Summary: 12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You (Tony Reinke)

1. **We are addicted to distraction**
    1. Check our phone once every 4.3 minutes
    2. 8,000 Christians surveyed, more than half check phone within minutes of waking and 73% before spiritual disciplines.
    3. One billion check Facebook daily, and average spend 1 hour per day on Facebook Messenger or Instagram
    4. More addicted to phone, more prone to depression, anxiety and less able to concentrate and sleep at night.
    5. Three reasons we succumb so easily
        1. Use digital distractions to keep work away. We procrastinate around hard things, work deadlines, tough conversations etc.
        2. Use digital distractions to keep people away. (put phone face-up on the table)
        3. Use digital distractions to keep thoughts of eternity away.
            1. Pascal: "I have discovered that all the unhappiness of men arises from one single fact, that they cannot stay quietly in their own chamber."
            2. Solitude is incomprehensible. Frightened if we discover we left our phone back or lost it.
            3. Kreeft: "We think we want peace and silence and freedom and leisure, but deep down we know that this would be unendurable to us. We want to complexify our lives. We don't have to, we want to. We want to be harried and hassled and busy. Unconsciously, we want the very thing we complain about."
    6. Hold out hand, rise to sky and that is how long our lives are compared to eternity.
    7. Distractions come in many ways. Anything that diverts our minds and hearts from what is most significant. Heart works best when not dominated by cares.
    8. Scripture warns us of unchecked distractions
        1. Blind souls from God
        2. Close off communion with God (fail to pray and draw near)
        3. Mute the urgency of God (distractions are anything that veil spiritual eyes from shortness. Should be on toes for Christ's return; should declutter unimportant things)
    9. We should purge anything that is unhelpful in our lives. Keller said noise and distraction greatest hindrance to knowing God. "It is easier to tweet than pray."
    10. Then diagnostic questions
        1. Do my smartphone habits expose addiction to amusements?
        2. Reveal desire to be affirmed?
        3. Distract from genuine communion with God?
        4. Easy escape from serious thinking?
        5. Preoccupy me with worldly success?
        6. Mute Spirit's leading in my life?
    11. We must move from being distracted on purpose to be less and less distracted with an eternal purpose
    12. Phone conditions us to be passive observer

2. **We ignore our flesh and blood**
    1. Serious dangers of talking or texting on phone while driving
    2. When our phone dings, our brains get a shot of dopamine and we proceed to ignore our neighbour. We sin against our neighbour when we ignore our street neighbour.
    3. Viral Anger

        1. Easier to slander online than a real life brother.
        2. "The single most important determining fator about whether what I publish online will get hot, spread virally, and reach new pockets of readers is my success at igniting a heated debate." (59). Rage spreads
    4. Joy of Fellowship
        1. "Though I have much to write to yo, I would rather not use paper and ink (modern technology for John). Instead I hope to come to you, and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete" (2Jn. 12). John used tech to communicate but knew this was only part of communication.
        2. Misunderstanding is easier when we removed part of our embodied personhood. Arms cross, eyes linger, ear detect sarcasm...when these aren't there we invite misunderstanding and tension.
        3. Eye contact is one of most powerful forms of social bonding possible.
        4. All writing is remote and ghost-to-ghost communication rather than person-to-person. We are to love in physical presence.
    5. Compounded embodiment: Paul encourages holy kisses; not neglecting gathering together

3. **We Crave Immediate Approval**
    1. Hero versus celebrity
        1. Heroes are men and women of character known for acts of valour and celebrated long after death. Time not image makes them. They are mostly unseen in the moment.
        2. The driving force of the modern age is the desire for attention. We all want to grab attention and taste fame, even for a flickering blink.
    2. Comfort of online friends. Why so much easier to talk to people online? Factors:
        1. We can break free from our physical limitations (and continue to find church awkward)
        2. We can separate ourselves from people we don't like or gravitate to. (online we can go where everyone likes us and agrees; digital buffer and village to protect us; insular; echo chamber)
            1. Family requires unconditional love; hard to grow when every individual is pre-occupied with individual performance.
            2. We must feel award at times and unheard and under-appreciated, all on purpose; no substitute for church
    3. If you follow Christ, the world will unfollow you. You'll be shunned and despised; Sinners love the approval of man more than God (Jn. 12:42-43)
    4. "The sad truth is that we are addicted to our phones because we crave immediate approval and affirmation." (75) Affirmation draws us to our phones
    5. Jesus warned us of striving to be seen by men (Mt. 6:1). If done (like taking pic of Bible reading) is done to be seen, poof, reward is gone. We wake up each day hungry for approval of man and validation.
    6. If we don't detox this, we will go on seeking intimacy by reproducing ourselves and binge on man's approval.
    7. God approves us for things largely unseen by man.
    8. Don't waste your approval
        1. Smartphones prick impulse for appreciation, self-replication to be seen, known and loved. This is why we can't put our phones away. We crave the admiration of others and cultivate sinful desire for approval through social media.
        2. "If you want to become an 'Instagram celebrity,' if you crave fame and seek it through self-promotion, I plead with you to stop. The urgency that you feel and that drives you online is caused by your fear of being un-replicated, unseen, unloved. Each day you feel as if you are losing your grip on your online status unless you

deliver crowd-pleasing content. Stop trying to impress the online world with your body or your wit, all for the sake of a few likes of affirmation." (77)

9. God should be a hero in the next world, not celebrity in this life. Seek eternal crown, not man's approval now.

4. **We lose our literacy**
    1. Books now considered boring; inconvenient and downright boring.
    2. Stats say those struggling to read have addiction to smart phone as root cause.
    3. Some SP users still read a lot. and even more. But we are also easily distracted.
    4. Paper or pixels. Digital readers naturally read too quickly. we skim. Paper, we're more slow. Internalize, we have to linger. Big challenge to literacy is short attention span. Deep reading is harder than ever. "Once I was a scuba diver in a sea of words...now I zip along the surface like a guy on a Jet Ski."
    5. We mustn't lose our ability to stop and ponder, lose our ability to deeply enjoy.
    6. Bible is most important book, not breaking news or updates. "Look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen." 2Cor. 4:18

5. **We feed on the produced**
    1. Celebs must stay in the news.
    2. We can't retain things by memory. We have to take pics and vids. We become actors. Richest memories are enjoyed in full senses, then later journaled. Instead, we impulsively reach for our phones.
    3. Breaking free:
        1. Humbly admit we are targets of digital mega-corps that want to make us consumers. don't be naive. Social media not created to make you better but to make company more money.
        2. Enjoy present moment in faith without feeling compelled to capture each moment with phone
        3. Celebrate

6. **We become like what we 'like'**
    1. Words and images we consume transform us.
    2. Story of Narcissus and Nemesis
    3. We have an addiction of looking at ourselves
    4. If we worship Christ, we become like Christ. Object of worship is object of our imitation.
    5. Today, we idolize our phones when we lose ability to ask if they help us to reach our spiritual goals.
    6. Groothuis: "the way we interact online becomes the norm for how we interact offline. Facebook and Twitter communications are pretty short, clipped, and rapid. And that is not a way to have good conversation with someone." (116)
    7. When guy decided to ditch social media, wife said best gift he ever gave her. More of what we talk about comes from heart, not twitter feed.

7. **We get lonely**
    1. SP was supposed to cure loneliness
    2. SP have many benefits; major downfall is isolation. Technology cuts off more and more personal interaction. No milkman or gathering around fire or live orchestra. Tech draws us apart.
    3. Headphones are the ultimate. It refuses to listen to silence, thus refusing to listen to self or others. Says: disinterested, musically inclined, non-threatening people."
    4. Distance is no longer an impediment. Safe way to offer ourselves to others.

5. Online, we off up ourselves by self-interpretation, rarely called into question. In person, people can push back, question for our own good. (similar to missions)
6. Piper: "I feel like I have to get saved every morning. I wake up and the devil is sitting on my face." Early morning so important to read the word. Satan wants to distract us with a thousand vanities. We relinquish mornings by turning on our phones
7. Six instinctive reasons
    1. Novelty candy (the new)
    2. Ego candy (what they say about us)
    3. Entertainment candy (fascinating, shocking)
    4. Boredom avoidance
    5. Responsibility avoidance
    6. Hardship avoidance
8. Isolation + feeding on vanity=soul-starved loneliness; Isolation + communion with God = soul-feeding solitude
9. Spurgeon: "Permit not your minds to be easily distracted, or you will often have your devotion destroyed."
10. "Be still and know that I am God" (ps. 46;10).

8. **We get comfortable in secret vices**
    1. Consumerism is idea that all of life can be converted into commodities, controlled and monetized.
    2. Ashley Madison fiasco; gigantic scam targeting naive men; 20 million men to 1,500 women; more than 13,000 to one.
    3. Price of cheap curiosities
        1. SP make sexual sin more discreet, festering behind veil of privacy
        2. SP make porn easier to find; spiritual epidemic unprecedented in gravity in history of church, costing whole generation of joy and killing souls by unchecked lust.
        3. Capitalize on endless curiosities...finds outlet in sexting and online porn. It emasculates, renders passive and impotent; virgins longer than peers; struggle to find relationships; sexual disorders; never satisfied by novelty.
        4. Leads to deeper and deeper addiction and lurid forms of porn.
    4. God sees all
        1. We hate seeing unflattering pics of self online;
        2. Porn is web's largest industry.
        3. "Better to enter heaven having decided to never use the Internet again, rather than going to hell clicking on everything you desire." Ferguson
        4. One day will be ultimate humiliation.

9. **We lose meaning**
    1. Postman (Amusing ourselves to death) contrasted two warnings:
        1. Orwell of 1984 said books would disappear by censorship; truth would be concealed
        2. Huxley of *Brave New World* thought books marginalized by data torrent. too much info, drowned in sea of irrelevance. Huxley was probably right.
    2. Techno-pessimism?
        1. declining lit rates before Facebook
        2. Challenge isn't information overload but junk food online. (memes, twinkies etc.)
        3. pointless talk, trivial knowledge for some kind of bond; small talk; substance of content will diminish; we keep pushing bc we want to stay relevant; we want to be liked;
    3. Addiction to anything new in last five minutes
    4. Solution isn't passivism; narcissism or nihilism.
    5. Solomon's solution

1. Cherish wisdom (absorb good info, don't clamour for immediacy, rapidity of some invisible expiration dates, hyper palatability of noise; novelty)
2. Fearful obedience over frivolous info.
3. Embrace freedom in Christ

10. **We fear missing out**
    1. FOMO: anxiety exciting event somewhere, aroused by posts online
    2. Nomophobia - fear of not having access to media world
    3. Andy couch took 40 days offline, no screens, no social media; mostly delightful; fomo was real; feared missing info and affirmation.
    4. online shows everything is perfect
    5. Envy thrives by concrete markers of comparison.
    6. FOMO object lesson is luke 16:19-31, rich man and Lazarus. real life fomo is fear of eternally mission out.

11. **We become harsh to one another**
    1. Time to cover over sins
    2. Online intent on provoking hostility without resolution (trolling, or slander); slander is against report, not necessarily false report.
    3. "Many use truth as a license to righteously diminish other reputations." Act of exposing dirt one someone rarely stops with whistle blowing."
    4. We shouldn't spout guesses about intentions or motives. We should seek to cover sins, space for discipline and repentance. We often can't see work of Spirit.
    5. Spurgeon: "The easiest work in the world is to find fault." Internet allows us to do this like never before. All of us has an inner troll. We love to see failure of others.
    6. Should I tweet it?
        1. Has God called me to write or comment from my proximity?
        2. Actions helpful to expose their sins?
        3. Fault-finding made assumptions of another's motives
        4. If I do speak out, what is moment of resolution?
        5. The most viral emotion is anger; the most viral story is scandal.

12. **We lose our place in time**
    1. Am I entitled to spend hours every day browsing curiosities?
    2. SP makes us squander hours
        1. We lose track of time
        2. dislocates us
        3. we look for sin
    3. Cast all that distracts; redeem the time; get rid of useless chitchat, stupid jokes, GIFs, small talk, sports,
    4. We'll give an account for all of this (Mt. 12:36-37); every careless word, words with no thought; don't jest about sin. No jokes to put ourselves up.
    5. Small talk can be good or bad, depending on the message (don't get close to me, or, I want to get to know you)