

What If Jesus Were on Facebook?

Do you use Facebook? If so, are you using it as a tool for the glory of God or is it a distraction from spiritual priorities? Is Facebook helping or hindering your influence for the Lord?

I read a lesson from Don Blackwell, a brother in Christ concerning his thoughts concerning the usage of Facebook. I thought he made some excellent points and I would like to share some of his thoughts with you with some minor editing on my part.

He stated Facebook has taken the cyber world by storm and our social lives in a different direction. Compete.com ranked Facebook as the most used social network in the world. According to Facebook's own stats page, there are currently more than 350 million active users and 65 million people are accessing Facebook through their phones/mobile devices. They say the average user has 130 Facebook friends and spends more than 55 minutes a day on their site.

Facebook has opened doors of communication that didn't exist in the past. It has united old friends, helped to keep families connected, and openly provided opportunities to teach the gospel. Unfortunately, however, **not everything that Facebook has brought us is good.** In many ways Facebook is like a window into one's soul. It allows others to see his hobbies and habits. They can see everything from pictures of your vacation to your favorite songs and websites. Truly, Facebook reveals more about us than we might at first realize. **Sadly, the Facebook pages of some Christians bring shame on themselves and the Lord's church.**

What if Jesus were on Facebook? I want you to use your imagination and pretend that you log on to Facebook one day, and Jesus has sent you a friend request. We know that such is not possible, but, for the sake of illustration, pretend. What would you do? Would you have to stop and think before you accepted it? Would you have to look through your pictures to be sure you don't have any immodest images of yourself or anything tasteless? Would you need to make sure you don't have any pictures taken in inappropriate places? Would you go back over your postings to be sure you haven't said anything crude or inappropriate? Would you scan through your list of favorite movies and music, and perhaps delete a few of them before you let Jesus on your site? If the answer is "Yes," to any of those questions, then why not go ahead and take it off now? The fact of the matter is, the Lord does look at our Facebook pages! He sees everything we post on Facebook (and everywhere else for that matter). Proverbs 15:3 says, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good."

There's another part of this, even beyond the fact that God is watching you on Facebook; other people are watching you, too. Why does that matter? It matters because what they see on your Facebook site affects what they think about you, the church, and Christianity. What if you have your "religious preference" listed as "church of Christ," and then you have pictures posted of you at a nightclub or dancing or at the beach or some other place dressed immodestly or with an alcoholic beverage? Or maybe you're venting and running someone else down with a generally ugly demeanor? We could give dozens of examples, but the question is: "What effect is it going to have on my non-Christian friends (or Christian friends for that matter) who looks at my site?" They might say to themselves, "We can do better than that and we don't even pretend to be a Christians!" Or, they might just think: "What a hypocrite!" You need to do a better job of keeping it a secret. Posting these things on Facebook for all the world to see makes it worse, because when a Christian advertises immorality, he or she hurts the church.

Sometimes Christians ask: “What do I do if I see another Christian posting something inappropriate on Facebook?” Perhaps you’ve seen a brother or sister in Christ use foul language in his or her status update, or maybe he has posted a picture of himself downing a Budweiser. What do I do? Jesus told His disciples to be “wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” In other words, use wisdom and be kind. Second, the same Bible principles that apply elsewhere apply here (Gal. 6:1). There may come a time when, out of love for your brother and the church, you may need to address something a fellow Christian has posted on Facebook. Maybe you need to call them on the phone, or send him a private message. Facebook does not exempt us from our Christian duties.

What if you spent as much time each day in Bible study as you do on Facebook? The average person spends 55 minutes a day (nearly an hour) on Facebook. For some, it’s obviously a whole lot more. What would your spiritual life be like if you spent that much time in Bible study and prayer? Why not update your status on Facebook with: “Reading my Bible. No more Facebook tonight.”

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