



ADDICTED

Have we gone too far?



Do we already
sense that we
are?

Are we listening
to ourselves?

-- Modern Media Committee

Addicted? Yes, while to many it is hidden, to a few it is evident that I am obsessed with my smartphone and computer. How did this happen? Subconsciously, I have been seeking for happiness, not momentary happiness, but lasting contentment. I seek to find it in the texts or e-mails I receive, via YouTube videos, Instagram and Facebook posts, etc., while daily losing sight of where true happiness is to be found. Despite my accusing conscience which warns me to follow God and His Word, I stubbornly seek to fill the ever-aching void within by pursuing satisfaction where it cannot be found. Constantly, I'm checking my phone or tablet for messages from others, reading the news, getting updates on the weather, searching for entertaining video clips — all with a hope that something will speak loud and clear, “Happiness lies here!”.

Alas, my efforts are all in vain. Instead of drawing me closer to my goal, they drive me to the brink of despair. I am so wrapped up in seeking my happiness in earthly things that I fail to hear the words, “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace”.

With technology being so accessible, I am trapped in a habit of viewing others' lives in comparison to my own. I laugh at clips of comical people or hilarious animals, adore others' homes and families, or become absorbed in trivial details related to people's blogs or posts. All seems to grant a reprieve from life's daily pressures but, admittedly, it yields only momentary satisfaction. I cannot ignore the sense of becoming enslaved to these time-wasting habits. My conscience again faithfully warns me that I am not redeeming the time.

Despite my good intentions and seemingly innocent social networking with friends and family, it is evident that carelessness and wordly-mindedness are the root causes. Nevertheless, I reason, “Don't think so deep; it's all okay. There's no happiness in relinquishing my self-love and acceptance with others. After all, am I not worthy to be liked, respected, and admired for all that I have accomplished?” Truth is, I have no desire to live a selfless life of complete surrender to Christ by submitting to His Word and will.

Dear reader, you may recognize in my account much of your own struggles with an overindulgence in social networking and the temptations associated with modern media. Surrounded by overwhelming amounts of data in the form of words, pictures, videos, etc., our lives have become unavoidably interconnected and dependent upon technology. While technology is not evil in itself, our abuse of it can tempt us to fall into sin. It has a powerful way of ensnaring us in its web of deceit and vainglory.

Little by little we form habits that pull us away from our family, friends, spouse, and children, even God's Word and church. Rather than interacting constructively face-to-face with others, we carelessly



default to the indirect and partially secretive approach of using social media to view others' lives and compare them to our own. Subconsciously, we may begin to covet what others have or pride ourselves in how much better we have it compared to them. We post pictures of ourselves and family seeking respect, affirmation and admiration by others. We spend an inordinate amount of time seeking our personal pleasure, while we waste the precious hours that God gives us each day to redeem. Our digital habits even tempt us to desecrate the Sabbath day. Our motives and desires become increasingly self-centered which is idolatry before God. Our digital addiction quickly leads to the transgression of all God's commandments. We desire the praise of men, yet have little regard to that which is most important: How do we stand in the sight of our Almighty Creator who shall one day judge us for every thought, word and action?

Will we then appear conformed to the image of God and be found perfect in the Lord Jesus Christ?