

## Christian Love and Social Media

Several years ago I took down my Facebook page after seeing some problematic directions social media was headed. One of my favorite preachers (and bulletin article writers) is Neal Pollard at the Bear Valley church of Christ. (You might want to subscribe to their “Daily Bread” articles.) His recent missive squarely addresses the challenges we all see in social media today. Pay close attention. – Ray

- I will try to use social media to encourage and edify others (1 Thess. 5:11; 1 Cor. 14:26b).
- I will avoid the shocking, inflammatory, and divisive tactics increasingly characteristic of S.M. (cf. 1 Cor. 1:10; Prov. 12:18; Prov. 15:2,4; etc.).
- I will ask, "Would I say this in the way I am saying this?," if face to face with this person or this group of people (Prov. 23:7).
- I will not use Social Media to pick fights or put people on the defensive (cf. 2 Tim. 3:1ff).
- I will not be Nellie Nitpicker and Contrary Charlie. About. Every. Single. Little. Thing.
- I will respect that my connections have connections that are not Christians and I want to be sure to say what I say in accordance with Ephesians 4:15 and 2 Timothy 2:24-26.
- I will sever connections with individuals who consistently display a lack of self-control with their words and attitudes. Souls are too precious.
- I will abhor the thought of doing what would put Christ to an open shame (cf. Heb. 10:29).
- I will double-check myself to avoid bragging and self-promotion (1 Cor. 13:4-5).
- I will conquer the desire to have the last word, pile on, or fight fire with fire (Mat. 5:39-42).
- I will not let the false teaching, bad attitude, or meanness of another be my rationale for behaving in a way that brings Christ shame or jeopardizes my own soul (cf. 1 Cor. 9:24-27).
- I will always be trying to set the table for productive evangelism or retrieving the wayward (Jas. 5:19-20; Col. 4:6).
- I will always try to portray the doctrinal, moral, and ethical values of my Lord, thus avoiding reflecting and glorifying whatever values conflict with His (Mat. 5:14-16).
- I will try to promote, not pummel, the bride of Jesus, appreciate, not attack, the elders, and unite, not untie, wherever possible.
- I will shun passive aggression in myself first, but also in others.
- I will deal with dirty laundry in its appropriate way, which is not on Social Media.
- I will actively try to show grace to everyone, including cantankerous curmudgeons.
- I will, foremost, realize my own imperfections and try every day I use Social Media to do so in the way Jesus would, if He had Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, a blog, LinkedIn, etc. In a way, through you and me, He does. I will let that sink in!