

10 Online Sins We're All Apparently Okay With
by Aaron Berry

The most subtle vices are the ones that everyone is “okay” with. Whenever we open our web browsers, whether it’s Facebook, Amazon, Twitter, or Netflix, we’re entering a world with a laundry list of “acceptable” sins.

As Christians, we often fail to realize it when we are allowing the culture to shape our testimony when it should be the other way around. Being conformed to the world is easy—just be passive. But honoring Christ takes active obedience through the power of the Spirit as your mind is transformed by the Word of God. Are you allowing God’s Word to shape your time online? What online sins are you tolerating in your own life and the lives of others? **Here are 10 online sins we’re all apparently okay with.**

1. Indulgence

Should we really be bragging about how much we binge on Netflix? If we didn’t have the reassurance that literally everybody else does it, we would probably be a little ashamed to admit that “I sat in my bedroom, ate Pizza Rolls, and binge-watched ‘The Office’ for the past 12 hours.” We might as well say, “I have no self-control and my priorities are way out of whack.”

As Christians, we have been given the Holy Spirit who wages war against our flesh “to keep you from doing the things you want to do” (**Galatians 5:17**). Don’t allow your flesh to control your actions. Don’t waste away your days doing things that don’t profit. And perhaps, try “binging” on God’s Word - you might be shocked by the change it produces.

“... but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives.” (**1 Timothy 5:6**)

2. Materialism

The internet gives us the power to buy literally anything we want and have it delivered to our front door – without ever leaving the couch. Are you constantly placing orders on Amazon because you simply can’t get enough? Beware of filling your life with *things*. The more attention you give to materialism, the less attention you’ll give to eternity. Are you entangled in materialism?

A life of materialism is a life that hasn’t experienced the eternal joys that Christ provides. The things of this world will all pass away, but you have been given heavenly, eternal treasures that no one can take from you. Live for eternity - not for “stuff.” When this life is over and you stand before God, those Black Friday Amazon deals you missed out on won’t seem as important to you.

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (**1 John 2:15**)

3. Pride

Social media is a great place to subtly brag about your accomplishments. And just because you preface it with the phrase “incredibly humbled for the opportunity to...” and follow it up with #blessed, doesn’t mean you aren’t trying to parade how great you are. If you’re tempted by pride, don’t forget who you would be without Christ.

When you post something online, ask yourself if you are bringing unnecessary attention to yourself or if you are hoping to elicit comments that feed your ego. To God, pride is one of the ugliest sins because it seeks to receive the glory that he alone deserves. Social media provides you with an exciting opportunity to spread God’s fame to a huge audience. Don’t try to steal that spotlight.

“Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me.” (**Jeremiah 9:23-24**)

4. Slander

The internet is the place where we can slander and mock people without the fear of being punched in the face. We typically are far more bold behind a keyboard than we are in person. Social media can be ugly. Are you using your presence online to build others up or rip people to shreds?

The greatest revealer of our hearts are the words we say—and that includes the ones we type. If we only knew the pain that one slanderous word can cause—if we only knew what trials people are already facing before we start verbally tearing them down—we would think twice about spewing venom online. Use your words to heal and strengthen.

“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” (**Ephesians 4:29**)

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LIGHTHOUSE

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February 17, 2019

We welcome you to all our services!

Sunday:	9:45 AM	Pre-Service Prayer
	10:00 AM	Sunday School
	11:00 AM	Morning Worship
	5:00 PM	Pre-Service Prayer
	6:00 PM	Evening Worship

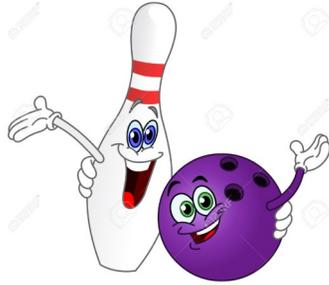
Wednesday:	6:30 PM	Prayer & Devotion
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CDs of all services are available upon request at no charge.
Contact Jim Wilson at 451-6454.

Announcements

Next Sunday: This month's Special Offering will go to The Help Center.

March 10: All-Church Bowling at Edgewood Bowl in Neosho from 3:00 to 5:00 PM.



All-church Bowling party and Life Group activity at Edgewood Bowl in Neosho on Sunday, March 10, from 3-5pm. We are asking the Senior Adult Sanctuary Class to provide drinks & ice; the Bridge-builder class to provide Chips & Veggie Tray, and the Young Adult class to bring desserts. Come join us for a fun time of fellowship.

Don't forget to discuss Sunday School & Kids Church with your children!



Door Greeters for March:
Eli & Lisa West

Thought of the Week

"A lot of people like snow. I find it to be an unnecessary freezing of water."

— Carl Reiner

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5. Quarreling

Some people get on Twitter and Facebook for no other reason than to pick a fight. Do you get a thrill out of attacking the claims of others? Winning an online argument might make you feel wise but the Bible says you might be broadcasting your own foolishness.

Do you know what takes far greater wisdom? Walking from a fight without saying a word. Most online debates are pointless because all the wise voices are the ones refraining from getting involved, which means 90 percent of the participants are most likely fools. Since online debates are almost never profitable, they are almost never appropriate.

"It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife, but every fool will be quarreling." (Proverbs 20:3)

6. Vanity

Selfies. Selfies everywhere. You have to admit: we overdo it sometimes—bathroom-mirror selfies, car selfies, gym selfies, work selfies, and just-felt-pretty-today selfies. Does your Instagram document your life or your face? There's nothing wrong with taking a nice picture of yourself but social media can easily become an outlet for your own vanity. Christ saved us so that we no longer live for ourselves, but devote our lives to serving him and loving others. Use your social media to showcase God's love, not yourself.

"Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3)

7. Discontentment

My wife once defined Pinterest this way: "Girls use Pinterest to create the life they wish they had." Whether you're creating boards for your "perfect engagement," your "perfect house," or your "perfect man," are you using Pinterest to feed your own discontentment of the life you're living?

No matter how good you have it, it's so easy to think everyone else's life is better than yours and the internet is here to make that possible. For Paul, contentment was sourced in Christ himself, not in his circumstances. You may not have the perfect house, perfect engagement, or the perfect man, but you do have a perfect Savior, and he has given *"all things that pertain to life and godliness"* (2 Peter 1:3)

"Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content." (Philippians 4:11)

8. Hypocrisy

Are you living two different lives? Are you trying to maintain a "social media" persona that is completely different than real life? It's exhausting, isn't it? We typically associate "pharisaism" with legalism, but living a double-life is exactly what the Pharisees were guilty of in Jesus' day. Instead of trying to maintain your social media personality, maybe take some time off to maintain your walk with Christ.

Followers of Christ are transformed from the inside out, not by putting on a mask. If you do personal devotions so you can post pictures of your Bible/coffee/notebook on Instagram instead of communing with your Savior, you're missing out on the refreshing peace that only Christ can offer.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence." (Matthew 23:25)

9. Hatred

If there is one unwritten rule that I have discovered on social media, it's that it is completely acceptable to spew hatred toward others if they hate you first. This is completely unchristian. Jesus Christ called us to a radically different manner of life—loving your enemies. Is your light shining online?

Every human being, friend or foe, is made in the image of God (and yes, that includes political figures). If you *really* want to make an impact online, show love even toward those who hate you. Yes, it is natural hate your enemies online, but nothing about the Christian life should be natural.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (Matthew 5:43-44)

10. Jealousy

Do spend your leisure time watching the Insta Stories of people who are living your "dream life"? Are you growing bitter because the success and prosperity of others? Beware. This bitter jealousy will lead to selfish ambition and ultimately toward destruction.

You'll find yourself despising those who have a "better" life than you. You'll find yourself questioning God's goodness. And all the while, you will be missing the story that God is writing for you right before your eyes. Don't let jealousy cloud your view. God is writing a story for you. Rejoice in it.

"For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice." (James 3:16)