



## **SOCIAL - LESSON 2**

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## **SOCIAL**

Series: If you're on social media, you're telling a story...so what story are you telling?

Lesson 2: Be true to God.

Bible: Galatians 5:22-23a, Galatians 5:19-21a

Bottom Line: Our social media posts should be consistent with the values of the Kingdom of God.

## **SUPPLIES**

- A way to receive messages from students. You can EITHER use your (or another adult's) actual number OR use a free service like:  
<https://smsreceivefree.com/country/usa>.

## **NOTES**

All Scripture references are in New Living Translation unless otherwise indicated.

At the time of publication, all links are active.

## OPENING GAME – IN-PERSON VERSION: Story Time: Emoji Edition

### GAME PREP

- None

### HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Say:

- Everyone loves a good story.
- Tonight, you're going to get in groups of two or three and retell a famous childhood story of your choosing using only emojis. The stories would be from a book most people read as children or maybe from a popular kids' movie.
- The group that is the most creative will win a fabulous prize.
- When I say, "GO!", get in groups, pick a famous childhood story, and type it out using emojis.
- When you're done, send it to \_\_\_\_\_. *[You can EITHER use your (or another adult's) actual number OR use a free service like <https://smsreceivefree.com/country/usa> to receive text messages.]*
- Ready? Set? Go!

Give students a two-minute warning when their time is running out.

See if you can guess the story.

Award a fabulous prize to the winner.

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### HOW TO PLAY THE GAME (ONLINE)

Same as above, except each student will write their own story to send in to you.

## TEACH

Hey everybody!

I'm so glad you're back for week two of our Social series, where we're talking about the story our social media activity is telling.

Before we jump back in, someone tell me why you picked the story you did for our game.

*[Give two or three students an opportunity to share.]*

Last week we kicked things off with the idea that if we're followers of Jesus, our social media should point people to Him.

If you weren't here last week, we landed on the idea that our social media activity reveals things about us.

As we jump back into our conversation tonight, I'd love to hear what you think about a few questions.

*[Give a little time to interact with your students about the following questions. You'll likely need to redirect the conversation to not be negative about people but to acknowledge that we're all broken people on a journey with Jesus.]*

If social media reveals something about us, what might sexualized pictures say about a person?

*[Give time to interact.]*

If social media reveals something about us, what might crude language say about a person?

*[Give time to interact.]*

If social media reveals something about us, what might bullying posts say about a person?

*[Give time to interact.]*

If social media reveals something about us, what might paying super close attention to who's unfollowing you or reposting pictures say about a person?

*[Give time to interact.]*

It's tempting to hear questions like these and only think of other people.

It can be difficult to do honest self-reflection and think about your own social media activity and what it reveals about you.

We launched the series by encouraging you to **be true to your story**.

Specifically, if you're a follower of Jesus, your social media should point people to Him.

This week I want to encourage you to **be true to God** because **our social media posts should be consistent with the values of the Kingdom of God**.

What does that mean?

What are the values of the Kingdom of God?

Let's look at two Bible passages to give us a framework for Kingdom values.

The first is in Paul's letter to the Galatians.

Paul was a guy who started out as an enemy of Jesus but later became a committed follower of Jesus.

Paul would travel around to various cities, tell people about Jesus, help them organize into a church, and then head to another city to do it all over again.

Sometimes Paul would send letters to those new churches to help them work through issues they were facing.

One of those churches was in Galatia, and one of the letters was Galatians.

Would someone read **Galatians 5:22-23a** out loud for the group? *[I LOVE having students read from the Bible. If it doesn't work for your group, feel free to read it yourself or have another adult read it.]*

**22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control.**

Paul is saying that as you stay connected to Jesus, these “fruit” start growing in your life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

These are kingdom values, and our social media posts should reflect these things.

I’m not saying that your posts should all include the name “Jesus” or invite people to a church gathering.

But all of your posts should reflect these values.

Take a minute to look over the list and share with me some things you’ve seen on social media that reflect these Kingdom values, even if they aren’t explicitly “Christian.”

*[Give students a few minutes to share.]*

What do you think when you see those types of posts?

*[Give students a few minutes to share.]*

These posts are memorable because so much of what’s on social media is the opposite of these values.

Some of them have pretty clear opposites – the opposite of love is hate; the opposite of patience is impatience; the opposite of kindness is rudeness; the opposite of goodness is badness – but some of the “fruit” might push you to think a little.

Let’s talk about a few of them.

What is the opposite of joy?

*[Give time for students to discuss; try to land on “negativity” or something similar.]*

What is the opposite of peace?

*[Give time for students to discuss; try to land on “chaos” or “discord” or something similar.]*

What is the opposite of faithfulness?

*[Give time for students to discuss; try to land on “backstabbing” or something similar.]*

What is the opposite of gentleness?

*[Give time for students to discuss; try to land on “coarseness” or something similar.]*

What is the opposite of self-control?

*[Give time for students to discuss; try to land on “hedonism” or “self-indulgence” or something similar.]*

Paul actually gives a list of opposites a few verses before the one we read earlier.

Would someone read **Galatians 5:19-21a** out loud for the group?

**19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these.**

These are values that are the opposite of the Kingdom of God.

How do you feel when you see posts that bash on others or make fun of them?

What about posts that spew hatred toward others?

How about posts that are angry and full of hatred?

Positive posts are memorable, and they usually make your day a little better.

Negative posts are sometimes just as memorable, and they usually make your day a little worse.

Okay, now we’ve got an idea of the values of the Kingdom of God – love, joy, peace, etc. – what does it look like to reflect those values in our social media activity?

**First, be consistent.**

I love to see someone post something positive on their social media: a Bible verse, an encouraging quote, a positive story about something good, etc.

What's confusing is when there's something inappropriate sandwiched between those positive posts.

Have you seen social media accounts that post a Bible verse, then a crude sexual joke, then something positive about the world, then something racist, then something about Jesus, then a video that's oversexualized?

It's confusing! It's like that person doesn't really know who they are.

Even the language we use is also confusing.

What does it communicate if you're dropping f-bombs on social media? (And abbreviations and acronyms count here!)

Or if you're posting or reposting videos where a lifestyle of sex and drugs is celebrated?

Or if you're liking videos where people are valued because they're wealthy or attractive?

Don't misunderstand me – I'm not judging; I'm just asking the question: If you're a follower of Jesus and you trust that His way is best, why wouldn't you want your social media posts to reflect that?

If you're not being consistent in your Kingdom values, you're not only making yourself look foolish but also you're making every other follower of Jesus look like a hypocrite.

Be consistent.

**The second way you can reflect Kingdom values on social media is to be positive.**

We live in an incredibly negative culture.

The news is negative, people's comments are negative, the way we interact in person is negative.

I'm confused why a follower of Jesus would ever participate in gossip or slander or piling on someone who's messed up.

A couple of years ago, I remember Demi Lovato was hospitalized for drug rehab.

People were brutal – they said horrible things about her.



What was super sad for me was the number of Christ-followers who made mean comments about her.

We all make mistakes.

More than mistakes, we all make bad decisions.

But I'm almost 100 percent sure that you've never read someone's mean post to you or someone you love and thought, "Wow, they really care; maybe I'll consider what they're saying and make some changes!"

No! You read hurtful comments, and it pushes you away from them.

There's nothing good that can come out of us being negative on social media.

Instead, be positive.

Say something nice.

Share something encouraging.

**The third way you can reflect Kingdom values on social media is to be loving.**

This one seems pretty self-explanatory, but it can get confusing, so let's unpack it together with a little mandatory fun time.

Turn to someone next to you and answer the question: How can you be loving on social media?

*[Give students a few minutes to chat, then debrief. As they share, lead them to understand that we're loving when the person we're talking to or talking about feels loved.]*

It's easier to be loving to people we like, or people that like us, or people that are like us.

I think we can also be loving to people we may not like, people who may not like us, or people who are nothing like us.

When we're loving, we're expressing the greatest value in the Kingdom of God.

Let me close us out with two questions.

**Question one:** If you opened up your social media tonight when you got home and had a friend request from Jesus, would you let Him follow you?

If He follows you, He gets to see everything you post, everything you comment on, and everything you like.

Are you okay with that?

If not ... why?

I'm not trying to make you feel bad; I just want you to think about it.

**Question two:** How can your social media activity reflect more of Jesus and the values of the Kingdom of God?

People can't unsee what you've posted, but they might notice a change if what you posted started looking a little different.

I'm not saying you should be fake – just the opposite, I think you should be real.

If you're 100 percent committed to Jesus, post that.

If you've got questions and doubts about Jesus, post those.

If you're looking for someone to help you on your spiritual journey, put it out there.

If you're wanting to help others on their spiritual journeys, put that out there too.

All I'm suggesting is that your social media should reflect who you are.

Stop worrying about your reputation, followers, or influence, and be true to God.

If you're a follower of Jesus, your social media posts should be consistent with the values of the Kingdom of God – especially love.

Go have a great small group!

*[Close in prayer and dismiss to small groups.]*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is your favorite childhood story, and why?
2. If someone only knew you based on your social media activity, what are some adjectives they'd use to describe you?
  - a. What three adjectives would best describe you?
  - b. Are you happy or not happy with your answer to the above question, and why?
3. Why is it so easy to post things on social media that don't line up with the values of the Kingdom of God?
4. Why is it so difficult to keep your social media activity lined up with Kingdom values?
  - a. What can you do to help?
5. We said there are three ways to make sure your social media posts line up with Kingdom values: be consistent, be positive, and be loving.
  - a. Which of those is easiest for you and why?
  - b. Which of those is most difficult for you and why?
6. Tonight's bottom line is to be true to God because our social media posts should be consistent with the values of the Kingdom of God.
  - a. On a scale of 1 (atrocious) to 10 (amazing), how well does your social media activity line up with the values of the Kingdom of God?
  - b. What do you need to do, and what are you willing to do to move your number up?