

Social Media & The Heart

If you missed the first article called “Quarreling on Social Media” I encourage you to read it first. Our text to explore is 2 Timothy 2:22-26. Paul begins where all quarreling begins, in the heart. He says, “Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2:22) Every word and image we post, and every post response comes from a place inside our hearts. “For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.” (Luke 6:45) Are you irritated? Are you mad? Are you feeling unheard? Are you bitter? Are you lonely? Are you fed up? Are you feeling better than others? Are you sympathetic or indifferent within your heart? Are you letting too much emotion show or not enough? Which picture of Jesus do you have in your head with you post a condemning piece, Him turning over the tables of the money changers, or Him dealing with the woman caught in the act of adultery? Do I use a story of Jesus to justify my heart-response? These impulsive responses are youthful, the youth whose brains are not fully formed, and who often do not think before they speak. Yet, Paul gives us several controlling words to guide our responses: righteousness, faith, love, and peace, all from a pure heart. Once I know that my heart is pure, I still must decide to test my words. Is this post righteous? Is this post faith-based? Is this post out of love and said in love? Will this post produce peace or more chaos and conflict? One of the hardest things to do is to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. (Jas.1:19) The person who speaks before they understand is not wise. Seek clarification. Make sure you know why someone thinks what they think. And if it is so important for you to respond, perhaps it would be wise to make a phone call first to try to make sure you understand what you are responding to. Let’s check our hearts before we post.