



# DISCIPLESHIP IN A DIGITAL AGE

HOW WE ARE BEING SHAPED

# **JOHN MARK COMER, THE RUTHLESS ELIMINATION OF HURRY**

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**“What you give your attention to is the person you become. Put another way: the mind is the portal to the soul, and what you fill your mind with will shape the trajectory of your character. In the end, your life is no more than the sum of what you gave your attention to. That bodes well for those apprentices of Jesus who give the bulk of their attention to him and to all that is good, beautiful, and true in his world. But not for those who give their attention to the 24-7 news cycle of outrage and anxiety and emotion-charged drama or the nonstop feed of celebrity gossip, titillation, and cultural drivel. (As if we 'give' it in the first place; much of it is stolen by a clever algorithm out to monetize our precious attention.)”**

# **NICHOLAS CARR, THE SHALLOWS: WHAT THE INTERNET IS DOING TO OUR BRAINS**

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**“Whether I’m online or not, my mind now expects to take in information the way the Net distributes it: in a swiftly moving stream of particles. Once I was a scuba diver in the sea of words. Now I zip along the surface like a guy on a Jet Ski.”**

**“As we become increasingly reliant on digital technology in our daily lives, it is important to recognize and address the potential dangers it can pose. The Bible, in its wisdom, offers guidance on the use of technology and the dangers of allowing it to consume us. ...One potential danger of digital technology is the way it can distract us from what is truly important in life. In Matthew 6:21, Jesus says, ‘Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.’ If our treasure is found in the virtual world, we may find ourselves more concerned with likes, comments, and followers than with the relationships and responsibilities we have in the real world. ...Finally, we must be aware of the potential for**

**technology to be used for harm, such as through cyberbullying or the spread of misinformation. In Ephesians 4:29, it says, ‘Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.’ We must be mindful of the words and actions we take online and strive to use technology for good. ...In conclusion, while digital technology can be a valuable tool, it is important to be mindful of its potential dangers. By following the guidance offered in the Bible and prioritizing our relationships, mental health, and the well-being of others, we can use technology in a healthy and responsible manner.”**

**“ChatGPT, type 200 words on the dangers of digital technology  
referencing the Bible and modern culture”**

**“ChatGPT, Give me 30 words about eating donuts on a Sunday”**

**“Eating donuts on a Sunday can be a delicious and indulgent way to start the week. It can also be a fun activity to enjoy with friends or family. However, it is important to remember to consume sugary treats in moderation as part of a well-balanced diet.”**

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**Instead of asking, “Is this good or bad?” the question we should be asking is, “Who are we becoming?”**

**What kind of person is this shaping me to be? When I watch this screen, when I use this app, when I pick up this device, who am I being formed into?**

## **COLOSSIANS 2:2-3, NIV**

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**My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**

## **JOHN 4:4-26, NIV**

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**Now he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." "Sir,"**

## **JOHN 4:4-26, NIV**

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**the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?” Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”**

# C.S. LEWIS

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## **JOHN 4:4-26, NIV**

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**He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.” “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.” “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”**

# CAL NEWPORT, DIGITAL MINIMALISM

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**“Almost everyone I spoke to believed in the power of the internet, and recognized that it can and should be a force that improves their lives.**

**They didn't necessarily want to give up Google Maps, or abandon Instagram, but they also felt as though their current relationship with technology was unsustainable—to the point that if something didn't change soon, they'd break, too. A common term I heard in these conversations about modern digital life was exhaustion. It's not that any one app or website was particularly bad when considered in isolation. As many people clarified, the issue was the overall impact of having so many**

# CAL NEWPORT, DIGITAL MINIMALISM

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**different shiny baubles pulling so insistently at their attention and manipulating their mood. Their problem with this frenzied activity is less about its details than the fact that it's increasingly beyond their control. Few want to spend so much time online, but these tools have a way of cultivating behavioral addictions. The urge to check Twitter or refresh Reddit becomes a nervous twitch that shatters uninterrupted time into shards too small to support the presence necessary for an intentional life.”**



## **MATTHEW 11:28-30, MSG**

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**“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”**

# **HOW IS THIS SHAPING ME?**

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**When do I first pick up a device in the day?**

**When do I last put down a device for the day?**

**How long can I go in a day without looking at a screen?**

**How many consecutive hours in a week do I go without a screen?**

# **HOW IS THIS SHAPING ME?**

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**How many devices grab my attention for work?**

**On my days off, how much time is spent on a screen or device?**

**From what sources do I receive news about the world?**

**From what sources do I receive information about life?**

# **HOW IS THIS SHAPING ME?**

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**How many social media accounts do I have and how much time per day do I spend interacting with them?**

**On what devices or screens do I read Scripture?**

**On what devices or screens do I participate in worship?**

# **HOW IS THIS SHAPING THEM?**

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**What access do my children have to screens and devices?**

**What information do I review about my children's online activity?**

# HOW IS THIS SHAPING US?

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**What activities do I enjoy with friends and loved ones which don't involve a screen or device?**

## **QUESTION FOR A NEXT STEP**

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**What are some sustainable rhythms I can implement in pursuit of digital equilibrium?**