

CHAPTER 7 TECHNOLOGY



This study guide offers a suite of resources for teachers, small group leaders, or parents to generate discussion and reflection. This guide is not intended to be a structured 'lesson plan', but aims to provide questions, discussion starters, Bible passages, videos, and challenge questions that can be shaped into a structured experience.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

You might use one or more of these to foster engagement in a discussion about technology:

- > How immersed in, and impacted by, digital culture are you (scale of 1-10)?
- > How important is it for you to stay connected and up to date?
If you are honest, how easily do you experience FoMO?
- > What are some of the ways that digital technology has been really helpful in your life?
- > Is it possible that having a mass of friends online may actually detract from feeling connected in real life?
How so?
- > Does your connection to social networking ever make you a little anxious?
- > Does digital culture always help you to be the person you really want to be?
Or can it sometimes get in the way?

BIBLE PASSAGES

This resource is not intended to be a Bible study. However, discussion and reflection on one or more of these passages, and how they might inform a view of the topic of the chapter, is encouraged. It would be good to direct questioning towards, "What was the original context?", "What was the author's purpose?", and "How does the passage add to a big picture view of technology?":

Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth." But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The Lord said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—

because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth. *Genesis 11:1-9*

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. *Colossians 3:17*

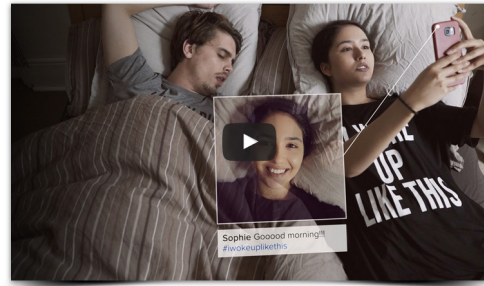
Do not make any idols. *Exodus 34:17*

STIMULUS VIDEOS

You might use one or more of these videos to generate engagement. Or you might use one at the end of the discussion with the focus being to critique the assumptions within the video. You might follow the viewing with questions like “What feelings did that video give you?”, or “Would this video be helpful to show young children? Why or why not?”, or “What do we learn about our culture in this video?”:



Are you lost in the world like me?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3wjcwTcfT4>



Are you living an Insta lie?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EFHbruKEmw>



Can we auto-correct humanity?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRl8ElhrQjQ>



You wouldn't say it in person
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TJ9P_nDbTo

All videos can be found at www.thefrogandthefish.com/videos

EXTRACTS FROM THE BOOK

It might be that reading one, or both, of these extracts from *The Frog and the Fish* could be a helpful addition to your discussion time:

“Our social networking technologies create a narcissistic endless loop. Self-promoting behaviour tends to be rewarded with more ‘likes’, comments, and friend connections. The more we self-promote, the more connected we are to fellow self-promoters—and the loop continues. We then begin to understand our self-worth through this narcissistic loop and it can be hard to recognise that you have been looped in. Maybe we don’t consciously think that the more likes we get for a post the more valuable we are as a person. But what about at the subconscious level? Have you ever checked on the responses to a post and either experienced a little injection of excitement, or a small churn of disappointment, with the level of response? I suspect that I am not alone in this. Digital technologies, like social networking,

have flavoured the water of our world in a way that makes self-focused behaviour more normal and more acceptable. The first question for us to consider is, “How aware of this are we?”. The second is, “How much is my habit of cultural immersion hindering me being the person that I desire to be?”

The Frog and the Fish, Chapter 7, pg. 71

“We can begin to idolise technology. One of the storylines of our society is that humans have remarkable ability to discover, to understand, and to conquer—an ability to create the perfect world that we want to live in. Science, and its resulting technologies, have an important place in this story. Technology then becomes something that we worship and idolise as a thing that can save us from all that is wrong and broken in the world. This view is subtle and requires us to be discerning. It is therefore worth asking ourselves, “How much have I been shaped by this cultural story?”, and “How much do I rely on technology to give me a sense of security, purpose, and hope?”

The Frog and the Fish, Chapter 7, pg. 74

? CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

Perhaps the aim of your discussion/reflection with your group is to present a biblical perspective on the topic of the chapter. It might be that challenging the culturally shaped assumptions currently held needs to compliment this. You might use one or more of these questions to help achieve this:

1. Do you ever feel that the more information you access the less you seem to know?

It's good to be informed. However, the efficiency and effectiveness of digital technologies have resulted in an over-emphasis in being informed. This is (ironically) resulting in a decrease in knowing. We are tending to settle for shallow knowing at the cost of depth and wisdom.

2. When was the last time you posted a vulnerable insight into the real you?

Digital technologies are designed in a way that encourages us to bias our posting to the happy, positive aspects of our lives and under emphasise the everyday, the 'real', and the struggles of life. This can lead us to feel a tad depressed with our own lives as they don't look so 'cool', together, and perfect as other people's.

3. Have you ever felt a pull toward self-promotion when you are online?

Digital technologies are designed to promote narcissistic behaviour and mindset. They can make self-loving, 'look-at-me' attitudes seem normal and good. Digital technologies are potentially shaping our character.

4. Have you ever sent a text message when you really should have phoned?

Increasingly, digital technologies are being used as mediator between us and real-life-living. The more we embrace them the more we become self-focused, relationally lazy, and miss out on rich relational depth.

5. Do you tend to view technology as 'just a tool' that you must use well?

We oversimplify the effect of technology on shaping our view of life, our view of others, and our view of ourselves, if we persist in thinking, “It's only a tool and I just have to make sure I use it in good ways.”

6. What is the nature of your relationship with your phone; honestly?

The cultural storytelling around technology promises that it can provide security and hope. However, technology at its best makes life easier, and at its worst draws us away from the 'good life' God has designed for humans. It cannot provide security and hope, nor can it save us.