The Impact of Social Media on Mental Health:

By Erica Jermanus

There are both positive and negative effects of social media on mental health. I am going to be sharing with you some of the good and bad things that social media can do to affect the mind. I talk about how social media is a blessing and how it can also be a curse. I talk about how social media can help us in this day and age. I talk about some social media changes you can implement into your life for the good and the better. If you are interested in reading more, then stay tuned!

Some of the positive things that social media do to impact the mind or mental health are connection and social support. Social media helps like-minded believers come together in faith and in unity and harmony. Social media helps believers to come together in prayer and fellowship as well as come together to share a common interest and common belief, and that is Jesus Christ and the gospel. Social media also is great for sharing the gospel and sharing encouragement and exhortations.

A Christian can use their God-given gifts on social media to share with others. A Christian can fulfill their purpose and their assignments on social media. A Christian can preach the gospel on social media and

share words of prophecy, teaching, and encouragement with the body of Christ. Also, a Christian can use their platforms to win souls to Christ and His kingdom. There are many people online that have come to Christ through social media and through other Christians posting on social media. 1 Peter 4:10-19 says, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

A Christian can also record videos or do podcasts or write books and blogs to get the gospel message out there to those in need. A Christian can start a business or a ministry through social media, and it can help and bless others in their faith. It may be a calling on a woman or man's life to do business online or to write or to speak for Christ and be His mouthpiece. Many Christians are called to be prophets and teachers and to share the messages that God gives them to share with the world. When we act on those gifts, by being obedient, we will be blessed in return.

Social media also boosts a person's self-esteem and confidence because that person is using their gifts and talents on the platforms to serve others, and it brings a

sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. When you go on social media, you can also get words of knowledge and encouragement from others and from God speaking through others posts and videos. This can give you hope, peace, and joy about the current situation in your life.

Social media can also give a person a sense of belonging in a Christian community. When a Christian is on social media, and they are communicating with others on there or fellowshipping with other believers, it can make them feel like they are not alone and that they have accountability. When you have accountability, you have people who can hold you accountable for your sins. These people can pray for you and help you to acknowledge when you sinned against God and to confess and repent of it. You may also feel a sense of belonging or love through social media because of Christians who post encouragement, prayers, scriptures, and support through their social media platforms.

The negative effects of social media that can impact the mind include anxiety and depression. There is a study showing that social media can increase the risk

of anxiety and depression in a person. I believe that when a person is on social media, and they are consuming things that are not godly, Christ-centered, or that are sinful, then that can evoke anxiety, fear, and depression in a person and even in a believer. 2 Timothy 1:7 says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Nehemiah 8:10 says, "…for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

That is why it is important to use social media for the right reasons and to glorify God on your platform. You can do that by posting scripture and encouragement to help others in need. When you surround yourself with people of like-minded faith, then your mental health will have positive effects and not negative. You will have less anxiety, worry, or depression because your friends will post things that line up with scripture and not ungodly or unwholesome entertainment.

You may want to ask God to send in the right people who are sent from Him who will post godly content to help you to grow and mature in your faith and relationship with Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:33 says, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good

manners." Proverbs 11:14 says, "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety."

Another negative effect of social media on the mind is the fear of missing out. When we are not constantly on social media all the time, we may feel like we are missing out on what our friends are doing. We may feel like we are not being updated with them or having known what is going on with them. That can lead to being a busy body and getting into other people's matters. Sometimes, things do not need to be posted on social media because they are meant to stay private. So, we may feel like we need to know what is going on in a person's life, so that is why we check our social media all the time to catch up with others or to stay in touch with others.

Another negative effect that social media have on the mind is cyberbullying and harassment. There are women that post half-naked pictures of themselves on social media, and they wonder why they are getting the wrong attention from the wrong people. They wonder why they are getting sexually harassed. It is because they have their breasts and their buttocks showing, or

they have their body parts showing. 1 Peter 3:3-4 says, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

Another negative effect that social media has on the mind is self-comparison. A person may share photos of them on vacation, or of their food, or their homes, cars, money, jobs, etc. This can lead to a person coveting or becoming jealous of what that other person has. That person may see their food on social media, and maybe they do not have food or shelter, and so they may start to covet and want their food or their home. This can even pertain to a relationship or children. A woman may really want children and she cannot conceive in her womb, and so she evy's other women who have children, because she so yearns for that herself. I know we have all been there before, including myself at times.

Social media can make a person seem like they have the most picture perfect life or well put together life

when, in reality, we do not see what is happening behind a screen or what is happening in their lives. They may have lost their jobs, cars, finances, homes, marriages, or children. So, people may be hurt and broken on the inside and may be portrayed as being good on the outside or in their pictures on social media. We do not know what a person is going through in life. We have not walked a mile in their shoes.

Another negative effect of social media on the mind is sleep disturbances. A person may stay up all night scrolling through their social media news feeds and not get any sleep or little to not sleep. Also, screen time can have an effect on the mind because of the lightening in screens and the long amount of time the screen has been exposed to a person's eyes can have negative effects as well and can cause people to lose sleep at night. Psalm 127:2 says, "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep."

Social media can also cause isolation in a person's life instead of seeking out real in-person relationships. Many people go on social media for communication, but not in person due to friends and family living far

away. This is not bad, but it can lead to overtime isolating oneself from actually going out of your home to talk to people and have conversations with the public.