

No. 2 **Avoid Sowing to the Flesh (Symposium)** —Use Social Media Wisely (Local elder)

Note to speaker:

This is the first talk of a four-part symposium. In an upbuilding and positive way, warn the audience of the potential dangers of social media and provide practical and balanced reminders. (See the *Ministry School* book, pages 202-204.) This talk includes a scripted demonstration

WHAT ‘SOWING WITH A VIEW TO THE FLESH’ MEANS (4 min.)

In order to do what is fine, we must avoid ‘sowing to the flesh’ **[Read Galatians 6:8]**

To understand this expression, consider Paul’s illustration

Our actions are like seed that is sown; we “reap,” or receive, the end result of those actions

For example, a man who wants a healthy crop sows fine seed, never weeds

If his seed had weed seeds mixed in, the weeds could soon take over his field

We do not want to reap corruption and death, so we must beware that we do not sow to the flesh by engaging in “the works of the flesh” (Ga 5:19; w95 6/15 31)

For instance, a brother could work hard in God’s service yet engage in mental uncleanness that could lead to disastrous consequences (Mt 5:28)

This symposium will consider four areas in which we need to avoid sowing to the flesh: (1) social media, (2) entertainment, (3) envy, and (4) material wealth

HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA WISELY AND AVOID THE DANGERS (9 min.)

Social media has benefits, and some Christians take advantage of these

You can easily stay connected with your family and friends

You can save time when you have important news to share with more than one person

Those who choose to use social media need to be aware of the dangers **[Read Proverbs 22:3]**

Wasted time: Overuse of social media could rob us of time for activities that are useful in God’s sight (Eph 5:15, 16; w17.03 21-22 ¶17)

To use social media wisely, set a time limit for each session

You could use the timer on your electronic device to help you stick to your decision

Presumptuousness: Do not assume that others have the same view of social media that you do (Pr 11:2)

Would it not be loving to ask for permission before posting photos or other information about a person?

Show consideration for others; do not assume that they will be captivated by photos of you and your activities (Ro 12:3)

Bad association: Social media can bring us into contact with people we would avoid in person

Some who may want to connect with you on a social network may not be who they appear to be (Ps 26:4)

Be thoroughly familiar with social network privacy settings, and use them

Resolve not to view or post comments on blogs or social networks when doing so would involve you in bad associations

Reject communication with apostates or disfellowshipped ones (2Jo 9-11)

DEMONSTRATION (2 min.)

[Note: You may make minor adjustments to the script for naturalness. Participants may use their own names if desired. Rehearse thoroughly so that the participants will be conversational, neither comical nor overly dramatic. The Witness who offers counsel (Lauren) should avoid a self-righteous tone. Select participants who are exemplary in their use of social media]

****[Two young adults named Lauren and Jennifer are discussing a blog that they both follow]****

Lauren: She covers a wide range of topics in her blog and always has a fresh view of things.

Jennifer: I follow that blog too, but a recent post really bothered me—it cast Jehovah’s Witnesses in a bad light. A lot of the responses to the post were outright lies. I felt that I had to defend the truth.

Lauren: ****[Surprised]**** I didn’t see that post. What did you do?

Jennifer: I responded to the post and to several of the false statements.

Lauren: Oh.

Jennifer: ****[Hesitates]**** Uh, did I do something wrong?

Lauren: Well, is it possible that by responding to the comments, you could have been communicating with apostates?

Jennifer: I never thought of that. But the responses made me angry. How should I have dealt with them?

Lauren: Well, when I see negative information on social media, I try to remember that Jesus said “wisdom is proved righteous by its works,” so I choose not to get involved.

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Jennifer: Oh, yeah. Instead of arguing with every lie spoken against him, Jesus let his works speak for themselves. Thanks for the reminder.

Lauren: Here comes our bus.

****[Participants exit]****

YOU CAN AVOID SOWING TO THE FLESH (1 min.)

The “shrewd one” of Proverbs 22:3 “conceals himself,” not from the world altogether, but from danger

If you choose to use social media, do so in a way that avoids ‘sowing to the flesh’

Brother _____ will now consider the next part of this symposium, “Avoid Sowing to the Flesh—Choose Wholesome Entertainment”

(Speaker does not need to read or comment on every cited text)

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TO BE COVERED IN 16 MINUTES

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