

Spiritual Disciplines in an Online World

We regularly feel like we don't have enough time—time to rest, time to get our work done, time to see friends or spend time with God. I think we feel overwhelmed by the constant stimulation we get bombarded with from the online world. We are distracted more often than we'd like to admit, feeling over-friended online but lonely in real life, and our minds are regularly too busy to hear from the Lord. It's time we put some boundaries in place.

Reflect on Psalm 1:1-3 (NIV)

Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.

What would it take for you to be more like the person who is a tree planted by streams of water?

What would have to change in your day to day to make space for meditating on God's law day and night?

While we don't think boundaries with what we do online are the only way to solve this problem, we do think they will create just a little more space to be silent, to hear from God and to spend time with Him.

Consider a few of these potential boundaries:

- 1. Start the first hour of your day without any social media or email. Use that time to spend with Jesus, reflecting with Him as you get ready for the day.*
- 2. Shut down your email/social media at least 1 hour before bed. Do something life-giving that won't activate you before going to sleep.*

3. *Consider taking an online/social media break for 24 hours 1 day/week as a Sabbath. See what it feels like to not have the outside world constantly invading your thoughts even just for one day.*
4. *When you feel a pause moment in between your daily activities, try praying rather than checking social media. Notice when you feel the temptation to check and the feelings that might arise when you don't. Bring this to the Lord.*

Pray and ask the Lord which boundary could be helpful for you. It may even feel painful or nerve-wracking to consider. Jot down 1-2 that you are thinking of trying.

After you have picked a boundary or two to implement, tell a friend who can hold you accountable. Try it for even just a week. See if it gives you more space to meditate on God's Word and to hear from Him. I wonder if you just might feel more rested and less overwhelmed, too. 😊