

TEENS ASK: WHERE IS GOD IN TODAY'S SOCIAL MEDIA?

ser4042, God in the Real World, Pt 4

May 23, 2021 E & L

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(HOOK) What is Social Media? (Play Video)

I love that video ([go into details about video](#)).

(DO DANCE WITH PB)

Let's begin with a question, shall we?

- o What are our teens going through or seeing while dealing with the media?
- o This includes social media, movies, music, etc.
- o This morning I want to focus on social media.
- o Did you know that according to statistics 90% of teenagers ages 13-17 use social media?
- o The main reasons teens are attracted to elements of the media are because it is a way of communication. They feel it allows them to express themselves. It keeps them up to date on all the news and trends, and it is a way of escaping the real world.

- o While most of these things sound great, we have to ask ourselves: ***“Where is God in today’s media for our teens?”***

Let us Pray!

Let’s tackle one thing at a time.

Social Media (Show Slide)

Social media keeps teenagers occupied, and in some instances, it can be helpful. However, social media is highly controlled by large corporations and influencers who show us what is popular and what is not popular. The most frightening thing about social media when it comes to our teens is that *social media tells our teens how to live their lives and in most cases, God is absent.*

When teens are involved in social media there are a large number of risk factors. Researchers have established that many teens who are heavily involved in social media have a much higher risk of depression. Why? *Because it increases levels of comparison. It encourages bullying. It decreases social interaction. Finally, it gives teens fear of “missing out on things” when they are unable to be a part of things.*

Then add elements of anxiety and self-esteem. When we have these high-class people controlling our social media, our teens feel pressured by what is acceptable and what is not. Social media subliminally tells our teens that they are to be “perfect”. Whether that’s in

posting photos, in commenting back to people...the list goes on. Then our teens are pressured into what people will think of them while being on social media.

ILLUSTRATION: Tell story about a friend in high school.

(BOOK) WHERE IS GOD IN ALL OF THIS?

There are many risk factors when it comes to our teens dealing with social media. The even greater risk, *where is God in all of this?*

- o Verse 1 (**Show Slide**)
- o **Romans 12:2** says:
Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.

I ask again, *where is God in all of this?*

On some social media platforms, religious posts and content can be blocked or deemed as not true, or even "hateful."

In the past, I've made a few posts that people would deem controversial.

- o Let me just say: NO ONE CAN EVER BLOCK, DELETE, OR FACT CHECK GOD.

- o When there is a will there is a way, and God's will is always ***the*** way!

(LOOK) WHERE CAN OUR TEENS FIND GOD IN ALL OF THIS?

I say, "Church, it starts with us."

- o Instead of posting things of a demeaning nature, we should be posting things that show the joy and glorification of Jesus.
- o We must let our teens know:
 - That person on Twitter does not define you.
 - That person on Instagram does not have the authority to control your feelings and tell you that you are not beautiful because you are not thin.
 - That person on Snapchat has no right to pressure you into sending photos that you know are inappropriate,
 - That person on Tik-Tok has no right to tell you that you are a terrible dancer or that you do not properly follow trends. (**Ask PB? LOL!**)
 - That person on Facebook has no right to insult you because of who you are.

***The only person in authority over your life is God.
(*Say that with me!)**

I'm not preaching here without basis. Believe me, I know. It wasn't too long ago I was a teen, and I know

there can be many things that teens are faced with when dealing with social media. But, here's the thing... *God debunks every trial that teens face when dealing with social media.*

- o Peer pressure is a big deal when dealing with social media, and social media will tell you to give in, while God says in (Slide) **1 Corinthians 10:12-13:** ¹² So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! ¹³ No temptation^[c] has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted^[d] beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted,^[e] He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.
- o There comes a time when friendships are drastically challenged if social media is a part of the picture. Social media tells our teens what the proper qualities of a friend are. (Go into detail.)
- o (Slide) In **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** God defines friendship as this: ⁹ Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: ¹⁰ If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. ¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? ¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can

defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

- o Next, you get to issues of self-identity, self-esteem, and everything that falls under that umbrella (**go into detail**).
- o What God says to that is:

(**Slide**) **Genesis 1:27** So God created mankind in His own image in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them.

- o (**Slide**) **1 Corinthians 15:10** ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.
- o You see, with social media in the lives of teens, everything is up **for grabs**. There is no true answer to *friendship*. There is no official solution to *peer pressure*. There is no official solution to *mental health* issues, such as depression, anxiety, etc. And, there is no official solution to the *identity* issues within social media.

BUT, I SAY THAT GOD HAS A SOLUTION TO EVERY AREA OF LIFE INCLUDING OUR PERSONAL SHORTCOMINGS. Peter tells us, **to every man an answer. 1 Peter 3:15-18**

Teens! I am talking to you all on this one.

- o *Social media* does not have the answers, God does!
- o *Tik-Tok* does not have the answers, God does!
- o *Facebook* does not have the answers, God does!
- o *Twitter* does not have the answers, God does!
- o *Snapchat* does not have the answers, God does!
- o *Instagram* does not have the answers, GOD HAS THE ANSWERS!

God has the answers. Now I am not saying to get rid of social media, I am not saying social media is bad in itself. What I am saying is to not fall into the evil agenda that we so often find on social media. Jesus said, "Let me not fall into temptation."

How can we make God a forefront on social media, and what is the best way we can incorporate God into social media?

It is so simple; it starts with us, church.

1. We must look at ourselves.
2. We must promote the love of God instead of our personal propaganda.
3. We must show our youth that they are beautiful no matter what the Instagram model throws in their face.

4. We must show them the joy of the Lord instead of constantly having a Boomers vs. Gen Z battle.
5. We must let them know that they can be lit and still be cool.

There is no shame in being public with our walk with the Lord, and we have to show them that.

- o Lil Baby, Miley Cyrus, Doja Cat, Da Baby, Lil Durk, PnB Rock, Drake, Beyonce, Taylor Swift, and the list goes on. These are all amazing talents, but at the end of the day, God is the only one that is going to contribute to your happiness.

(TOOK) AS YOUTH PASTOR AT GCCC

- o I want to start a new trend. I want to start a trend that allows all teens who are involved in social media, know that it is okay to spread the Gospel.
- o I want our teens to know that nothing on these devices has to define who they are.

God has made each of you beautiful and knowledgeable, CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD. Believe that NO app can tell you otherwise. If you are TIGHT WITH JESUS, you are beautiful in the image of God.

Transition line into INVITATION.

Admit– your sins have separated you from God. (Psa 14:1-3; Rom 3: 23);

Believe – that God did something about your sins through Jesus Christ. (The final Pascal Lamb/Messiah.)

(Lev 17:10; Heb 9: 19-22);

Commit – yourself to His righteousness by confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior. (Isa 53:5; Col 1:22);

Do it today! (Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2).

Father in Heaven, thank you for loving me. I admit that I am a sinner. I believe that you did something about my sin, through your son Jesus, when He died, so that I could be forgiven. Jesus, come into my heart, I give you my life. I make you my Lord and Savior. Amen.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Those of you who prayed with me today and **received** Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, please fill out the **Welcome Card** or **White Envelope** found in the pew in front of you and check the box that says FTD. Place it in the offering baskets as you leave the Church. We'll be in touch this week via letter giving you a few pointers on how to grow in your fellowship with Christ.

Those of you watching [online](#), who prayed with me, please ...

TEXT: Pray to 62488 or

EMAIL: Bruce@gcccprayer.com

CLOSING STATEMENT!

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