

Social Media and the Power of Imagination

Nathan Pettit



Times Have
Changed: Living
Our Lives
through an
iPhone Lens



Common Conversations about Social Media

- Neurology: Our brains are changing; attentions spans are shorter; our long-term memories are worse.
- Inter-Personal Relationships: We're spending less time with friends and more time at home on our phones.
- Self-Care: Depression and anxiety have increased drastically since the release of the iPhone in 2007.



- What role does social media play in the person you are becoming?
- Could there be a disconnect between what we want to pursue and what we are actually pursuing?
- Who were we made to be?



Made To Be Makers

Genesis 1:27–28, “So God created mankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living thing that moves on the ground.’”



Made To Be Makers

- Creation is presented a place to be expanded and unfolded, advanced from garden to city.
- Making is how we be *human*.



You Make What You Want

- *What we want* is some vision of the world we dream of that has captured and captivated our imaginations.
- Our imagination matters because whatever captures our imagination, in turn shapes our desires, our pursuits; ultimately who we are becoming.



We Don't Always Want What We Think

- Where do my wants come from?
- What's training my desires and pursuits?

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WHOLESALE



How are my desires and pursuits shaped?

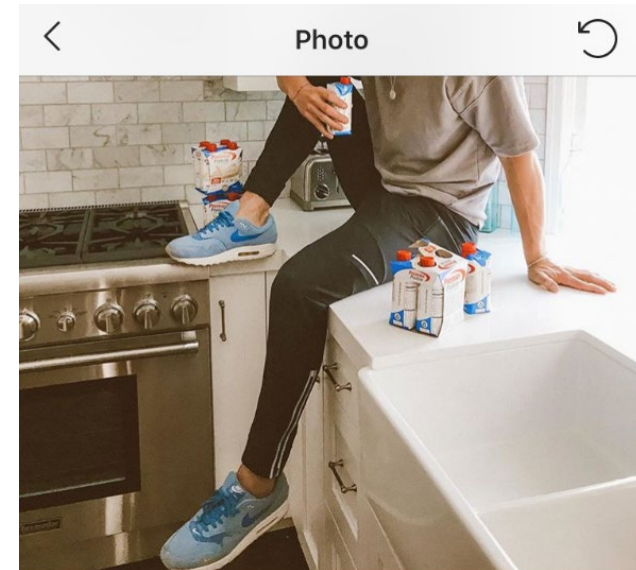
- They are not something we acquire didactically through the intellect.
- They are formed by habits and rituals that often fly under the radar of our consciousness.
- *They are things we think we are doing, but are actually doing something to us.*



Social Media's Stories

Consumerism

Someone has something we obviously need, and if we don't have it, something is wrong with us.



5,283 likes

For the last two months I've been become super relaxed when it came to gym and diet, and I can feel now what its doing to my body and overall energy. I've been more tired, less motivated to do things, and sore for no reason. I want to turn the page and for then next 60 days get back in shape with the right diet, exercising and @premierprotein. I've wanted to do this for some time now. Ill keep you posted on the week to week. Also want to thank @premierprotein for the help, also cool that there light weight and easy to take around. No GMO, and 100% recyclable. #premierprotein #ad

Social Media's Stories

Egoism

Because we often use social media as a primary mode of social connectivity, our social standing is always in play, always at risk. The resulting self-consciousness – even, at times, fear – magnifies the intensity of our involvement with the medium (Nicholas Carr).

The narrative is that everything is about me – my likes, my perception, my lifestyle. Our hunger for affirmation drags us back to our media to check our accounts over and over again.



Social Media's Stories

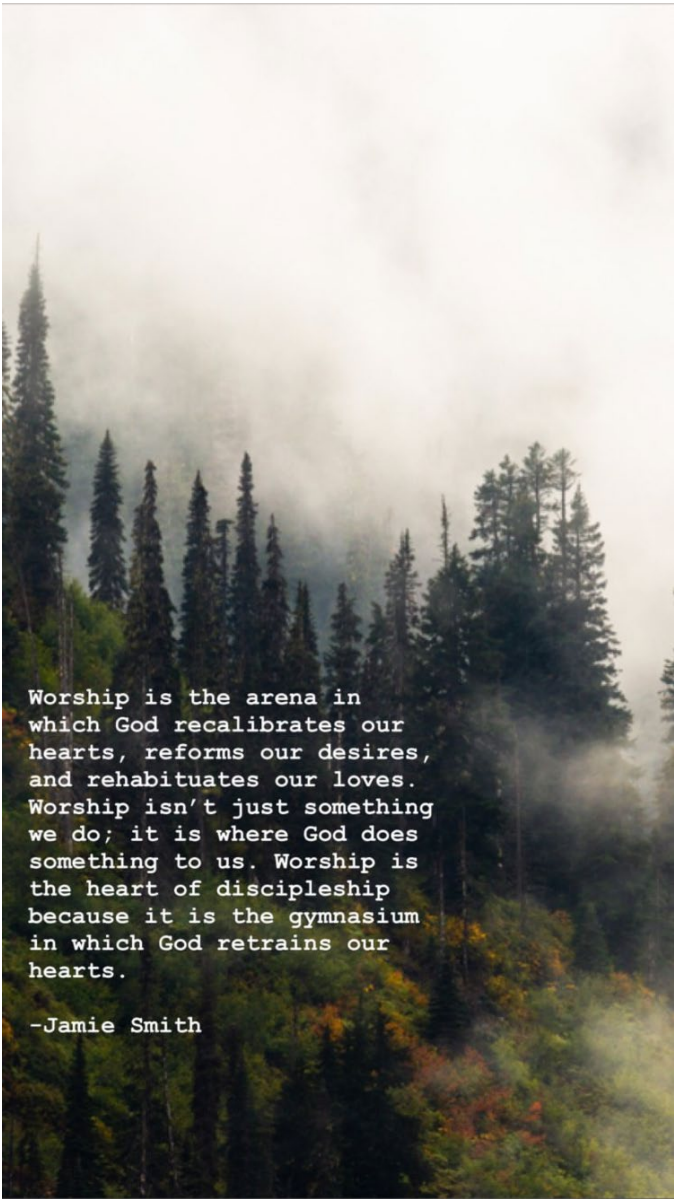
Entertainment

I exist to be entertained; the world answers to my wants and interests.



Constructive Counter-Measures

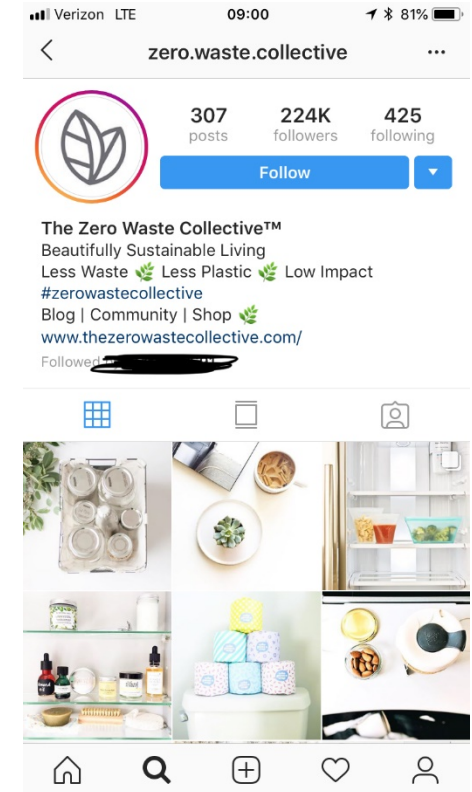
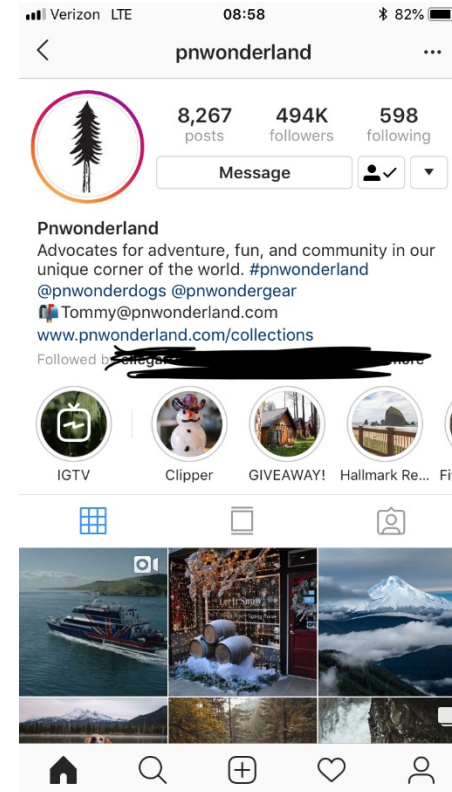
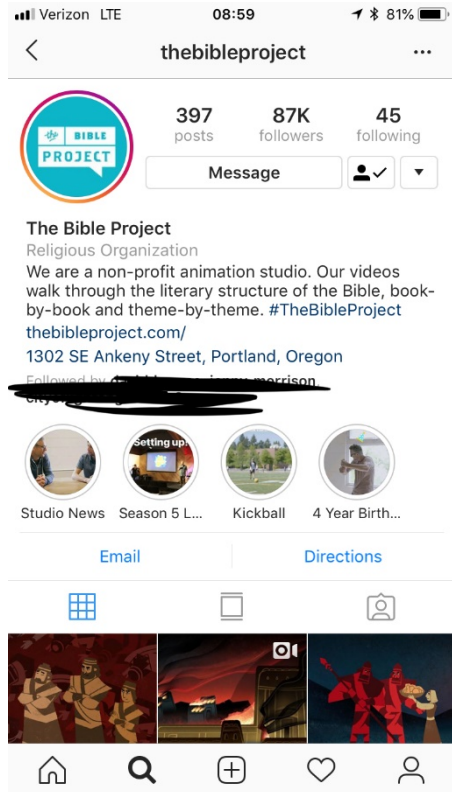
If we want to be kingdom-oriented culture makers, one of the most significant investments we can make in the formation of our imagination is to go to church.



Worship is the arena in which God recalibrates our hearts, reforms our desires, and rehabituates our loves. Worship isn't just something we do; it is where God does something to us. Worship is the heart of discipleship because it is the gymnasium in which God retrains our hearts.

-Jamie Smith

Captured by Truth, Goodness, and Beauty



What now?

- *Social Media Inventory*: ask yourself whether the specific people/accounts you follow are capturing your imagination with stories that rival the gospel. Diversify your follows and seek out accounts that will inspire you to become the person you hope to be.
- *Track Your Usage*: New Apple iOS 12 software tracks time on phone and pick-ups, Instagram tracks time spent and allows you to set goals. Set goals and then compete against friends or family to see who can keep to their goals.
- *Replacement Activities*: You may find that trying to cut a lot of social media will just drive you to another media platform unless you have other activities or social events prepared in advance.
- *Phone-Free Intervals*: regularly do your homework, take a walk, eat a meal or spend a weekend without your phone – after a couple hours you may be surprised how little you actually want it.



Recommended Reading

- Nicholas Carr, *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*
- Pico Iyer, *The Joy of Quiet* (The New York Times)
- James K. A. Smith, *You Are What You Love*
- Jean M. Twenge, *Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?* (The Atlantic)