

Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Oct 7th 2018

Just imagine for a minute what a different world it would be if instead of God saying, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him,” God would have said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make an iPhone for him.”

We probably all chuckle at the absurdity of the idea, but maybe that world is closer than we think.

Are we becoming more like Adam before the creation of Eve and “alone” because we have the ubiquitous smartphone constantly in our hand? How much has the smartphone interfered with the relationship we have with our spouse? Or, to the extreme, has the smartphone superseded the importance of being with our spouse?

My wife and I eat the vast majority of our meals at home, but last week we took my mother-in-law out to celebrate her birthday. Across from our table was a couple with wedding rings on their fingers and iPhones in their hands every time I glanced over at them. Each was engrossed in their own phone. Except for when the waiter checked on them, they rarely looked up, and I am not sure if I saw them talk to each other. After settling their bill they looked at each other, smiled and left. If all you saw was them walking out together, you would say to yourself, “What a perfectly happily married couple.” But are they?

Per statista.com we are spending over 200 minutes per day using our smartphones for something other than a conversation. If the focus of the research is on teenagers, some report their usage tops 500 minutes per day.

Is the smartphone also interfering with the frequency and depth of our conversations with God? Instead of finding a quiet spot to sit down, hitting the “pause button” on life and reflecting on what we are doing with our lives and how much or how little God is part of each and every moment of our life, we sit down, grab our phones and check to see who recently updated their Facebook page or Tweeted something we just have to know, or we watch stupid pet tricks on YouTube.

Perhaps if couples spent more time conversing with each other and listening to what their spouse was concerned about or was feeling, the rate of divorce would not continue to climb. (One has to wonder if one of the reasons young people today are delaying marriage could be tied to the cell phone?)

As you do your daily exam of conscience today, think about how many times you had your cellphone in hand, and then ask yourself how necessary your use of it was. The next time you go out to eat with your spouse or even at the dinner table at home, do NOT bring your phone to the table. Engage your spouse in conversation much like Jesus would engage those around him in conversation and listen intently to what they have to say. Likewise, when you have a free moment, instead of trolling the internet for mindless stories, talk to God about your day, what you did right, who you helped, how you made his world a better place and how you can do better tomorrow.

Don't let your spouse live alone, right next to you in the same home, and don't let God live alone either. Talk to them. They are there ready to listen.

