



# LIFE *On* MISSION

ADVENTIST CHURCH *in Sydney*

## The Online Space

At the end of 2017, Google revealed what Australians searched for the most on its platform. Can you guess what those searches were?

According to news.com.au, Aussies were most curious about fidget spinners, the new Apple iPhone, Harvey Weinstein's investigation, tennis, Bitcoin and particular Australian drug traffickers. Increasingly Google has become the go-to for any clarification in an argument, that personal question you're too embarrassed to ask or your quest to gain a better understanding on any topic.

The online space plays a prominent role in our lives these days. Marketing agency Mediakix estimates the average person will spend over 5 years of his or her life on social media. It's hard to escape the reach of the internet and social media. No longer is it a question about *if* we should use the online space to share Jesus but *how* we should use it.

How do you spend your time online? What does it reveal about the priorities in your life?

### Digging into the Bible

When Jesus was asked to name the greatest commandment in the Bible, He responded, '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.' All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments." **(Matthew 22:37-40).**

1. When Jesus describes loving the Lord with all our heart, do you think He would include our social media use and internet use?
2. When Jesus describes the second great commandment of loving our neighbor, could this command carry over into how we interact with people on social media and in the digital space?
3. In what ways can you live out these great commandments in time spent online?

Throughout the Bible we find stories set with agricultural backdrops that would have been completely familiar to the listeners and readers of the Scriptures. Jesus calls his first disciples from their work at sea as fishermen. He uses the story of sowing, tending and harvesting to explain the lifecycle and growth of disciples. He uses a field to explain the treasure of the Kingdom of God.

These days, more than half of the world's inhabitants live in cities. According to the UN, that number is expected to grow to over sixty percent by 2050. If Jesus used the familiar to speak to the generation of His day, what familiar setting would He use to speak to us today? With technology

surrounding us from the food we eat to the clothes we wear to the way we exercise, it's not hard to imagine it would include some sort of technology.

Try reconsidering Jesus' method (**Matthew 4:23-25**) and the method He taught His disciples (**Luke 10:1-24**), as mentioned in the lesson, *The Method*. Imagine how Jesus would apply His principles and methods in our modern world. Where might you find opportunities to fulfil his calling utilising the digital space?

### **Making It Personal**

If you're looking for guidance on how you can show Jesus' love in the online space, read **Romans 12:14-21**. This passage contains principles that are timeless even as technology changes. If you hone in on **Romans 12:15**, you'll find a guiding light for your interactions on social media.

Find opportunities to "rejoice with those who rejoice" and "mourn with those who mourn". Following this simple principle alone will make a world of difference in the lives of those around you in the digital space.

How would your interactions change online if you used the Romans 12:15 principle to guide you as you commented, liked, scrolled and engaged?

### **Talking with the Master**

Spend time praying conversationally as a group. Thanks Jesus for forgiveness and grace. Ask Him to show you how He wants you to use your online space, interactions and engagement for his glory and for the growth of His kingdom.