

## The Church in Babylon

### Study Notes

### Session Four

#### “The Church, Technology, and Purity”

#### A. The Church, Technology, and Purity

##### 1. Three Myths About Technology

- a. **Technology is Neutral:** Years ago, Neil Postman (“*Amusing Ourselves to Death*”) argued that technology always had a bias. Our news programs are leading us one direction or the other; our movies and shows are trying to lead us toward a particular understanding of life; the commercials are trying to attract us to buy something; even social media posts are geared to create some kind of an impact. Whether it’s good or bad, technology isn’t neutral. There’s always a direction we are being led.
- b. **What We Watch Doesn’t Affect Us:** As more research is conducted on human viewing habits, scientists are seeing more long-term effects upon our brains and our relationships with others – whether that’s through videogames, pornography, social media, news networks, sports programming, etc. When we watch and engage in unhealthy forms of viewing – whether it’s ungodly content, intense situations, and news coverage, or over lengthy periods of time – our minds become desensitized, discouraged, depressed, or over-burdened.
- c. **We Cannot Control Technology with the Off Button:** Technology has such a power grip on people that they cannot turn it off, even when they know it’s harmful or leading them to sin. Furthermore, the dangers of technology appear even after we hit the “off button.” Many today do not know how to engage in meaningful in-person conversation with someone else. Others do not have the willpower to disconnect.

##### 2. The Dangers and Misuses of Social Media

- a. **Danger:** While social media has many benefits and can be used for good, it has developed into a dangerous tool for the enemy. Regardless of what platform a person uses, social media has given a public voice to violent speech, harsh criticism, verbal abuse, the spread of gossip and rumors, the exaggeration of issues and concerns, the distortion of real life, and the destruction of individuals and institution.
- b. **Problem:** Sometimes such negative social media activity takes place within the church, between the people of God.
  - **Galatians 5:13, 15** – *“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.”*

- **Galatians 6:1** – *“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.”*

c. **Important Questions Before Posting Grievances on Social Media** (Lutzer)

- Why do you think your proposed exposé is necessary to bring glory to God? What God-honoring goal do you have in mind?
- Have you gone to this person and/or institution to make sure that your facts are not only correct but also in balance and in context?
- If you are writing about a particular person, would you say these things to their face? Or do you find it safe to shoot arrows from a distance, immune from uncomfortable personal interaction?
- Do you write with the goal of bringing about restoration and/or reconciliation whenever possible? Or are you writing out of a spirit of anger and personal hurt?
- Are you under the authority of a church or Christian institution to whom you owe accountability for your own life and actions?

3. **Hearts Drawn Away from God**

- a. **Proverbs 4:23** – *“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”*
- b. **Challenge:** We must discipline ourselves and our children to be more responsible when it comes to technology and media. We must put accountability measures in place and keep watch on others, especially children. In a similar way, churches need to help, guide, and encourage their people to confront this enemy, not support it.
- c. **Matthew 5:8** – *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”*