

What The Church Needs Now

Is To Take Advantage Of New Technology

(Mt 28:19-20)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Evening,
 - a. Greeting...
 - i. Thank you to this congregation for its dedication to righteousness.
 - ii. Thank you to the men for its leadership in preserving the old paths.
2. My topic for this evening is...
 - a. What the church needs now is to take advantage of new technology.
 - i. I am a self-proclaimed electronics nerd who does not shy away from saying such.
 - b. When Brother Earl called me and asked me if I would be willing to speak on this subject I was very excited and said yes quickly.
 - i. The reason I was so excited was not because I love technology so much.
 - ii. The reason I was so excited was because this is such a misunderstood tool within the brotherhood.
3. Technology is misunderstood.
 - a. Technology has always scared people for some reason.
 - i. The fear seems magnified in the church.
 - b. The reason people have been scared though is because, like most new things, they don't understand it.
 - i. Remember the fear of PowerPoint when it came out?
 1. Preachers had been using chalk boards, and overheads for years but as soon as you strap a computer to an overhead it became taboo.
 2. Example: Cherokee Hills cofC and their PowerPoint machine.
4. It is this fear I hope to stamp down and out today by educating and hopefully at the same time encouraging each of you on the benefits of technology to the church.
5. We will be focusing on three areas tonight.
 - a. The history of technology & how it has benefited the church.
 - i. We will examine how technology hasn't been a "bad thing" for the church.
 - b. Modern technology & how it is and can benefiting the church.
 - i. We will show that modern technology should be used by every church today
 - c. God is not against technology that benefits the church
 - i. We will show we have authority for said technology.
6. With that in mind let us take this time now to examine our lesson for this evening.

I. The History Of Technology & How It Has Benefited The Church

- A. My grandfather once said...
 1. "In my life time I have seen so much change that the world we live in now does not even compare to the world I was born into."
 - i. Born July 16th 1920 and died September 2003.
 2. The next lifetime might not seem as dramatic but we will have to wait to see.
- B. Technological advances over the last 114 years
 1. 1901 the first radio transmission was made.
 - i. Radio has allowed the church to spread the gospel out a bit farther than their local town.

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2. 1903 the Wright brothers flew the first plane.
 - i. There are two ways flying has benefited the church.
 - a. First it allows preachers from here to go to other countries quicker and spread the gospel.
 - b. Second it allows churches that are supporting missionaries to go and “checkup” on the work they are supporting.
 3. 1914 the Ford Model T was the first mass produced affordable car for only four months average pay.
 - i. The automobile has benefited the church greatly.
 - a. It has allowed the church to gather from greater distances which is significant in places were the church is not prevalent.
 - b. It has allowed the church to encourage other churches by being able to attend gospel meetings, lectureships, etc...
 4. 1928 hosted the first regularly scheduled television program.
 - i. The church has benefited from this because TV has made it possible for local congregations to teach the gospel all over the world with a single broadcast.
 - a. Think of how many souls have been reach by the Search Program and others like it.
 5. 1976 the personal PC was created and sold.
 - i. The church has benefited from this preachers can put so much more efficient study into sermons, Bible classes, ect...
 - a. Example: Hardeman Nicholes was shown by his grandson about “Ask Jeeves” a pre-google search function. We could see the excitement as he explained the hours he had been on that one sight asking it to look up information he previously would have spent days looking into.
 6. 1991 the World Wide Web was created by Tim Berners-Lee of Switzerland. In 1992 the user-friendly browser Mosaic later Netscape was created and issued in the modern web as seen today.
 - i. The church has benefited from this up to now through distribution of material.
 - a. In other words anyone could put material together like sermons or class notes and put them on a website for others to view, study, and even download.
 - ii. The church is just scratching the surface of what the web is now capable of doing which we will get into a bit later in this lesson.
- C. Therefore...
1. As we can see the church has benefited quite a bit from technology over the last 100 years or so. In the same way we have embraced past technology to benefit the church let us embrace modern technology.

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II. Modern Technology & How It Is Benefiting The Church

A. Electronic Visual Aids

1. Their use is nothing new
 - i. Preachers/teachers have been using chalkboards, overheads, and the like for years.
 - a. The use of electronic visual aids such PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi, and others like these are what is making visual aids exciting for preachers and teachers that take full advantage of them.
 2. Electronic visual aids are a benefit to the church.
 - i. It has been scientifically proven over and over that people who are taught by more than one method of teaching retain much more.
 - a. There are seven learning styles¹ that can be broke down into three basic overview styles if you will.
 1. Visual learning style
 2. Verbal learning style
 3. Physical learning style²
 - ii. Visual aids should do what their name suggest...aid in the teaching of God's word.
 - a. Far too many preachers have not taken full advantage of this great technology.
 1. For example in many congregations the most you get is the outline and verses for the lesson.
 - i. I have fallen into this category plenty of times.
 - b. We, preachers, need to stop looking at visual aids as outline boards and think along the line of aiding the lesson by impacting the student.
 1. I'm not suggesting "entertaining" people with it.
 - i. A preacher's responsibility is not to entertain but to proclaim God's Word.
 2. I'm suggesting using...
 - i. Maps, pictures, animations (when warranted), along with outline points and verses if desired.
 3. Thus...
 - i. Electronic visual aids are a benefit to the church because it aids the lesson and helping the student to mature even more.

B. Mobile devices

1. In 2003 I went to BTSOP with the KJV. A few months in I switched to the wide margin NKJV. By year two it had fallen apart and I learned of the ESV, started using it and have not looked back.
 - i. If one was to go through my ESV one would find a number of underlined verses, notes, and other marks of emphasis.
 - a. This has been the Bible student way for years and years.

¹ Overview of Learning Styles: <http://goo.gl/uqaMgy>

² New Life Behavioral Material "Parenting Matters: Train Up A Child Modeling Winning Behavior" by Creach, George & Motsinger, Hillery pg. 2

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- b. Over the last three or four years I have discovered that as I mature and learn more some of the marks or notes are not up to snuff.
 - 1. This means I have corrections, and in some cases scratching through some that are in there.
- ii. With the smart phone and tablet revolution since 2007 this method has started to change all that I just mentioned.
 - a. More and more people are starting to bring their phones and tablets instead paper Bibles. This has been a cause of concern for some people.
 - 1. Example: I was told by a man about a Bible class he attended at a congregation. The teacher after seeing so many with phones and tablets said I want to hear those pages turning in class today. I told the man, who thought this was a good idea, that all they needed to do was turn the “page turn sound on” and problem solved.
 - b. Instead of marking up their paper Bibles they are marking them up electronically.
 - 1. This allows for more detailed notes, corrections, changes, additions...
- 2. Mobile devices are a benefit for the church.
 - i. There is no doubt that some will abuse their devices and instead of using it for the purpose of Bible study during services they will play games or something along those lines.
 - a. Let’s be honest these same people weren’t studying during services anyway.
 - b. The majority of people use these devices in a proper way.
 - ii. How do these devices benefit the church?
 - a. They make it easier for everyone to read the verses for themselves.
 - 1. For many turning to a passage is easy to do but with a mobile device it is as simple as making three taps.
 - i. *Blue Letter Bible App Slide*
 - 2. That means children, non-Christian visitors, etc...can get to the passages quicker and can read it for themselves.
 - b. They make it easier to add specific verse or chapter notes.
 - 1. How many of us have taking notes on a sermon or Bible class only to find us never putting that information somewhere where we can use it regularly. It usually gets thrown away before it is ever used.
 - i. *Logos App Slide*
 - ii. *Blue Letter Bible App Slide*

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- c. They make studying in-depth easy for everyone.
 1. No longer does anyone need to open up multiple Lexicons and compare because they are at the tips of our fingers.
 - i. *Blue Letter Bible App*
 - ii. *Logos Bible App*
3. Thus...
 - i. We should be embracing and educating people to use these technologies not running from them.
- C. Social Networks
 1. Here is the fastest growing industry in the world.
 - i. Social networks giants are those companies like Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, Instagram, Skype...
 - a. “According to a new eMarketer report, “Worldwide Social Network Users: 2013 Forecast and Comparative Estimates,” nearly one in four people worldwide will use social networks in 2013. The number of social network users around the world will rise from 1.47 billion in 2012 to 1.73 billion this year, an 18% increase. By 2017, the global social network audience will total 2.55 billion.”³
 - ii. Back in 2010 I attended “Affirming The Faith” there at North MacArthur church of Christ. Joe Wells spoke on “Families Confronting Culture.”
 - a. In that lesson he stated young people are not using twitter.
 1. In 2010 that was a very true statement.
 - b. Fast forward to 2014 and most kids are using twitter along with many other social networking sites like Instagram, Snapchat...
 - iii. The point is that due to mobile devices all walks of life are getting on the social network bandwagon.
 2. Social networks are a benefit to the church.
 - i. They can be used to encourage the church.
 - a. I am personally apart of some preacher groups on Facebook and have gained much encouragement from such.
 1. From things as simple as asking their opinion on a particular study I’m doing to asking for prayers for a loved one I have been greatly encouraged.
 - b. This world is difficult and as such it is good to have those of like mindedness we can communicate with.

³ Article: “Social Networking Reaches Nearly One in Four the World;” Date: June 18, 2013<http://goo.gl/gjc6Mg>

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- ii. They can be used to defend God's Word.
 - a. One year ago or so I was helping family and friends in their defense against the false doctrine on MDR.
 - 1. To open the discussion up and reach more people I put a post on Facebook. Some here saw the post.
 - i. I then encouraged others to discuss the post.
 - 2. After some week or so of discussion and some 200 plus comments much good came for it.
 - i. First I found there were more that held to the truth than I realized.
 - ii. Second I was able to counsel a few people that were actually in an adulterous relationship.
 - iii. Third hundreds learned how to defend the truth on this subject.
 - b. God's Word can be defended on many topics through social networks.
 - 1. I have personally had several very good discussions with atheist over Twitter and as such have several atheist that follow me and many actually read the sermon notes, articles, and the like that I put up.
 - c. Over the last four years BTSOP Alumni have put on the BTSOP Alumni Lectureship.
 - 1. This lectureship is streamed live and over the years has been watched by people in twenty plus countries.
- iii. They can be used to teach the gospel to the world.
 - a. I personally studied the Bible with a young man over Facebook messenger who became a Christian.
 - 1. This particular gentleman was one not prone to talking on the phone but would text or message all night long.
 - 2. Thus I used the avenue available to me and taught him the gospel.
 - b. In the July 2014 Christian Chronicle⁴ I came across an article titled "Baptism via Skype: Christian in Arkansas plants Gospel seeds across an ocean in China."
 - 1. Cherry, the girl from China, was on the internet looking for someone to help her improve her English. Paul Harp the man from Arkansas notice Cherry's plea and told her he would help her.
 - 2. The Bible was their tool for learning better English. After about a year Cherry became a Christian by being immersed on her roof where there was a large water tank.

D. Hence...

- 1. One can clearly see that modern technology is a great benefit to the church if the church is willing to use it.

⁴ I don't recommend this newspaper as it is full of false doctrine nor do I pay for "support" the paper in anyway.

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III. God Is Not Against Technology That Benefits The Church

- A. We must have authority for everything we do
 - 1. Let me be clear, I am not suggesting we do anything that is not authorized.
 - i. **Co 3:17** “And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”⁵
- B. We must understand proper hermeneutics to properly understand the Bible
 - 2. God authorized using four methods.⁶
 - i. Direct Statement
 - ii. Example
 - iii. Implication
 - iv. Expedience
 - 3. God uses two standards for each of those four methods.
 - i. First standard is specific authority.
 - ii. Second standard is generic authority.
- C. We have authority for using modern technology
 - 1. God has authorized us to teach the gospel to everyone by any scriptural means possible.
 - i. **Mt 28:19** “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”
 - ii. **Mk 16:16** “...Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”
 - a. God specifically told us who do go to “everyone” we can.
 - 1. That being wherever we are we are to teach the gospel.
 - b. God generically told us how to go to “everyone.”
 - 2. God didn’t specifically say...
 - i. Go make disciples by foot.
 - ii. Go make disciples by carriage.
 - iii. Go make disciples by being carried.
 - c. God was generic in how we are to go and therefore are authorized to choose how we go and teach the gospel.
 - 1. Keeping in mind the method doesn’t violate any other scriptures.
 - 2. God has authorized us to study the His Word.
 - i. **II Ti 2:15** “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.”
 - ii. **Ps 1:1-3** “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.”

⁵ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

⁶ Great book on this is *Ascertaining Bible Authority* by Roy Deaver

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- a. God specifically authorized us to study His Word.
 - b. God generically authorized us to use any medium by which that Word finds itself.
 1. Whether stone, paper, or computer if the text is the inspired writ it is God's Word.
3. God has authorized us to use visual aids in our teaching the brethren.
- i. **Jn 8:5-7** "Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" 6 This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. 7 And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.""
 - ii. **Mt 21:19-22** "And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he went to it and found nothing on it but only leaves. And he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once. 20 When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?" 21 And Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' it will happen. 22 And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith.""
 - a. These are just a few of many but suffice to say God has authorized the use of visual aids in the teaching of His Word.
4. God has authorized us to defend His Word.
- i. **Jd 3** "Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints."
 - ii. **I Pt 3:15** "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect"
 - a. God has authorized us to defend Him with His Word, how we get the Word out is been left to us.
 1. Whether TV, radio, social media, or websites we are to use that which is at our disposal to defend the truth.
- D. Thus...
1. The technology we have discussed in no way violates God's Word as long as it is used scripturally.

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CONCLUSION

1. Brethren as God's people we are to stay on the Old Paths of righteousness but that does not mean we cannot use the new tools that are now available.
 - a. Let us not be a people anymore that run from technology but rather embrace it and use it to glorify God in the furtherance of the gospel.
2. Question: Are you willing to further the gospel any biblical means necessary?
 - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If not why not?
3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**