Be Responsible With Social Media

➤ Intro:
- "**social media**" (as it's known in the modern world) has been around about 15 years or so
    - **social media, broadly defined**, is media designed to be disseminated through **social interaction**
    - **illus.: search engine** – users searches based on key words they enter

- **examples of more complex social media:**
    - email groups: South Livingston, BOL, BibleStudyGuide
    - social networking: Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Blogger
    - collaboration: wikipedia

- **Facebook.com:** #1 in social networking
    - ranked #2 busiest website in the world by Alexa, just behind Google.com
    - stats as of 6-9-10
        - more than 400 million active users
        - 50% of our active users log on to Facebook in any given day
        - average user has 130 friends
        - people spend over 500 billion minutes per month on Facebook

- **Google Wave** is probably the most recent invention of social networking which is already being used by corporations and schools for online collaboration

- **social media is like the telephone, TV, and computer**, everyone who wants to work, and communicate with most everyone else will have to use social media
        - **illus.: Dad**, started working for Levi Strauss before computers, did everything by hand, had to learn to use a computer, worked online before retired
        - **illus.: Allan**, social media, thought to myself, better get with the program or get left behind
            - **BibleStudyGuide.org:** newsletter through Yahoo Groups, RSS news feed, podcasts, recently made the search engine a more prominent feature of the site, started a Facebook group, added share buttons
            - **personally:** started Facebook page to keep up with kids, grand kids, brethren, and friends
        - **illus.: business**, social media is a "must" to be successful today, especially for small business and entrepreneurs

- **as with everything, social media is good as a gift from God, and it's our responsibly to use it properly, to the glory of God**

- **lesson:** Be Responsible With Social Media
    - **note: lesson on advocating the use of social media**, which is a choice, but those who to be involved with social media have responsibilities as Christians

➤ **Social media can be used for good and evil purposes** – like other types of media – **be responsible**

- **social media can be used for either good or evil, just like everything else**
  - **Rom. 7:12 -13 the law is good when used properly** (by faith), **but when not** used properly results in sin and death
  - **printing press:** Bible v. pornography
  - **telephone:** Bible study v. gossip
  - **gun:** kill animal for food v. murder a person
  - **Bible:** rightly divide and teach truth vs. twist and teach error
  - **must stay alert and on guard regarding social media**, just like with everything else, that we only use it for good

➤ - **just because something is used in sinful way, doesn't make it "all" bad**
  - **1 Tim 4:4 everything created by God is good** (Ja. 1:17)
    - **illus.: meat for food**
    - **illus.: printing press, internet, social media**
➤   - **1 Tim. 1:8 our responsibility to use the things God created** (social media) **lawfully** – good deeds
    - **illus.: Mosaic Law**, today use it for our learning
    - **illus.: printing press, internet, social media**

➤ - **social media is being used for good in the kingdom**
  - **it is a way for Christians to stay in touch, and expedite important matters**
    - **illus.: SL email group**, helps us stay in touch, esp. through the week regarding important matters (sick)
    - **illus.: BOL**, keeps brethren in touch regarding **urgent needs and prayer** (urgent matters)
    - **illus.: BOL, I use frequently to find Bible teachers** in places where there are no congregations, to introduce contacts, esp. in foreign countries
    - **illus.: online databases of sound churches**
  - **it helps us reach people with the gospel**
    - **search engines are helping Bible teachers get the truth out to people we may not reach otherwise**
      - **illus.: one contact wrote me through BSG last week and requested baptism**, lives in a town in Kansas where there is not a church, was able to connect her to a preacher who lives in her town and preaches in a nearby church
      - **illus.: another contact wrote several times last week who had requested to be baptism**, introduced her to a local gospel preacher with whom she's ben studying, has just learned she is in an unlawful marriage, is in the process of repenting and getting a divorce
      - **illus.: my teaching resources reach people in more than 100 countries**, one in particular that it's illegal for Bible teachers to go there personally
    - **social media let Bible teachers keep people updated on available resources**
      - **illus.: I update people on BSG through** RSS news feed, audio podcast, video podcast, newsletter, Facebook group

- **social media can be used for good and for evil, just like everything else**
  - **we have to be alert and on guard for sin**, and protect ourselves from evil
  - **we can use it to accomplish good**, as the Lord provides opportunity
  - **use responsibly**

➤ **Parents have a responsibility to train their children to properly use social media** (Dawn suggested)
    - note: some parents may decide to train their children to never engage themselves with social media, and that is their right – not opposing their view – this is still training

    - Eph. 6:4 parents train and discipline, includes social media and computer usage in general
        - illus.: like TV and telephones, social media is woven into our society
            - so parents have to train children regarding its use, just like answering and talking on the phone

➤   **- Eph. 6:1-3 children obey, have long life** – learn, use computer as parents instruct

    - illus.: teaching kids regarding social media to be responsible – things we all know
        - teach how to **keep personal** info private
        - teach how to safely use **search engines** – filters
        - teach who to **add people** to their social networks, when to **delete** someone
        - teach how to **detect crime** and protect themselves **– protect from stalkers**
        - parent monitoring of computer usage, especially when young
            - like teaching to ride a bike, 1st with training wheels, then supervised without training wheels, to less supervision, to none at all after their grown

    - as parents, our job is to train our children – social media is not an exception **– be responsible**
        - if we're going to let our kids engage in social media, we should be very familiar with it (not just from watching the news, but through personal experience) so we can guide them

➤ **Social media is a reflection of who you are** (Andrea suggested) – like everything you say and do
  - **Matt. 7:15-20 people know us by our fruits**
    - **our actions** are a reflection of who we are – **social media** is a reflection of who we are

➤ - **illus.: Google search for "Allan McNabb" on Facebook**
    - **pic.: screen shoot, Allan's Facebook**, not logged into Facebook
      - what anyone in the world can see whether we're friends or not
    - **see some of my friends**, who have a **reflection** on me – **review who they are**
      - **and I am a reflection on them**
    - **see some of my interests**, which have a **reflection** on me – **review**

➤ - **God's laws apply to the online world – though people in society don't think so**
    - **Col. 3:17 God's laws apply to our behavior at all times** – including social media, internet
      - **words** used, **thoughts** expressed, dealing with **anger and hurt feelings**
      - **interaction between male and female** the same whether online or in person
      - **pretending to be someone you aren't is a lie** - illus.: dating sites
      - **pornography** on the Internet is as sinful as any other pornography
    - **Matt. 5:14-16 only say and do things that glorify God**, as a light to the world
    - **Rom. 15:2 always build other people up**, don't tear them down – illus.: no cyberbullying
    - **Rom. 13:8-10 always live by the golden rule** – love (1 Cor. 13)
    - **1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Cor. 13:5 be modest and becoming at all times**
      - **everything is public** that you put on the Internet – security and firewalls break down sometimes
      - **there are some things that are okay to do privately, but** they shouldn't go out on the Internet – nothing is private on the Internet

➤ - **we must proactively manage our social networking sites as Christians** – if we don't. . . .
    - **we may have to stop participation with some sites because of the ads** the company puts on the sites
      - **illus.: looked at one site to post video bible lessons**, but the computer generated links that were there were so bad I couldn't do it
    - **don't post things that might be misconstrued**, or look bad to someone who doesn't know you
      - **illus.: employers check out perspective employees** on social networking sites, not want to be joking with friends in a way that a person who doesn't know you would think you're doing bad things
      - **illus.: only post things that would be okay for little kids at church to read and see**, when watching their parents on the computer
    - **pick friends carefully that won't post stuff that makes you look bad**
      - **illus.: just like we are judged by our friends as school and work**, we are also judged by the friends we connect with on social media sites
      - **may have to delete some friends who continue to act improper** – language, pictures, course jesting
    - **manage posts that directly affect you**
      - **illus.: tagged with a pictures** – may have to untag yourself
    - **make sure not doing something private and someone takes a picture and posts it**
      - **illus.: girl with her girlfriends swimming at a private pool, make sure friend not take picture and post** a pic that would be improper for the general public
    - **tell people when they act inappropriately online**, esp. when it affects you – just like would do in person

  - **people know you by your fruits**
    - **if they know nothing about you besides what is online, what would they think** – faithful Christian?

4

➤ **Protect yourself against addiction** – just like with all media
  - **1 Cor. 6:12 not allow anything lawful thing to become your master** – have control over you
    - **if we don't control it, it will control us** – everything in life

➤ - **illus.: social networking encourage (enable) addiction**
    - **Why are the number of your friends posted?** - encourage you to check it regularly
    - **What is the purpose of online games on social networking sites?** - time spend, eyeballs, $
      - **example Facebook: when see someone who has all this stuff posted constantly about games** they're playing, wonder what they're doing besides playing games, wonder why they're not more productive with they're life, wonder if they have an addiction problem – change my settings to hide game posts from people

➤ - **illus.: addiction to social networking sites is growing – titles of CNN articles** – beware of danger
    - Five clues that you are addicted to Facebook
    - Therapists report seeing more people with addiction to social-networking sites
    - The sites themselves are not the problem; disconnection from real life is
    - You may be addicted if you lose sleep over Facebook, obsess over old flames

➤ - **one of the best ways to avoid addiction with anything is to take regular breaks** – go without social networking for a week or two (except what is absolutely necessary for school and work)

  - **if we allow ourselves to become addicted to social network sites** (or anything), **we are sinning and our soul is in jeopardy of eternal damnation**

➤ **Nothing is secret, your sins will find you out !**
  - **many in society think they can get away with things online that could not in "real" life** – not true
    - **illus.: lie** about identity, **illicit behavior** without friends and family finding out, etc.

  - **1 Sam. 2:3 God knows everything** – omniscient
    - be judged for everything we do, even the "secret" things (Ec. 12:14)

➤ - **Num. 32:23 if we do sinful things online, our sin will find us out** - i.e., God knows of the sin and will make us pay for it
    - **when we sin, we should quickly repent and get back into a right relationship with God, before He deals with the sin and punishes us** – thins life, eternity
      - **it may be that God chastises us** through a series of events in life (Heb. 12:4-13)
      - **it may be that something we did online was meant to be private but became public**, and you suffer retribution
      - **it will be eternal punishment in hell, unless** we repent

  Summary / Inv.
    - **review:** PP

    - **inv.:** in your life right with God, online and offline, do you need to correct. . . .