



**Educate
+ Engage**



**MEDIA
MATTERS:**



**Social Media-
The Digital
Tapestry**

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, we explore the effects of our online presence—specifically through social media—and also the nuances of digital authenticity, the power of storytelling through visuals, and the role of social media in fostering meaningful connections.

As we navigate the vibrant tapestry of social media, it's crucial to recognize its profound influence on our lives. This virtual realm shapes our identities, molds our interactions, and serves as a powerful tool for both positive and negative impacts. We must embark on this digital journey with discernment, understanding the depth of our responsibility as Christians in this dynamic space.

Scripture Passage

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV)

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

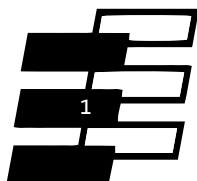
I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

God's Insight: Your light can shine and direct others to Christ, even through social media. Our identity is found in Christ, not in the affirmation of others.

EDUCATE

Crafting Authentic Digital Identities

In the digital age, our online personas often become extensions of us. Beyond mere representation, authenticity is key. Consider how your social media presence can reflect the genuine nature of your faith journey, showcasing the highs and lows, struggles and triumphs.



Christian authenticity online involves more than just sharing positive moments; it encompasses transparency about challenges and reliance on God's grace. As you craft your digital identity, remember that others are likely grappling with similar struggles. Your authenticity might serve as a source of encouragement and connection.

Optional Activity: Ask students to really think about their social media presence. Have them consider the authenticity of their posts and how they align with their real-life experiences. Then allow them to share their reflections with a peer, exploring how authenticity can foster genuine connections.

Discussion Questions: In what ways can authenticity on social media positively impact others? How can you balance authenticity while still maintaining a positive online presence?

The Power of Visual Storytelling

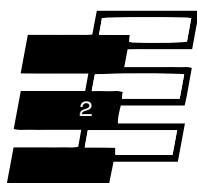
Visual storytelling carries significant weight in the world of social media. Beyond words, images convey powerful stories and emotions. As Christians we can use visuals to share God's love, the beauty of creation, and moments of gratitude.

Consider how a simple image accompanied by a thoughtful caption can communicate a profound message. Visual storytelling isn't about presenting a perfect life but rather sharing the imperfect beauty of God's work in progress.

Social media has proven to be a tool that could build up or tear down. Especially among teens, social media has become a place to compare our lives with each other. However, most of our lives we see on social media are heavily filtered and it's the thirteenth take of the photo to get it all just right. But that's not real life. And unless you live by the coast or in Paris, we don't always live on the beach or in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower.

Those photos and reels are carefully chosen from once a year—or even once in a lifetime—events. You often don't see the photos where your peers and classmates are raking leaves or cleaning out the garage. But we spend more time living “real life” than we spend on vacation. Don't compare your life to everyone else's. Open your eyes and see the blessings God has given you right where you are.

Trends are also changing like the weather in the Midwest United States. What is popular today will not be tomorrow, so trying to keep followers following and engaged is a full-time, high stress job. Take the stress off yourself. If the world does not comment or engage with your post



or reel, that's okay. If you're using social media to help glorify God, many times just getting the message out there is the aim. Let the world know who you are and whose you are. You belong to Jesus and He loves you, no matter who does or doesn't "like" your post.

Optional Activity: Pair students with one another. Ask each group to choose a Bible verse and create a visual representation of that verse using images or symbols. Allow them to share their creations with the class, discussing how visual storytelling can convey powerful messages.

Discussion Questions: How can visual storytelling be a tool for sharing Christian values on social media? In what ways have you seen visual storytelling impact your own perspective or that of others?

Fostering Meaningful Connections

Social media is more than a platform for self-expression; it's a way to build connections. We Christians can leverage this digital space to encourage, support, and uplift others. Engaging in meaningful conversations, sharing resources, and offering prayers can turn virtual connections into genuine relationships.

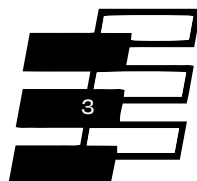
Recognize the potential of social media to foster a sense of community. Join groups or communities that align with your Christian values and actively contribute to discussions that edify and inspire.

Optional Activity: Form small groups and explore a cause or ministry on social media that aligns with faith. Allow groups to share their findings with the class, discussing how these online communities can contribute to our spiritual journeys.

Discussion Questions: How can social media be a platform for Christian fellowship and support? What challenges do you face in fostering meaningful connections in the digital world?

Closing

As we conclude our discussion of social media, remember that the digital tapestry you weave is not just a collection of pixels; it is a canvas that reflects your Christian identity. Navigate the digital realm with wisdom, grace, and the light of Jesus Christ, taking care that both the words and images you share convey an authentic lifestyle that honors God and encourages wholesome interaction



ENGAGE

Create a digital covenant, outlining principles and values that reflect a Christ-centered approach to social media. Share this covenant with your wider social media circles, inviting others to join in fostering a positive and uplifting online community that glorifies God and helps make disciples for Him. Let your digital presence be a beacon of light in an oft dark digital landscape, drawing others closer to the love of Jesus.

