



Theme: “Smile You’re On Facebook!”

Scripture:

A Thought: I am not on Facebook. Oh, okay, go ahead call me a fuddy-duddy. Yep, proud to be one. It isn’t because I am remnant of the past, deliberately ignorant or I miss my old battered Royal typewriter or the fact that I am seventy something. I just got plain tired of it. There were times in the old Facebook days that I would lock in as though my life depended on it. I personally never sent a Facebook missive to anyone. However I was the recipient of countless, yes, countless blips of smiles, zippy comments, vacation pictures, cat pictures, dog pictures, family pictures, and “this is what I am doing NOW pictures.” Did I say smiles, already? Yes, cheek to cheek smiles. Many of the pictures were sent to me as though they thought I wanted to be a part of their immediate experience. I received them faster than you can say Polaroid, Ah, ha - got-cha! For the uninitiated Polaroid is a camera that was once the craze at least for a moment: it produced a finished print within seconds after each exposure...Facebook sans the internet. One thing though there was generally a personal experience an “eye ball to eye ball” experience. Actual words were exchanged. The moment was shared in the same environs. Facebook...it’s the smiles that get to me. Are they sincere? The world has had Facebook for less than ten years. Facebook and social media have changed the way we act and react to each other. Frankly, my personal observation I believe it is a phony way to communicate. Let’s take the “smile.” I have been around folks who are walking around (family gatherings, outings, work) pouting or mourning as though their dog just died and presto when the opportunity comes for a Facebook photo op....the perennial cheek to cheek. Not good. What are the emotions, thoughts, attitude behind the smile? Or is it no less no more than switching the light on? As Christians we know there is a time for everything...Ecclesiastes 3:4 “*a time to weep; and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.*” We are truly blessed that God provides us with all emotions that make us tick day to day. So, is the smile truly sincere? **Now what are your thoughts? Write them down.**

Talk to yourself:

- Is the frequency of social media creating a false persona of oneself?
- Is social media a shortcut for establishing a personal one-to-one relationship?
- Are the fingers doing all the psychological and spiritual heavy lifting for you?
- Is the “emoji” electronic image or icon equivalent to your true feelings?

Scriptures to read:

- Psalms 101:3-4; Isaiah 52:7; 1 Cor. 15:33; Ephesians 5:11;
- Matthew 6:22-23; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22; James 3:5-11; 1 John 2:15-17;
- Psalms 126:2; Nehemiah 8:10; Psalm 15:11; Philippians 4:4; 4:8

Quote: Craig Hodges, author, *“A fixation with connecting with friends on line comes with the rise of disconnection with friends waiting for you to be present in the offline world.”* My Note: I would include family - especially if they are not Facebook followers.

Bottom Line:

I’m not so naive that I don’t know there is a positive flip side to the social media movement. Long distance relationships become close relationships via our fingers. Quick communication in a moment of time “good and the bad” can provide information, relieve tension, stress, apprehension, worry, suspicion, instruction and humor in various formats. And of course a natural meaningful smile...(Psalm 19:14 NIV) *“May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”* The problem is are we becoming captives of false personas? Meaning, how different would we be as one person suggested if we couldn’t show off on social media would we continue to be devotees of the movement? Today’s Facebook follower is the publicist, newscaster, comedian, gossip, town crier, educator, psychologist and metaphorically speaking a podium of sorts...so, be careful. Take heed to Paul’s exhortation...(1 Corinthians 6:12 NIV) *“Everything is permissible for me” - but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible for me” - but I will not be mastered by anything.”*

NOW.....THAT’S THE BOTTOM LINE.

Spiritual Dabbler, Your bro, Ray

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