



[**Author Note:** I opened this lesson on a humorous note by sharing some funny cell phone memes I found through a quick google search. I would have included some for you, but they're copyrighted. Sorry!]

How true do you think some of these memes are? Cell phones are a huge part of our culture now, to the point that it would be hard to imagine what life would be like without having a phone near us all the time.

Raise your hand if any of the following are true of you.

- You sent at least five texts today.
- You checked social media at least five times today.
- You played a game on your phone today.
- You watched a video on your phone today.
- You spoke on the phone today [this one might be funny].
- Your phone was the first thing you touched this morning when you woke up and will probably be the last thing you touch before you go to sleep.

One high school girl who wrote an article on cell phones for her school newspaper said, “When I broke my phone and went without it for a week, I don’t know how I survived. I felt like I was on a deserted island all by myself.”

Raise your hands. How many of you, if you lost your phone for a week, would feel just like her? If not, how would you feel?

Last week, we started off this series by going to Colossians 3:17 and talking about how technology should be something that helps us worship God, not something that gets worshiped.

Let’s look again at that verse:

Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do, in WORD or DEED, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

If you think about it, smart phones are nothing but WORDS and DEEDS. We use them for talking, searching, playing, taking pictures, posting pictures, and, of course, texting. And on rare occasions, we even text full words.

Last week, we asked the question, “Is technology an idol in my life that I am loving more than God?” Today, we’re going to get specific to cell phones and smartphones and ask, **“Do my words and deeds that take place on my phone bring God honor and glory?”**

To answer this question, we’re going to examine just one verse by Paul in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 6:12

“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything.”

To better understand this one verse, let me tell you about some background stuff going on with the Corinthian church.

Paul has to address a lot of things that the Corinthian Christians were doing. They were taking each other to court, complaining about each other, and even being really, umm, “inappropriate” with each other. Do you guys get what I mean? Some people were sleeping together who shouldn’t be sleeping together. Hopefully, I don’t need to paint too much more of a picture than that. You get it ... naughty things were happening in this church.

But, here’s the worst part. The people doing these “naughty things” were using this really lame excuse. They were saying, “All things are lawful for me.” In other words, they were saying, “Hey, my body was made for sex, so obviously it’s OK for me to do this.”

To put that into perspective, that would be like if I stole money out of your pocket and said, “Hey, pockets were made to be reached into, so this is totally legal!”

Basically, the Corinthians were starting to sound like Outback Steakhouse: “No rules, just right.” So, before getting into a discussion about sexual

immorality (don't worry, that's not what we're talking about today), Paul quotes their popular excuse back to them and corrects it.

So, their popular excuse, again, is, “All things are lawful for me.” Now, believe it or not, this is actually true for Christians in a sense. In the Old Testament, followers of God were required to keep a lot of laws, which forbade them from doing certain things, hanging out with certain people, and eating certain foods. Today, because Christ has fulfilled the law and made the final sacrifice for our sins on the cross, if we believe and trust in Him, we are no longer “under the law,” so we have freedom to eat what we want, hang out with who we want, and even use whatever devices we want.

But, of course, all of those things should be done to honor God. So, it's not that “all things (including sins) are lawful to me,” which is what the Corinthians were saying. The truth is that for Christians, there are no longer any restrictions on how we live for God. Everything we eat can be for His glory, every relationship can be made to point to Him, and everything we do on our phone CAN BE done to honor God.

This brings up an important fact about the cell phone in your pocket. It's not evil! It's not the problem. A cell phone is just a tool. The problem is how we use it.

“Not all things are HELPFUL.”

A cell phone can be helpful. Last week, we talked about all the benefits that technology can bring. Does anyone remember some of the positive benefits we said that technology can bring?

But, a cell phone can also be harmful. What are some ways cell phones can be harmful?

We can post the wrong things on social media, we can talk about people behind their backs, or just ignore them altogether by blocking them. We can run up bills and cause huge expenses to bank accounts that don't even belong to us. That's basically stealing, by the way.

And just like the Corinthians, we can do some pretty naughty things by sending naughty messages and even pictures, or we can demand those