Fight a Good Fight in Information Technology

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Madam Enid Bloomy was right when she said, "The youth of this generation seldom talked to each other even though they sit together in a room, rather they touch the screen of their mobile phones and pay attention to that. They are starting to lose the essence of social humanity." I also join her statement because I have witnessed it too. When we were young, we came out from our houses and play together and chat with friends, but nowadays, young ones get inside their private rooms to play and chat with their friends. We cannot deny the fact that the proliferation of developed IT is changing the lives of everyone in one way or another. The positive impact and negative impact of IT could be seen everywhere. Technologies such as texting, instant messaging and video conferencing allow users to communicate instantaneously with people across the world, at the same time it increases crime in many places. As a human, we cannot hide away from all these developed IT, because we are still living together under the same sun. But as a Pentecostal, we need to teach one another how we could utilize these things in a good way, and have control over it. So, we need to know what is IT, what is its impact upon the people, and how could we fight a good fight in the midst of the intruding developed IT.

What is Information Technology?

Information technology (IT), describes any technology that powers or enables the storage, processing and information flow within an organization, it helps in transmitting and passing information from one to another. I think we all are familiar with some names such as: Radio, Television, Telephone, Mobile, SMS, Internet, Wifi, Whatsapp, Hike, Imo, Messenger, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Online shopping, GPRS, etc. We can say that these are the contents in the pack of Information Technology.

Some impacts of IT

We cannot ignore the development of IT these days, because it has a close relation with our life. But, in some way, it really changes the life of human and our ethics. As technology improves, tasks that were formerly performed by human employees are now carried out by computer systems. For example, automated telephone answering systems have replaced live receptionists in many organizations. This leads to the elimination of jobs and, in some cases, alienation of clients. And we often ignore people who ask us something in a public like, bus stop, market, hospital, restaurant, etc., because we are busy enough responding to a text or uploading pictures in Whatsapp. We spent far too much time on Facebook trying to catch up with our 1000+ *friends*, to *like* or *comment* on our friends' *status*.

We isolate ourselves by walking around in our own little world, listening or staring at the screen of the latest mobile device even when we are around other people, while creating a lasting bond with other people requires face-to-face interaction. The more we isolate ourselves with

technology the fewer bonds we will form. People who cannot control themselves from the intrusion of IT started to lose their social skills, and have obesity, addiction to touch the cellphone, poor sleep habits, neck and head pain, loss of hearing and eyesight, stress and depression, etc.

People over share on social media sites, there is an increasing tendency to cross social boundaries. Cyber stalking someone or sending unsolicited nude photos are examples of grossly crossing social boundaries. The constant stream of violent scenes on video games, TV, movies and YouTube causes people to become desensitized to destruction of any kind. The normalizing of bad things happening and the culture of narcissism created by social media creates a society of people who lack empathy, and grow more violence. It also causes people to suffer from mental and emotional disturbances, such as anxiety, phobias and delusions, which are all symptoms of neurosis.

The Information Technology Act

The human are changing, so is their moral and lifestyles. As the technology is developed, the crime also developed, the more defensive technique is better, the worst the offensive technique is growing. Many people use IT to do criminal things, because of this there is a need to make a law in our country, India, to justify the IT users.

The Information Technology Act, 2000 (also known as ITA-2000, or the IT Act) is an Act of the Indian Parliament (No 21 of 2000) notified on 17 October 2000. It is the primary law in India dealing with cybercrime and electronic commerce. It is based on the United Nations Model Law on Electronic Commerce 1996 (UNCITRAL Model) recommended by the general assembly of United Nations by a resolution dated 30th January 1997. The original Act contained 94 sections, divided in 19 chapters and 4 schedules. The laws apply to the whole of India. Persons of other nationalities can also be indicted under the law, if the crime involves a computer or network located in India.

Cyber Crime

As I have mentioned earlier, misuse of IT and committing crime through IT is increasing day by day, the term 'Cyber' became more familiar to the people. The evolution of Information Technology (IT) gave birth to the cyber space wherein internet provides equal opportunities to all the people to access any information, data storage, analyse etc. with the use of high technology. Due to increase in the number of netizens (users of internet), misuse of technology in the cyberspace was clutching up which gave birth to cyber-crimes at the domestic and international level as well.

We can commit crimes by or without consent. That means we can be accused against the law even though we are ignorant of it. Especially in Whatsapp group or Facebook group, we want to

be the first who distribute/send some classified information or disturbing pictures, some of which are against the law. Let us see some of Cyber Crimes in brief as follow:

Harassment via E-Mails, Cyber-Stalking, Dissemination of Obscene Material, Defamation, Hacking, Cracking, E-Mail Spoofing, SMS Spoofing, Carding, Cheating & Fraud, Child Pornography, Assault by Threat, Intellectual Property Crimes, Cyber Squatting, Cyber Vandalism, Hacking Computer System, Transmitting Virus, Cyber Trespass, Internet Time Thefts, Cyber Terrorism, Cyber Warfare, Distribution of pirated software, Possession of Unauthorized Information, Cyber Trafficking, Online Gambling, Financial Crimes, Forgery, etc.

How Could We Fight a Good Fight?

As a Pentecostal, we have to live a good and holy life. So, we need to know how to use these social networking sites and its technology. Everything has both positive and negative consequences. We must choose what is positive and useful for our ministry, which is how we could fight a good fight in this stream.

Let's see some positive side: It is amazing how someone can find a long-lost friend through a social networking site, enabling them to reconnect. In a society where family and friends are often geographically separated, it is convenient to keep in touch through technology, eg. Facebook group, Whatsapp group, etc. I also find again my old friends, some of which are more than ten years back friends. Beside this, we can easily buy or sell our used materials / properties through social network. And we can make any groups which are interesting in a particular organization or focus / issue. For example: when we make a Whatsapp group for sharing and distributing church's news, pictures, sermon, youth activities, missionary progression, sharing oneness Pentecostal doctrine, suggestion for new development, information, etc., we use it for the betterment and edification of the church.

From the said technology, many versions of Bible Dictionary and Commentary came out; we must make use of it. In this Calvary Bible College also we have Android version of College Hymn book, it is very convenient for us. It is joyful to be able to see our church news and oneness Pentecostal sermons on TV (Zonet Cable, Mizoram) every Saturday evening. The leaders of our church are appreciable in this regard as they fight a good fight for the church.

We must be more mindful of the time we spend using technology. If we have longer conversations with 'network friends' than we do with real people, and play more phone games more than real games, it is probably time to put the phone down. Sometime, we need to force ourselves to have an electronic-free day or weekend. When we go for meeting with someone, or to church service, it is best not to bring, or at least put it on "do not disturb" (silent). Creating balance will help us to enjoy the benefits of technology without becoming a mindless internet zombie. Many youth become the slave of internet; they are chained by unseen internet rope.

They bring their phone inside the church and play games or chat friends, we, the Pentecostal must not do this bad habit.

Conclusion

There could be many things to say, but due to the limitation of space, let me conclude in this way: We cannot do away with all these things, but it must not control us, rather we must control it. We must be careful in utilizing these things, because we might be charged or accused against the law for misusing it. Instead of spending time alone, let us meet and have a time with friends personally in order to build more brotherhood among the church. Let us try to use these IT purposefully for the development of the church. Let us be more careful in distributing some news or images, knowing that it could defame and degrade our personality and career. And let us give more awareness ('*dos and don'ts*') in using Information Technology especially to the youth and children. Then, we will be the victor in this fight.

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