

Pk's Perspectives ... Technology

Technology and social media are now fixed threads in the fabric of most of our lives; there may be a few 80+ year-old folks who have yet to establish a Facebook page or an email account, but the great majority of people are at least minimally connected in the cyber world. Ever since grandparents discovered they could look at pictures of grandchildren on Facebook and actually talk to grandchildren on a computer via Face Time, social media connectivity has exploded far beyond the demographic margins of teenagers and young adults.

As with any other aspect of our culture, we need to maintain a healthy perspective and practice discipline in regards to how we use technology so that we don't find ourselves being ruled by the technology beast. For example...food is a great thing but too much food is not healthy, the wrong kinds of food can be damaging, and food has become the master if a person finds himself or herself living to eat instead of eating to live. The same can be said of music, work, pleasure, exercise, and technology.

Andrea received the following list in an email and forwarded it to me. It's a good list; actually, a great list. I wanted to share it with you. Read this list slowly and reflect on each point because I've noticed that it's not just teenagers that have developed a smart phone umbilical cord! Here are 6 ways to know when technology is in its proper place:

1) Technology is in its proper place when it helps us bond with the real people we have been given to love. It's out of its proper place when we end up bonding with people at a distance, like celebrities, whom we will never meet.

2) Technology is in its proper place when it starts great conversations. It's out of its proper place when it prevents us from talking with and listening to one another.

3) Technology is in its proper place when it helps us take care of the fragile bodies we inhabit. It's out of its proper place when it promises to help us escape the limits and vulnerabilities of those bodies altogether.

4) Technology is in its proper place when it helps us acquire skill and mastery of domains that are the glory of human culture (sports, music, the arts, cooking, writing, accounting; the list could go on and on). When we let technology replace the development of skill with passive consumption, something has gone wrong.

5) Technology is in its proper place when it helps us cultivate awe for the created world we are part of and responsible for stewarding (our family spent some joyful and awe-filled hours when our children were in middle school watching the beautifully produced BBC series Planet Earth). It's out of its proper place when it keeps us from engaging the wild and wonderful natural world with all our senses.

6) Technology is in its proper place only when we use it with intention and care. If there's one thing I've discovered about technology, it's that it doesn't stay in its proper place on its own; much like my children's toys and stuffed creatures and minor treasures, it finds its way underfoot all over the house and all over our lives. If we aren't intentional and careful, we'll end up with a quite extraordinary mess.

Cya in Sunday School & Worship, PK.