

Digital Dangers

*avoiding the pitfalls posed
by social media*

*Right Thinking for a
Culture in Chaos*

Chapter 11
Tom Patton

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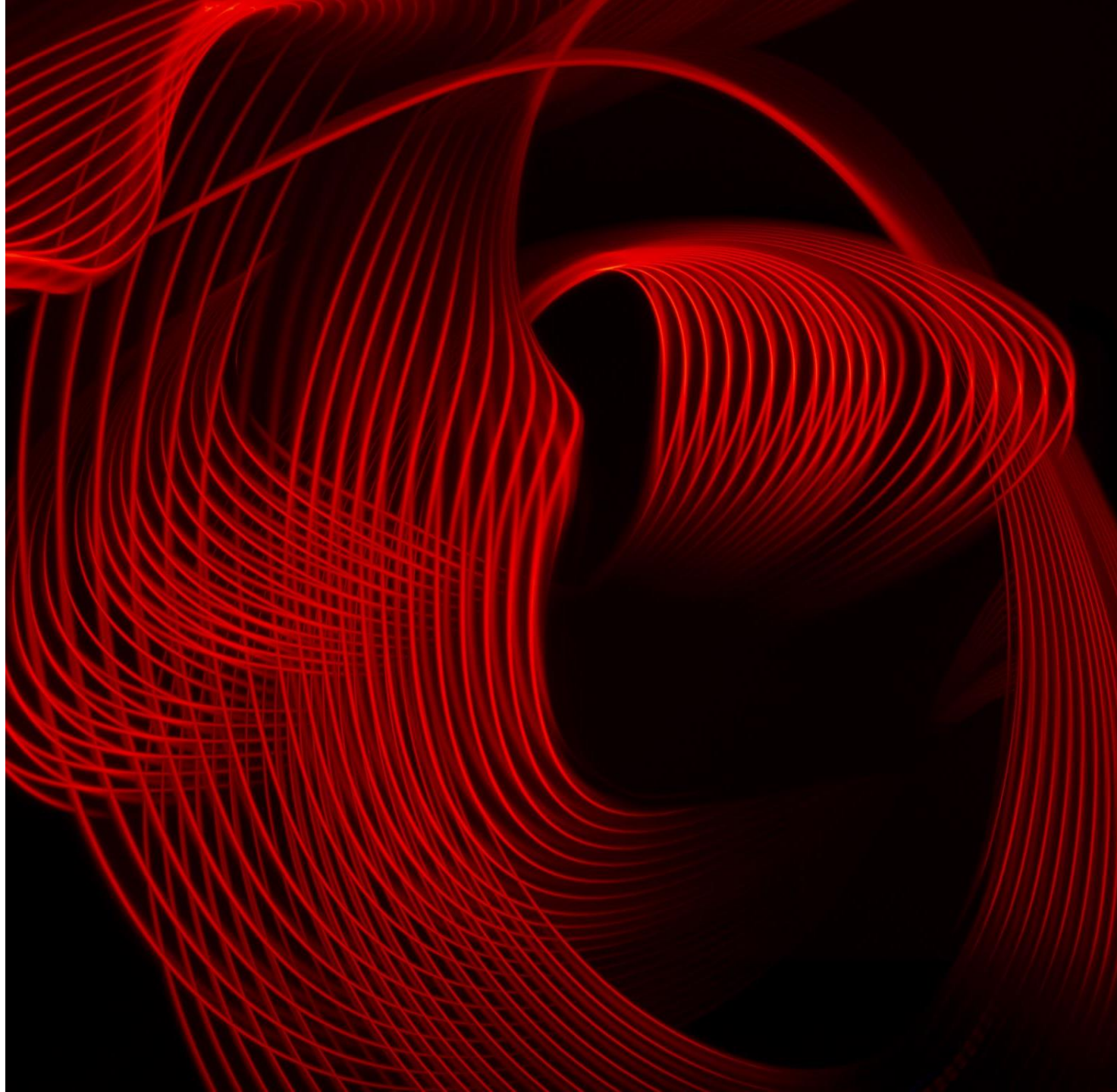
Phones and Social Media

*not necessarily bad, but
difficult to control*

“If we are not careful, we can be subtly drawn away from meaningful conversation, thinking, planning, dreaming, praying, and playing together, being swayed instead into meaningless hours of scrolling down and texting away.”

the digital world does not *cause* sin, it exposes the sin that's already in our hearts.

“Social media platforms are simply a vehicle through which the sinful desires of the heart are revealed (Mark 7:21-23).”



5 Potential Dangers Posed by Social Media

1. A FALSE VIEW OF INTIMACY

“True relational intimacy requires a sense of closeness, love, appreciation, and honesty with another person. That kind of trust arises from consistent, in-person interaction.” (171).

“False intimacy offers a veneer of closeness and admiration based on surface-level engagement. Gaining close friends and followers online may provide a rush of excitement, but those relationships lack the effort, sacrifice, and loyalty required for true fellowship.” (171)

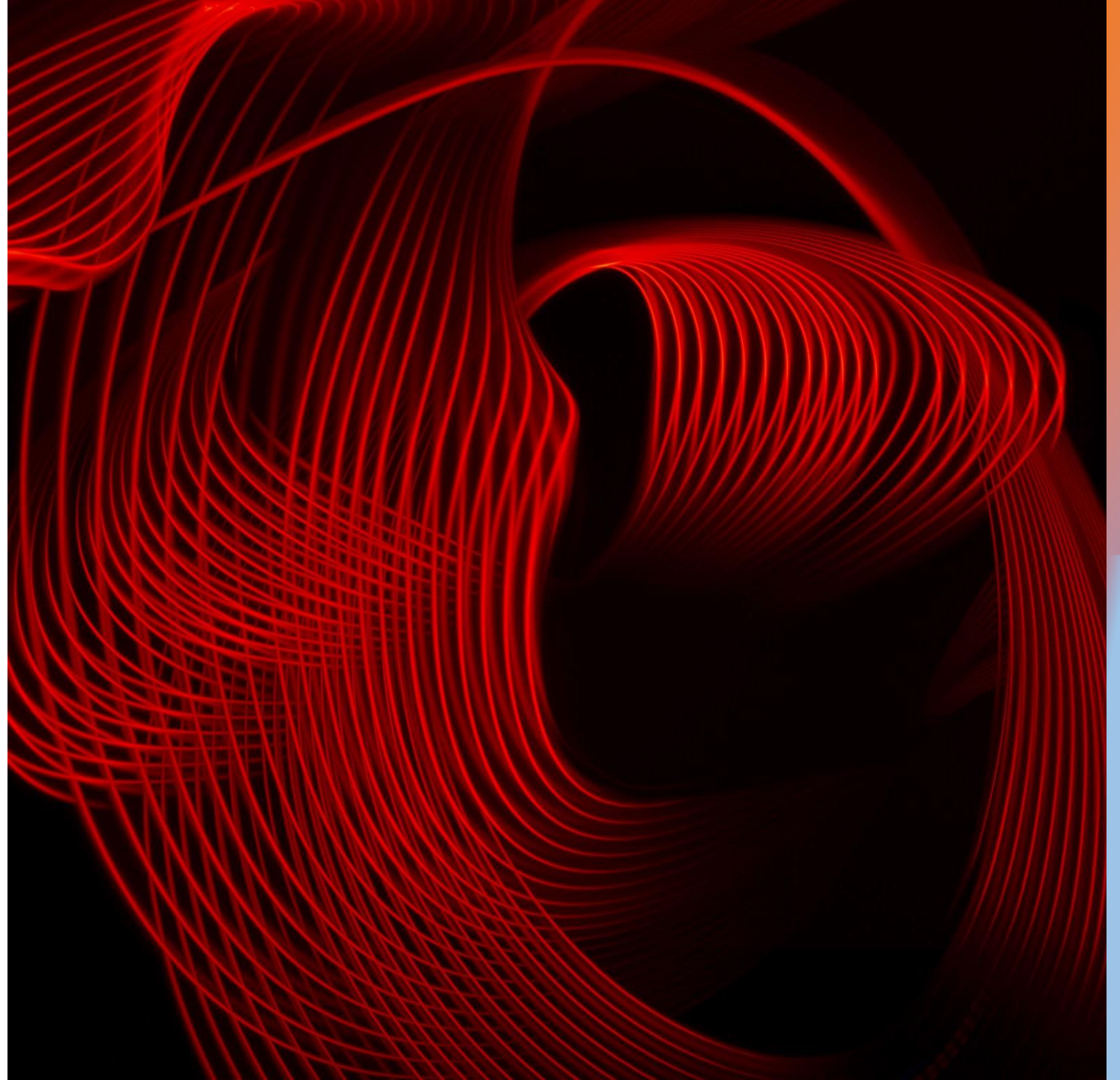
1 Thess. 2:17-20

¹⁷ But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short while—in person, not in spirit—were all the more eager with great desire to **see your face.**

¹⁸ For we wanted to **come to you**—I, Paul, more than once—and yet Satan hindered us.

¹⁹ For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?

²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.



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3 John 13–14.

¹³ I had many things to write to you, but I am not willing to write them to you with pen and ink;

¹⁴ BUT I hope to **see you shortly, and we will speak face to face.**

5 Potential Dangers Posed by Social Media

2. A FALSE VIEW OF ISOLATION

*“Ironically, the very platforms designed to bring people closer actually move them farther apart.”
(172)*

The Effects on the Family

“The effects of this isolation are especially noticeable within the family. The husband no longer comes home to serve, but to surf. The wife does not stay home to read her Bible, but to read *(or write)* her blogs. The children no longer want to play games together, but to play on their smartphones alone.” (173)

The Effects on the Church family

“The church no longer comes together for life-on-life fellowship but stays home to livestream.” (173)

“Instead of pouring themselves into the real-life friendships they currently have, people now spend hours with pseudo-friends online.” (174).

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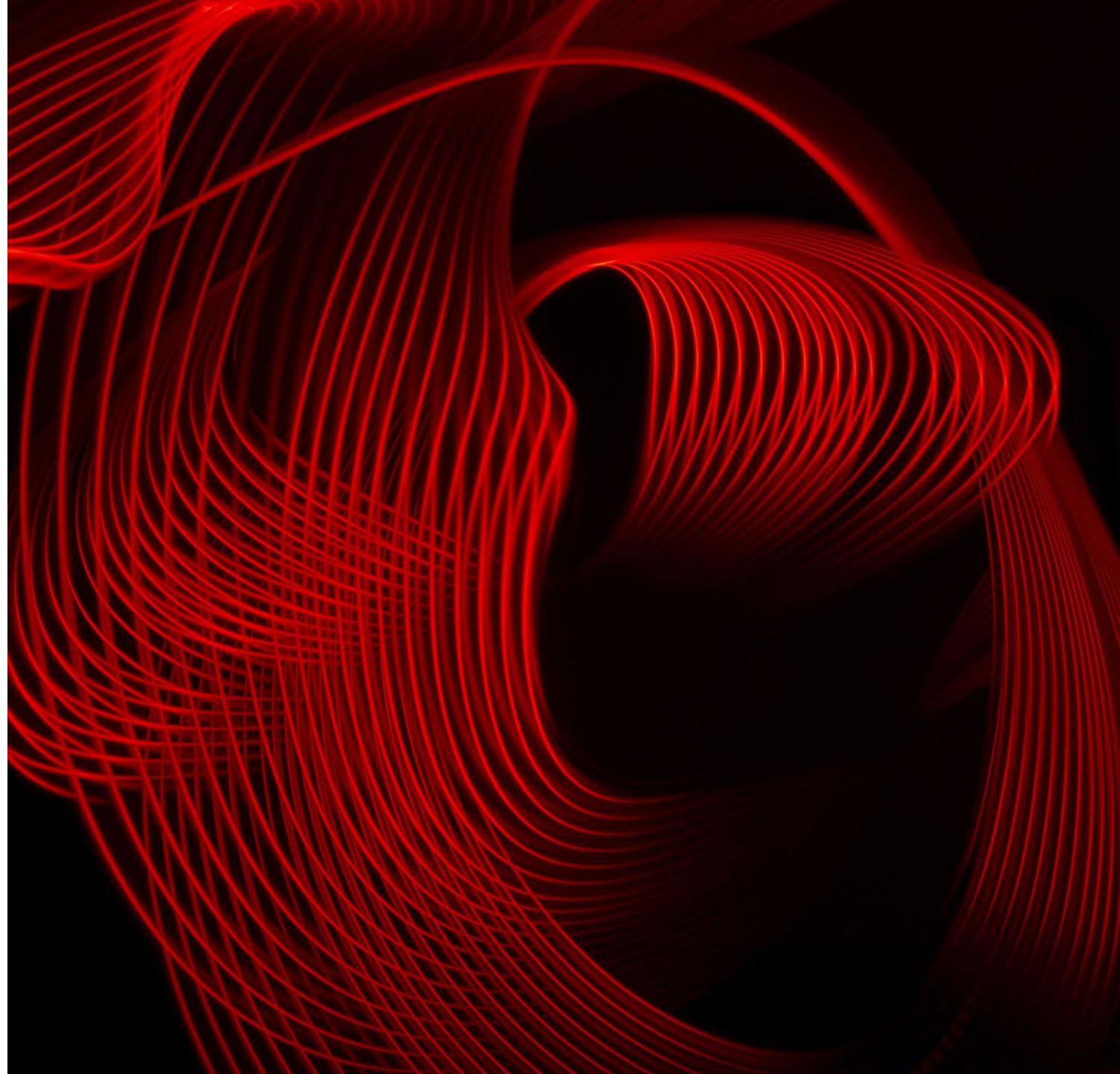
Prov. 18:1

¹Whoever **isolates** himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgement. (ESV).

Hebrews 10:24-25

²⁴ let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

²⁵ **not forsaking our own assembling together,** as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.



5 Potential Dangers Posed by Social Media

3. A FALSE SENSE OF INTELLIGENCE

“Instead of thinking deeply about the essential matters of life, too many people are hypnotized by clickbait videos and sensationalized articles. They fill their minds with fluff instead of thinking carefully about the essential matters of life.” (174).

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Prov. 18:13

¹³ One who gives an answer before he hears, It is foolishness and shame to him.

the wide proliferation and instant access of information gives us the illusion that we are informed and wise.

*But the reality is that we live in a day marked by **high confidence and low competence.***

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4. A FALSE SENSE OF IMAGE

“With the proliferation of images that have been photoshopped to perfection, millions of people online obsess over their own level of attractiveness and worthiness with every click they make.” (175)

5 Potential Dangers Posed by Social Media

5. A FALSE SENSE OF IMPORTANCE

Finding personal significance and meaning in the online world.

6. A FALSE SENSE OF INFLUENCE

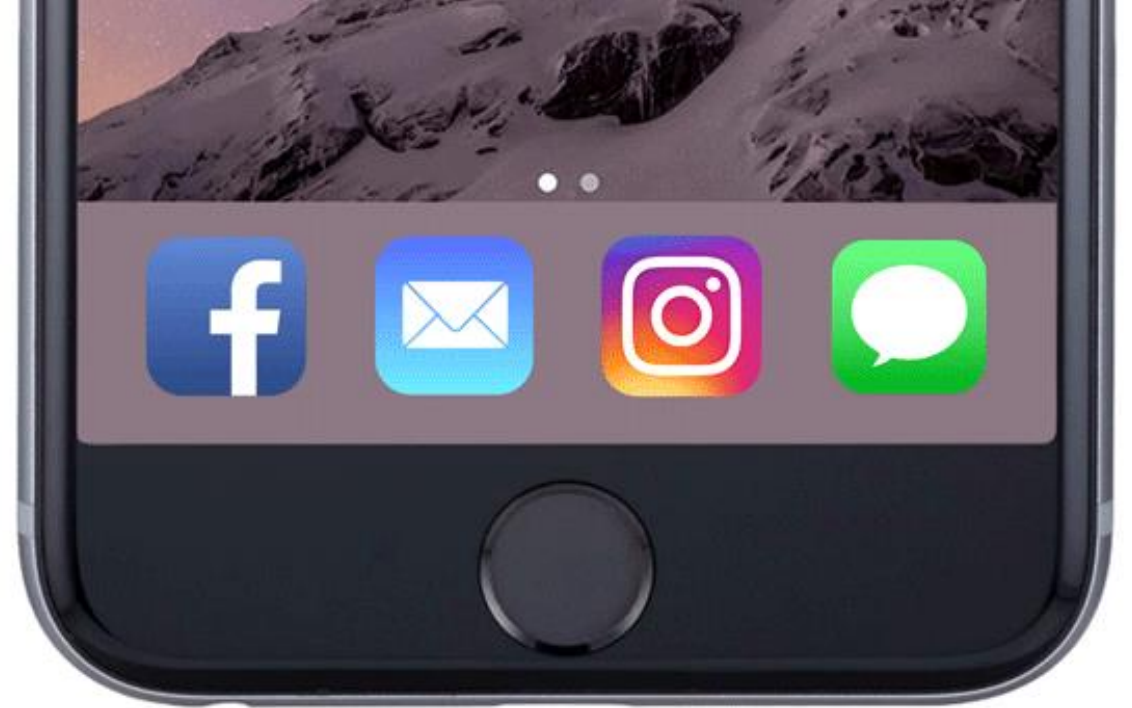
“True influence is measured in terms of lives impacted, not tweets read or likes recorded.” (177)

7. A FALSE SENSE OF URGENCY

Our priorities and focus can so quickly become dominated and distracted by the tyranny of the urgent.

“Instant distraction is only a text message away...” (174).

The notification *ding* conditions and lures us into the **tyranny of the urgent.**



8. A FALSE SENSE OF MULTI-TASKING

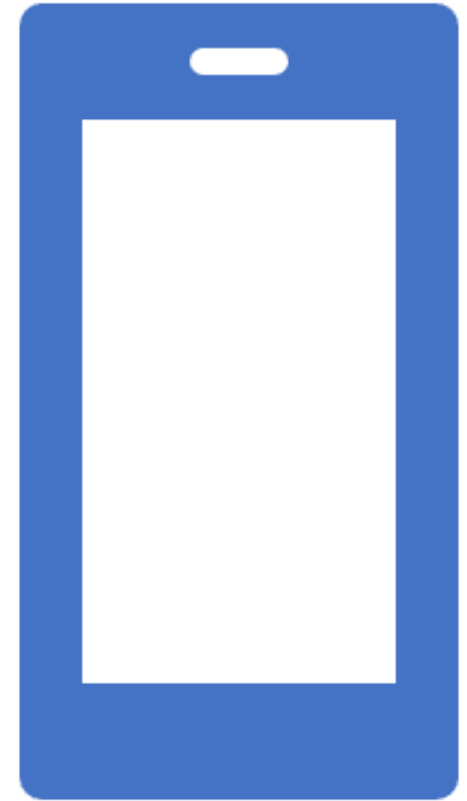
Fake omnipotence and omnipresence.

9. *A FALSE SENSE OF CONTROL*

We think we are in control, but so often, the algorithms control us and keep us scrolling.

Even worse, we think we are in control of *what* we are viewing when so very often, the algorithms are driving the content that we imbibe.

We should not be so presumptuous or naïve as to imagine that we are strong enough to withstand the power of *algorithms* that are designed to addict.



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Social Media does not
create **but exposes** the
lusts of our hearts

Excess

Fantasy

Entertainment

Avoiding conflict

Narcissism

Self-pity

Self-preservation

Self-Promotion



Thinking carefully about TEXTING

- it is a private, ongoing, one-on-one conversation*
- it is difficult to imagine a scenario in which this dynamic does not nurture intimacy and entangled emotions.*
- (it's essentially playing house).*



Foreword by John Piper



12 WAYS YOUR PHONE IS CHANGING YOU

Tony Reinke

1. We Are Addicted to Distraction
2. We Ignore Our Flesh and Blood
3. We Crave Immediate Approval
4. We Lose Our Literacy
5. We Feed on the Produced
6. We Become Like What We “Like”
7. We Get Lonely
8. We Get Comfortable in Secret Vices
9. We Lose Meaning
10. We Fear Missing Out
11. We Become Harsh to One Another
12. We Lose Our Place in Time