the cardinal problem of human life was how to conform the soul to objective reality, and the solution was wisdom, self-discipline, and virtue. For the modern, the cardinal problem is how to conform reality to the wishes of man, and the solution is a technique."

C.S. Lewis
The Abolition of Man

Do you realize that your parents did not have email in high school or college, instead they took typing classes and handwrote or typed letters?

Do you realize that your parents only had one phone in their house growing up that was stuck on the wall?

Do you realize that when your parents took pictures, they had to mail in the film and wait days until they could pick up their pictures to see them?

While it is a blessing that your generation has some of the newest technologies that allow you great freedom and ease of accomplishing many tasks, it also has negative effects that Pastor Jim discussed in our talk. It can be more difficult for you to evaluate the effect of technology on your life and your relationship with God because many of the more invasive technologies have been around for most of your life.

Take some time this week to ask a Christian parent, grandparent or trusted adult the following questions:

- 1. What piece of technology do you enjoy the most? What are the greatest benefits of the technology device and what are the greatest frustrations?
- 2. How have family relationships changed because of technology?
- 3. How have you seen technology change the way you engage with God (do your devotions, pray, study the Bible)?
- 4. What have you learned about maintaining a relationship with God in our high-tech culture?
- 5. What is one thing you wish I understood about technology?





"Without silence it is virtually impossible to live a spiritual life"

Henri Nouwen

### Parenting principle: HUMILITY

Although as parents we are able to do a lot for our children, we cannot save them from sin and death, and that is humbling. Our children must come to this realization for themselves. Only when they realize their need for a savior will they ask God for mercy and forgiveness.

Satan uses technology to tempt us to trust man's cleverness and ingenuity. Satan also tempts us to believe that our use of technology doesn't affect our relationship with God or others.

- 1. Ask your children if they have any problems or concerns with their use of technology and their relationship with God. Do you have any concerns? How might you address areas of agreement as well as areas of disagreement in your assessments?
- 2. As parents, do we feel pressured by society, the educational system, or our friends to always purchase the newest and best technology for our children? If we are experiencing that pressure, how do we combat it? How does humility fit into the equation?
- 3. For parents with tweens/teens, do you think your children are "branded," meaning, do they choose certain types and brands of devices simply because they want to portray a certain lifestyle or image? How self-aware are they of their tendencies? How can you help them in this area?



#### **Engaging Your Child**

Continue the technology conversation with your child, by asking them the following questions:

- 1. Pick your favorite piece of technology. Now that you know technology can be good but also dangerous at the same time, what might your favorite piece of technology be trying to teach you that is wrong? For example, one thing a video game may be teaching you is that games are best enjoyed virtually instead of with real people.
- 2. In the fourth commandment, God instructs His people to set aside working and instead spend time worshiping Him and resting. To remind us that enjoying a relationship with God is most important, how can we set aside time away from some kinds of technology to worship God and to rest?

#### **Parent Heart Questions**

- 1. When you hear about the impact of screen time on child development, do you tend to think that this information is helpful for someone else's family rather than yours?
- 2. What might God be calling you to do to model Sabbath rest from technology for your children?

# Session Six MAKING IT PERSONAL

While there is not a teaching session for your last meeting together as a group, it is important to take the time to consider practical steps and set up some guidelines to help you and your family live faithfully in a technological world.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Review the five principles of technology. How has your understanding changed?
- 2. While we, as Christians, should not abstain for technology as a whole, are there any specific technologies from which we should abstain?
- 3. What are practical ways you plan to introduce technology Sabbaths into your life?
- 4. What ways do you currently use technology that need to be cut back or cut out so that you can focus on relationships?
- 5. How is God leading you to grow in your prayer life as a result of this series?
- 6. How might the insights and experience from this series affect you as you desire to be more like Christ?
- 7. How might this group be an encouragement to you to implement and maintain these goals and guidelines?

When is the last time that you have been able to make the following affirmations:

- There is no place I would rather be.
- There is nothing I would rather do.
- There is no one I would rather be with.
- This I will remember well.

(Adapted from work done by Albert Borgmann, an American philosopher specializing in the philosophy of technology, as discussed in Living Into Focus by Arthur Boers)





We live in a world that is saturated with technology. It's tricky to navigate our way through. Here are a couple of stories that show some ways that technology can be used to have a positive impact.

#### **Story One**

I quickly silenced my phone – it was just my sister anyway. As I returned back to my conversation my phone suddenly jumped back to life. It was my sister again. "I better take this," I said to my friend.

Within moments of answering the call my world was upended and the future uncertain. My father had had a heart attack and it didn't look promising. He was in surgery, but the prognosis wasn't encouraging. Within a couple of hours I found myself behind the wheel of my car; an eight hour drive before me and the glimmer of a hope that I would get to see my dad alive one last time.

Shortly into my drive I received a message. A friend had sent me a Starbucks Card eGift with the following message: "Thought you could use some "fuel" as you journey to be with family during this difficult time. Praying!"

In that moment, I was reminded that God loves me and that I had Christian brothers and sisters who were praying for me.

#### **Story Two**

A few years ago, I started attending a new church for the first time. It was a smaller church and a couple of people in it friended me on social media.

#### \*\*Challenge\*\*

Pray about the technology you allow in your life and how you can use it in a positive way. Before your next technology purchase, pray and ask the Lord to help you make a wise and God-honoring decision.

At that time this felt odd to me, because I had made a pretty strict guideline for myself to only be friends online with friends from "real life." After some deliberation, I accepted. What I discovered was that I suddenly had things to talk about with them when I saw them each week. We were able to build on what we learned about each other online to create genuine friendships pretty quickly (friendships usually grow pretty slowly for me). Now we are separated, living in three states, but those two women continue to be godly friends in my life, encouraging me in everyday things but also to live for Jesus. Our online connection is just one facet of a much broader friendship.

As a result of this experience, my rules changed. I'm more open to the idea of using social media to build "real life" friendships and I try to do so more intentionally.



When the time came for God to rescue sinners from death, God did not send a book, a message from a robot, a movie, or any other technical solution. Instead God sent Himself in the person of Jesus. Jesus is God with skin on, and we call that the incarnation. We learn from God that a face-to-face visit and conversation is always better than anything technology can offer—any communication through a letter, phone call, text, Skype, or video.

#### **Engaging Your Child**

Continue the technology conversation with your child, by asking them the following questions:

- 1. Think about someone who lives far away from you. What does it feel like when you actually get to see that person? Is the actual visit better than Skyping or calling? Why is it so much better?
- 2. Are there people in your life who help you love and serve Jesus? Who are they? How might we help you develop a closer relationship with them?

#### **Parent Heart Questions**

- 1. As a result of this study, do you find yourself praying more in difficult situations?
- 2. What might God be asking you to give up in "technology time" to spend more time praying?

## RESOURCES

Many of the resources listed here, particularly in the area of internet and media safety, are technological tools. As was hopefully made clear in this series, technology is not the ultimate answer to our problems. A technical solution cannot resolve a spiritual issue for someone who does not want to change. Utilizing some of these resources can be part of a larger solution, but it cannot be a solution by itself. We encourage you to use these tools wisely, relying on God's work within you and within your family members and community.

#### **Internet Usage Statistics:**

Even though widespread usage of the Internet in homes is a recent luxury, according to a 2010 national survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation entitled "Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds," "8-18 year-olds devote an average of 7 hours and 38 minutes (7:38) to using entertainment media across a typical day (more than 53 hours a week). And because they spend so much of that time 'media multitasking' (using more than one medium at a time), they actually manage to pack a total of 10 hours and 45 minutes (10:45) worth of media content into those 7 hours."

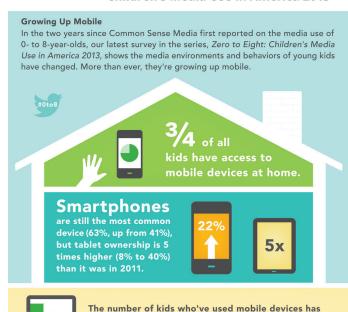
#### **Internet Filtering:**

The following resources are a few highly rated and proven website filtering options for families. This is not a complete list, nor are we endorsing these products.

Bsecure<sup>™</sup> Online is a provider of parent control software that allows parents to filter and



### ZERO TO EIGHT Children's Media Use in America 2013



nearly doubled since 2011 (38% to 72%).

Average daily use of mobile devices has tripled, from 5 to 15 minutes a day.



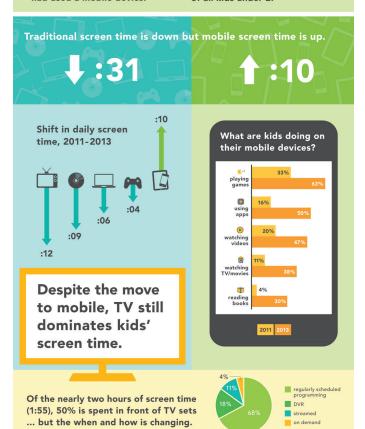


TECH SAVVY TODDLERS:

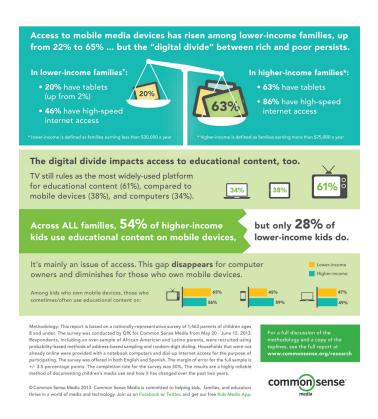
In 2011, 10% of kids under 2 had used a mobile device.



Now, that's grown to 38% of all kids under 2.







monitor online activity, as well as monitor instant message conversations. *bsecure.com* 

- Covenant Eyes® provides Internet filtering software to block offensive websites, and control how and when the Internet is used. Covenant Eyes also has an Internet accountability service that monitors Web usage and providing reports to help families develop integrity with their online choices. covenanteyes.com
- **Net Nanny**® provides Internet protection solutions that monitors, documents, and blocks unsafe digital content. *netnanny.com*
- **Safe Eyes**® is a flexible set of filters and controls that allows parents to determine the amount and type of media usage that is appropriate for

their child. It includes monitoring websites, iTunes, instant messages and online gaming devices. Detailed reports help parents know what children have been accessing. *internetsafety.com* 

- Accountable2You monitors phone usage including internet and texting. One account covers all
  household computers, phones and tablets. accountable2you.com
- **Opendns** uses your router to protect every internet-connected device in your home (including devices such as the Xbox, Playstation, iPad, iPhone, etc.). *opendns.com*

#### **Media Safety Resources**

- LearnTheNet.com Ever feel like your kids speak a totally different language when it comes to technology terms? Learnthenet.com provides parents with practical, easy-to-understand information about various kinds of technology so that you can talk intelligently with your kids about media.
- FocusontheFamily.com Focus on the Family provides lots of articles on online media, entertainment and phone usage. On the website, click on the "Parenting" tab and then "Protecting Your Family."
- pluggedin.com Plugged In provides reviews of movies, videos, music, TV and games so that families can make wise choices before engaging with media.

#### **Addiction Resources**

One of the biggest addictions heightened by the Internet is addiction to pornography. For people dealing with pornography addiction, *avenueresource.com* and *x3church.org* are recommended websites. For another good resource, as well as a ministry that offers in-patient assistance, visit *purelifeministries.org*.

An exceptional book in this area is *Finally Free* (by Heath Lambert). For a biblical perspective on dealing with addiction, *Addiction and Grace* (by Gerald May) provides assistance. Though it is not primarily focused on technology addictions, the principles are easily transferrable to technology-related addictions.

For friends and family members of people struggling with pornography addiction, *newlifepartners.org* provides lots of information and assistance.

#### **Bioethic Resources**

One very challenging area for Christians to consider is the use of technology in medicine. The Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity (cdhd.org) at Trinity International University is a bioethics research center whose mission is to explore the "nexus of biomedicine, biotechnology, and our common humanity." The center seeks to help people understand the complex issues involved in biotechnology, nanotechnology, genetics, cloning, etc.

#### **Environmental Issue Resources**

The use of technology impacts not only humans but also our environment. The Evangelical Environment Network (*creationcare.org*) is a ministry seeking to care for God's creation. They desire to "equip, inspire, disciple, and mobilize God's people in their effort to care for God's creation" by looking at the issues that stem from the use of technology, including global warming, pollution, access to clean water, etc.

#### **Books**

Following is a short list of books that the technology committee complied to help you continue to develop a biblical theology of technology, as well as consider some additional wisdom for incorporating technology into your life:

- Communicating for Life: Christian Stewardship in Community and Media (RenewedMinds), by Quentin J. Schultze and Martin Marty (2000)
- Habits of the High-Tech Heart: Living Virtuously in the Information Age, by Quentin J. Schultze and Jean Bethke Elshtain (2002)
- Logged On and Tuned Out: A Non-Techie's Guide to Parenting in a Tech-Savvy Generation, by Vicki Courtney (2007)
- The Church of Facebook: How the Hyperconnected Are Redefining Community, by Jesse Rice (2009)
- From the Garden to the City: The Redeeming and Corrupting Power of Technology, by John Dyer and T. David Gordon (2011)
- The Next Story: Life and Faith after the Digital Explosion, by Tim Challies (2011)
- Living into Focus: Choosing What Matters in an Age of Distractions, by Arthur Boers (2012)
- Hooked: The Pitfalls of Media, Technology and Social Networking, by Gregory L. Jantz (2012)
- Crazy Busy: A (Mercifully) Short Book about a (Really) Big Problem, by Kevin DeYoung (2013)



