

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Navigating the Digital Age: Youth, Technology, and Social Media Survival

(February 27, 2024)

JORGE:

In the age of technology, one of the worst things that can happen to anyone is for someone to hack your devices, and either steal or manipulate your data. Because it is almost certain that a hacker's intentions are not good. But what if this is exactly what is happening to you right now? Actually, this is happening to your kids every single day, from the moment they wake up to the moment they go to sleep. But it is not their phone, or their iPad, or their laptop that is being hacked. It is the other way around. It is their laptop, and their iPad, and their iPhone, that is hacking their minds. Their brains are being rewired by these devices.

The truth is even darker and scarier than you think. Because psychology is being weaponized by the tech industry to turn us and our children into addicts for more than just profit. And consequences of this insidious agenda are wreaking havoc on the next generation. I'm Jorge Gil, and I'm today's host of the I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist podcast. And my goal for this episode is to share with you some incredibly important information that I'm sure you will want anyone and everyone who is raising the next generation to know. A mom, a dad, grandparents, mentor, and anyone else involved in the rearing of a child. Now, not everything is going to be doom and gloom in this episode of the podcast. Because as you already know, here at CrossExamined.org, our goal is to equip you with practical tools to be salt and light in a culture that is bent to destroy the core virtues of our Christian worldview.

So, on the latter part of this show, I'll be sharing some effective pieces of advice so you can help your young person navigate and survive this new technological era mankind is now living in. So, let me begin by reading an excerpt from a very relevant article by psychologist Dr. Jean Twenge, who is a renowned psychologist specializing in generational trends, youth mental health, and the impact of technology on society. Now, I will encourage you to read the complete article that was published in The Atlantic a while back. I'll make sure to leave you the link in the show notes. But for now, let's listen to this quote.

And she writes, "There is compelling evidence that the devices we have placed in young people's hands are having profound effects on their lives and making them seriously unhappy. Today, teens are physically safer than teens have ever been. They are markedly less likely to get into a car accident and having less of a taste for alcohol than their predecessors, are less susceptible to drinking's attendant ills. Psychologically, however, they are more vulnerable than millennials were. Rates of teen depression and suicide have skyrocketed since 2011. It is not an exaggeration to describe iGen (or Gen Z) as being on the brink of the worst mental health crisis in decades. Much of this deterioration can be traced to their phones. The more time teens spend looking at screens, the more likely they are to report symptoms of depression."

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Let's reflect on what we just heard. How did we get here? How is it that a generation that is safer than ever, in one sense is on the brink of the worst mental health crisis in decades? If we take a look at the data, I think we can start to see how we got here. Now, I want to preface this by saying that as someone who for decades has made a living using technology, and in the last nine years have specialized on the areas of social media and digital content production, I say that technology in and of itself is not immoral or bad. But we cannot be unaware of the fact that it's being used to deliver a message in a way that has the potential to deeply corrupt our souls, and especially the souls of our kids.

Gen Z's, meaning those between 12 and 27 years of age, spent an average of six to nine hours daily, consuming social media or media on an average of five different screens. Two-thirds of Gen Z's spent at least six hours on their smartphones. But the goal of most tech companies is to promote their technology to younger and younger audiences. As of today, the average age, listen to this. The average age a child gets their first smartphone is around 10 years old. And 39% of children have a social media account by the age of 11. And out of those, around 11% that have a social media account, are under 10 years of age. Their minds and souls are being corrupted through these devices, and it is happening at a very early age.

But let's not be naive. Unless you live under a rock in complete solitude, you can be sure that this is happening to you as well. So, do you know how much time we adults spend on social media? This is not just something that is unique to the younger generations. Adults also have, use, and spend large amounts of time on our smartphones. Over 81% of US adults have smartphones. And if we analyze the data from the different social media platforms, we can see on average how much time we give to our devices. Now, keep in mind that if we were to make a demographic shift focus only on teens, these averages would change significantly.

So, how much time does an average person to spend on social media on a daily basis? On YouTube, it is between one to two hours per day. Facebook is around 35 minutes per day. Instagram and TikTok is around 45 minutes to one hour daily. Now, if we were to extrapolate that across our lifetime, we end up with the following figure just using these four social media platforms. And remember that this is if you're an average user of the platforms. Which I know from experience, someone like me who is part of the millennial generation uses social media more than the average adult. So here are the numbers. You are going to spend an average of five years and four months of your lifetime in front of a screen on social media. But this only applies to the average adult user. You can already see where this is going.

Gen Z's numbers are going to be way higher because we're living in a new era where technology is with us 24/7. It's in our hands, in our watches. We even have smart glasses. And for Gen Z's, smartphones have always existed, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks are a historical event. I can even remember like it was yesterday where I was when that happened. But they have to read that in a school history book. For most Gen Z's, the normal way to have relationships is via their smartphones. DM's, that's short for direct messages, texts, FaceTime,

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etc. So, you can easily see how their average usage of technology and social media could be much higher than the average adult.

But now, there is still one activity related to technology and screens that rank way higher in relationship to our daily routine, and that is watching television, or in modern terms, streaming video content. If we analyze the average amount of streaming or TV watched in our lifetime, the estimated total is seven years and eight months. So, if we add up the time we spend watching TV and using social media, we see that we spend in front of a screen approximately 13 years of our lives, and that's if you are an average user. What we need to realize is that younger generations like Gen Z's and the next generation under 30 years of age, teenagers and young kids spend way more time looking at these screens. The point is, in this new era, technology is inescapable. It's almost omnipresent, because it is everywhere.

I mean, you cannot go to a restaurant anymore without there being a screen fighting for your attention. Even when you get into the elevator, these screens are all around us. We use them all the time. Now, technology can be used for good, obviously. And I'm not making the argument here that social media, or technology, or the screen is bad in and of itself like I said before. But we also don't want to make the mistake of arguing that it is not influencing us and our children, one way or another. There is nothing wrong with using a smartphone. I mean, I work on one on and off throughout the day. But we also don't want to go as far as to say that it has no impact on us when we use it.

Technology such as smartphones, websites, and social media platforms are not neutral. And the problem in our culture to a large extent is that there is a belief that for the most part, technology is always good. The newer, the more convenient, the better. But that's exactly the kind of mentality that we need to avoid. In the immortal words of C.S. Lewis, he says the following. "The most dangerous ideas in a society are not those that are discussed, but those that are taken for granted." In other words, what is left unexamined is also left unchallenged. And when it comes to the influence of technology and social media, especially on our kids, it should be a perpetual topic of discussion. We cannot assume for one second that the message we are receiving is neutral. And in many cases, it is very, very subtle.

One of the first things they teach you when you're doing sea kayaking is to understand the tides and the concept of undercurrents, which can be fatal if you're inexperienced and you get caught in the drift. We don't want to get caught in the drift of technology and social media. We need to be fully aware of what is happening and how to deal with it. Now, there is no secret. Our most powerful devices are mobile, and they focus on isolating the user and giving the user an extreme sense of privacy. And this is a perfect storm. It is a perfect cocktail for demonic vices like pornography consumption to explode in kids, teens, and adults alike.

In the beginning, I mentioned the many tech companies are waging war on our kids. There is a great article about this very thing written by Richard Freed on Medium titled, 'The Tech Industry's War on Kids' that you can read for yourself. But the bottom line is that all the

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notifications, the dings, and the rings, and the red dots, and the scrolling, and the alerts, the need to read DM's, and the comments, and to get likes, and the never ending scrolling is rewiring our neural pathways in the brain, making it harder and harder to resist the urge to stay perpetually bound to their devices, turning us and them into social media zombies.

We know that dopamine is one of the brain's neurotransmitters, the chemical that carries information between the neurons. Dopamine helps regulate movement, attention, learning, and emotional responses. It also enables us not only to see rewards, but also to take steps to move in the direction of what we find rewarding. Dopamine contributes to feelings of pleasure and satisfaction as part of the reward system. So, the neurotransmitters also play a role in addiction. And this constant overload of stimulation that we get from the infinite feed of videos and images on our devices is what's hacking and hooking our kids minds into digital, mental slavery. Our kids are having a tough time being normal.

What we commonly see is the behavior of people. What we do not see is the basis of why this behavior occurs. It is underpinned by a set of layers, starting from their worldview at the bottom, which forms the beliefs and values of each individual. And it is this fundamental worldview that is constantly influenced by technology, social media, in TV, or streaming content consumption. And the Scripture is clear when it comes to applying biblical wisdom to issues like this. First Corinthians 10:23-24 says the following. "Everything is permissible. But not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible, but not everything edifies. No one needs to seek his own good, but the good of the other person."

We must always keep in mind the fact that just because we have access to all types of technology, it does not mean that we must do so constantly and without restrictions or allow our precious kids to have an open invitation to try it before we properly understand what we're allowing to enter their soul. And it boils down to the following equation. Time plus influence equals outcome. The amount of screen time plus a message that it is not neutral, I might add a message that is diametrically opposed to the truth of the Gospel, is going to yield a very negative outcome in our kid's lives. It is now much easier for us to see why an entire generation behaves in the way that it does. Some of these outcomes are very easy to see. And some of these are happening to you and me.

For example, we lose touch with one another. We lose contact with each other. We are together but alone. Technology can give us the illusion of companionship without the demands of a real relationship. Examples of these are common every day. Daily, I come across scenarios where I see either a mother or a daughter or a whole family sitting down to eat together in a restaurant, and none of them are interacting with each other. They are all on their devices. And the only person that they are interacting with is the waitress. And this is more and more common every day, not only between parents and children but between siblings, friends, and individuals in general. It is quite sad to see this because we are losing part of our humanity. We prefer the virtual company over the actual company of our loved ones.

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The next thing that happened, the next outcome is that we'll lose touch with ourselves. Dr. Twenge's article highlights the fact that we'll lose touch with ourselves. That is why the rates of anxiety and depression have skyrocketed among the younger generation. Actually, Neil Postman, who was an educator and cultural critic, wrote a prophetic book about 30 years ago called 'Amusing Ourselves to Death.' And this, of course, was before the age of social media, before the age of smartphones, and before all of this technology. And that is why he was talking about television. But I think it was prophetic. And I think if you replace the word television for smartphones or screens in general, you can see the weight of what he is saying.

The quote reads as follows. "Television is our culture's principal mode of knowing about itself. Therefore..." (and this is the critical point). "How television stages the world becomes the model for how the world is properly to be staged." Do you see what he's saying there? This screen, this device is now the role model of how the world should be for us. And I would argue that the vast majority of people who use smartphones, tablets, etc., don't even realize that they have never thought about this idea that technology models the world. It is telling us how the world should be. It is telling us how we should behave in that world, how we should live, how we should even see ourselves in that world. Reality no longer inspires the media content. Now the media content inspires how reality should be for us.

If this is not troublesome enough for you, I want you to listen to the following summary of the central idea of a book titled, 'American Girls: Social Media and the Secret Lives of Teenagers' from author Nancy Jo Sales, who to my knowledge, it is not herself a Christian. Her key message in that book is the following, that since girls live on a social media world, it maps out how they should live their lives, what they should believe, where they should spend their time, and how they should sadly curate themselves to conform their identities to cultural standards and expectations. Fulfilling the pornography defined and shaped expectations of their male peers becomes a 24/7 pursuit.

Beautiful, gorgeous, sexy, hot, are conventional responses to selfies in a culture of social media. These are responses that many girls seek as they spend minutes or hours of their day, preparing themselves to the best advantage. For many girls, the pressure to be considered hot is felt on a nearly continual basis online. Do you see it now? How the world is being modeled for our kids through social media. We see this across multiple platforms. As a fantasy world, it is presented to us. And this informs our children how the world should be for them. Now again, this is not just a youth problem. The world is also modeled for us as adults and the general public through social media, through the shows that we watch. It is all an illusion. It's all fabricated and presented as facts if we don't have the ability to have critical thinking.

For example, some of these influencers take hundreds of photos and videos until they find the perfect piece of content to post it. If this photo or video does not perform well, meaning it gets enough likes, shares, comments or you know, it gets a lot of followers, then it is deleted. It is reworked and then republished at a better time dictated by the almighty social media algorithm. They are being fed a fantasy. We are being fed a fantasy. By following celebrities and influencer

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accounts, they are seeing a world that is far from the real world. This is how social media and streaming content shape the world for us. It is not neutral. It is a delusion. And it's subtle in the way it influences us and our children.

It's like an army of termites destroying the house. It is silent and out of sight, so you don't notice it. Social media and the misuse of technology can destroy our lives, but they do not do so immediately. They would rather affect us as time goes by. And often, we do not notice it until the damage is too great. Remember, soul corruption on the outside will look okay. But on the inside, we are rotten. This is why we have to think carefully about anything related to social media and technology.

Now, I'm going to expose to you some of the lies that social media and technology in general tell us about life and about ourselves in the culture. Once you can spot these lies, you will be able to help your young person detect them and save them from a sure disaster. Lie number one, I am the center of my own universe. Technology helps us make sure that everything revolves around ourselves. Instant messaging, Door Dash grocery delivery, you can literally buy anything and everything with the push of a button on the screen. It is moving us from self-benefit to self-centeredness.

Now, technology helps me in my daily work. But when I use it only to inflate my ego, it is a problem. And that's one of the insidious things that happens to most teens without them even knowing it. Now, the next lie, lie number two is, I am my own authority. Now, that's what the culture through social media and through technology is telling them. I am my own authority. I do not have to go to anyone else. I just can go to social media. I can just go to the internet, and I can turn on my smartphone, and I can just go to Google and find an answer. And I don't need mentors. I don't need wise men to guide me.

I don't need those old guys that are called parents or grandparents, when all you need is Google and YouTube. And so, technology and social media gives them the illusion that they are in control and that they are the ultimate authority in their own lives. This gives them a world made in their own image and likeness. Next lie, lie number three. I must have endless options. We, as a society, are addicted to choice, and our technologies have only made it worse. There's always something better, something newer, an upgrade, something cooler, infinite choices of movies, songs, games, tablets, phones, experiences, and relationships, whether they're real or virtual. This is only teaching our kids that infinite choices are required for happiness and fulfillment.

However, when kids are trapped in the lie that choices are necessary prerequisites to happiness, two things result from this. First, rather than seizing the opportunity in front of them, they will always be looking for the next better and biggest thing. Second, addiction to choice leads to ungratefulness. And like Frank has said often on this show, you cannot be happy if you do not learn how to be grateful. Next lie, lie number four, others must see me. Now, is it wrong

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to post a picture once in a while? No. But the temptation is to post all of the time. The famous vacation never happened unless you post about it right?

Or you didn't enjoy a great dinner at that nice restaurant unless you take a picture of it for the world to see. Social media is a world of display, always asking, what are you doing now? And an invitation to post now. Instagram, Tik Tok, and other platforms foster habits of self-display that closely resemble the vice of vain glory. And with the expansion of social media, every space is a space of mutual self-display. Listen to this, we are no longer seeing doing something. We are doing something to be seen. And for the next generation, this has become the norm.

Lie number five, I am who I define myself to be. Good, this is important. This is a big one. I am who I define myself to be. This is the question of identity. Identity is the number one question that our culture asks itself. In our culture, our kids do not know who they are. It's like we don't know what it means to be human. We don't know what we are or how we should act. We are in a moment of cultural confusion. We cannot even determine if male and female are appropriate categories. We are completely confused when it comes to identity and young people are being shaped by this confusion.

The next generation does not understand that our identity is received, not achieved. And very often their identity is tied to or grounded in how they are viewed on social media and linked directly to their sexuality. Their goal is to develop a carefully crafted appearance of themselves online. In other words, what I appear to be is what I am. This starts to fit into their identity and who they are, especially when they start posting and start getting affirmation from others. They start getting likes and followers and a lot of them see famous people, models, and influencers, and sometimes even their own friends who constantly post pictures and videos of their body in revealing clothes. And they get a lot of likes and followers. And then they start doing similar things to get affirmation through this digital capital, this virtual currency of likes and followers.

But now, it is even worse because they can monetize this attention, some of them making hundreds of thousands of dollars via these platforms. This is what starts to feed their identity. And unfortunately, without it, they feel like they are a nobody. Now, appearing to be something you're not online, it is easy. But living a faithful life following Christ, especially in the moments when no one is watching, when life is hard and difficult, or when there are other challenges, it is much more complicated. So, there is a constant danger of substituting the false narrative online of myself for the reality that I live daily. And that's exactly where the tension that creates the anxiety and the depression from this youth comes from.

Because in reality, you are not really that person, and you're under pressure to keep pretending that you are. The reality is very different, and we all know it. That's why for so many young people, it's so difficult. That's why we need to help them understand that their identity has to be rooted in something that is much deeper and firmer than the changing opinion of those who like and comment on their posts. That is why every young person that falls for this lie is in a constant

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state of anxiety. And this will undoubtedly lead them to live a false life, a false self that would surely make them ignore the realities of their true identity.

Lie number six, I do not have to deal with you. I don't have to deal with you. Because if I don't like what you say, if I don't like anything you post, if I don't like your opinion or political affiliation, guess what? I can stop being your friend and I can stop following you, or just get rid of you. It is much easier on social media to abandon difficult relationships with my neighbors and my friends than to work hard to maintain the relationship with those people who might be a little more demanding of us. So, when there is friction, the temptation is to get rid of it.

Now, imagine that for the first 18 years of your life, all you have to do is unfriend those who they have deemed difficult to deal with. They just unlike, unfollow, block, or mute him. And then imagine that same person who has been conditioned that way, eventually when they enter adulthood, or they enter into a marital relationship where you cannot just unfriend, unlike, and unfollow that person, a relationship with the consequences is much, much greater. That is extremely dangerous.

In fact, today there are many young people who don't even talk to their parents because they have been conditioned in this way. And as soon as their parents scold them or simply give them advice, they do not want to hear. They walk away so they don't have to deal with them. In other words, they unfriend and unfollow their entire family in real life. This is no joke. This is happening, and it's creating a lot of pain and suffering. So, we need to make sure that our children and the next generation understand these lies.

Lie number seven, I deserve to be happy all of the time. When they check their social media accounts, everyone else seems to be happy all the time. They see all their friends doing all these wonderful things, eating delicious food, going to these wonderful outings, and vacations, and trips, and hanging out with their friends, and so on, and so forth. And they are alone in their room, bored out of their mind with nothing to do. Oh, but you always deserve to be happy. Why? Because these kids have FOMO, which is fear of missing out. For young people, this is a real fear.

So, you visit Instagram, and TikTok, and other social media platforms, and they see others doing a lot of things. And it generates this fear, this anxiety in them, the anxiety that they're missing out on things that are happening around them in this influence, the idea that they deserve to be happy at all times, and then they deserve to be part of everything. And unless we teach them differently, young people will absorb these three chief anti virtues of modern society: convenience, efficiency, and choice. But they all are achieved in illicit ways.

In other words, they will learn by technological osmosis that the best life is one that is faster, easier, and on their own terms. Along the way, they will miss the opportunity of developing the essential character qualities of patience, prudence, and perseverance. And now, on to the last lie. Lie number eight, what I see is normal life for everyone. What I see is what life is like for

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everyone else. Most of the accounts on social media that are followed by young people are accounts of upper middle class to upper class people, or famous people, entertainers and so on. And what this does is frame and shape their perspective of the world. This consequently makes the rest of the world to a certain extent, invisible. Why? Because most of the world does not live this way.

What we see through social media is a false view of reality, and this shapes their expectations in the wrong way. Even though I'm a US citizen now, I'm originally from Latin America, and I was able to see how the majority of the world lives, which is far below the economic level, of what here in the US would be considered a low economic status. We need to make sure our young people understand this reality. Now, the culture is teaching our kids to ask the wrong questions that provide the wrong framework for the truth.

These questions are usually something like, will this give me more freedom and choice? Or will this new iPhone make me happy? Or will it bring me more happiness and fulfillment? These are the kinds of questions that the culture is asking. And, of course, when we look at the marketing, that's exactly how things are being marketed to us. They portray everything to us from that perspective. But if we are raising disciples of Jesus, we cannot adopt the culture's questions. We have to take a different approach with different questions.

So, when it comes to technology and social media, here is what we should be asking. The question, the core question is, does my use of social media and technology make me a better servant of God and of my neighbors? Again, I'm going to repeat the question. This is foundational. Does my use of social media and technology make me a better servant of God and of my neighbors? How many of us have asked that question explicitly in our homes? I guarantee you that the vast majority of young men and women have never asked themselves that question. How do I use my social media? How can I be in the world of social media without being of the world of social media? How does my use of technology make me a better servant of God and my neighbors? These are the types of questions that we need to be teaching them to ask, and that should shape their lives.

Jesus Himself, gave us the blueprint to make sure we have the right framework. We find in Matthew 22:36-38, the following. And it reads, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law? Jesus replied, love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself." There it is, clear as day. Those are the two key questions that should shape our lives as followers of Jesus. And those questions should also shape our use of technology and social media. This is what we need to teach them. For many of our young people, it would be revolutionary if we helped them think about how a post can be a representation of their love for God, of their love for others.

So, let's start with the right questions. And let's become the right kind of people. By this I mean that we should become people of character and integrity. That does not mean that we are to

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abstain from everything. In Galatians 5, the fruit of the Spirit is not abstinence, but self-control. We must focus on developing integrity of character and virtuous behavior. This needs to be their foundation if they are going to survive this new age of technology and social media. Paul speaks of these in 1 Timothy 4:7-8, "But have nothing to do with pointless and silly myths. Rather, train yourself in godliness. For the training of the body has limited benefit. But godliness is beneficial in every way, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

We need to focus on character and virtue development on the next generation. For the fruit of the Spirit to be manifested in us, that is the ultimate goal. That's how they're going to survive technology. That's how they're going to survive social media. We need to start with the right questions. And then we start by becoming the right kind of people, to honor God and help the next generation survive this new world we're living in.

Now that we know the truth about how tech companies are hacking our minds and the minds of our children, now that we have the right framework to operate, and the right questions to ask, and now that we know and we can see through the lies the culture is feeding us, we can deploy a few actionable pieces of advice for you to help the young person in your life. These tips are going to be quite useful. But there is nothing that replaces the first two things we just talked about. Because we can set any number of limits on our use of social media and technology. And yet, if you don't develop character and virtue, they will never survive this technology age. Now, these tips will help with developing self-control, and thus protect themselves from the negative influence of social media and technology.

Now, the first tip is to disconnect on the regular basis. It is super simple. Unplug regularly. That's it. Make a habit to get off the grid as much as possible. Make sure that you help your young person stay off the devices as much as possible. Second tip, take technology slowly. Teach them a healthy pace. Teach them to not abuse their devices. Be aware of their usage. Do not overload yourself. Do not develop a toxic relationship with technology. My solution at home with my 17 year old daughter and my 16 year old son is no smartphones yet. They have a very basic device called the light phone.

And it is obvious that they did not like me or their mom for a while. But we know what's best for them for now. There's going to come a time that they're going to develop this character and they're going to be able, they have smart devices. And it's the same for any other screens at home: video games, YouTube web browsers, VR headsets. They all have time limits and use only under supervision. Third tip, turn off your notifications. Teach them to be selective with their notifications. I do not care who you are, there is absolutely no need for you to have all the notifications enabled.

It would be unbearable, especially for someone like me who has ADHD. I would not survive a minute with all my notifications on. Tip number four, and this is a big one. I think this is one of the main ones, especially for a teenager. There is no right to privacy. Because what we need is not privacy. What we need is accountability. You as parents need to set an example between

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you and your spouse. You must be fully transparent. For the kids, only allow the use of technology in public areas. No devices allowed in their bedrooms, and all devices must be put up in a public area by the end of the day, period. No excuses.

Tip number five, get some honest feedback. Develop an environment where they can find good friends that will hold them accountable. Make it clear that seeking help is a strength and not a weakness, and do not shame them. Parents, be ready to help. They can also seek out a close friend and understand that they need to sacrifice your right to privacy. They will be forced to be transparent when asking their friends or parents for feedback about their tech and their social media habits. We should all get into the habit of taking responsibility for what we do and say, whether in person or online. And let's make sure that we make this an everyday habit, both we model that we need to model it for the next generation.

Tip number six, cultivate the habit of consistent Bible study. Study the Scriptures properly on a daily basis. Let's remember that Bible reading is not the same as Bible study. We need to disciple them through Bible study. We need to pray that God gives us the Holy Spirit as a guide. We need to make sure that we know proper Bible study methods, that we study difficult passages. We do not need to avoid them. Right? We also need to make sure that we teach them the large parts of the story. Because the Bible is the story of reality, make sure they understand biblical themes, creation, fall, redemption, restoration. We've got to make sure that they understand things like literary genres that teach them to discover the historical context along with the immediate context.

We need to start reading the Bible in community like they used to do it back in the day, you know, in ancient times. And we need to seek good Bible study resources and use them. That is foundational because we need to make sure the Word of God is instilled in them. And that is only with consistent, not only Bible reading, but Bible study. The next step is, we need to teach them how to defend their faith. If you're listening to this podcast, this goes without saying.

You know, this is what we do here at CrossExamined. We give them solid reasons for their faith. This is fundamental. Believe me, they are going to run into literally dozens of challenges against Christianity daily across all social media platforms. In the streaming shows, they're going to bump into these challenges against Christianity. Now, we've got to make sure that we give them good resources. But we also as parents, as mentors, we have to prepare ourselves. And this will strengthen their relationship with God and will help us to be articulate when they have a question about their faith.

The next one is very important. Tip number seven, bring the Gospel into the culture. Let's teach them to influence the culture for God. We as Christians must create culture, but culture based on biblical principles. We need to take culture back and do it in a way that is pleasing to God. We must also stop injustice whenever we can. And this means confronting ideas opposed to God's truth, obviously with love and respect. But we need to be involved. Let's redeem the

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culture for Christ. Many aspects of our culture are redeemable. Whenever possible, us Christians should appropriate and correct the culture, redirecting it to its God given potential.

Ladies and gentlemen, these are just a few pieces of advice. But you can always take extra steps. You need to stay informed. You need to read books. Actually, one of my best recommendations for you today is our friend and CIA instructor, Brett Kunkel's book, titled, 'A Practical Guide to Culture: Helping the Next Generation Navigate Today's World.' Make sure you get a copy of that. And make sure that you stay informed. Our website has tons of resources. So now, in summary, when we are aware of the dangers of technology in social media, we can take the necessary steps to protect ourselves and our kids, and learn how to use technology, the right way to advance God's kingdom.

Technology is being weaponized against our kids. And it is not neutral. Social media is full of lies, and these lies can corrupt their souls, and shape their worldview, which is going to deeply affect their behavior. If we are able to train a child in the way that he or she should walk, they will always know how to get back on the right path. And that is the path of truth that will set them free. This is exactly what we must always remember, the wise words of Paul, when he said, "In whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him", Colossians 3:17.

God not only gives us the tools and power to navigate the world of technology and survive the world of social media. He also gives us the power to redeem and use them for good. Let's teach the next generation to do just that. And if this helps just one young person, then I can say mission accomplished. Thank you all for listening to the I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist podcast. And before we go, let me remind you that our annual CrossExamined Instructor Academy is coming to Charlotte in August. But as usual, space is limited. So, if you want to be a part of this event, and be mentored by people like Frank, and Greg Koukl, and Alisa Childers, and Brett Kunkel, myself, and many others, make sure to visit our website. Click on the Events tab and apply right away.

And if you cannot make it to Charlotte, North Carolina this year, you can sign up for the online version of the CrossExamined Instructor Academy right now. Just click on the Resource tab. Click on Online Courses and you will see it there. Also, catch Frank next week in Sarasota, Florida at the ApologeticCon event on March 4, along with Alisa Childers, and my boy Jon McCrae, David Wood, Michael Jones, Vocab Malone, and the great Dr. Chip Bennett. Many others are going to be there. Last but not least, if you are anywhere near Detroit, Michigan on March 9, make sure to attend Unshaken conference with Natasha Crain, Alisa Childers, and Frank as well. All the details are on our website. Thank you again and see you here in a couple of days. God bless.

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