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STUDENTS AND YOUTH CONGRESS

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**ICT: THE POSITIVES
AND PERILS OF
THE INTERNET REVOLUTION**

INTRODUCTION

The Internet is the global system of interconnected computer networks that uses the Internet protocol suite (TCP/IP) to communicate between networks and devices. It is a vast network that connects computers all over the world. Through the Internet, people can share information and communicate from anywhere with an Internet connection. With the evolution of internet, the whole world has become a global village.

The birth of internet has brought a revolution to the way the world works. It has become extremely useful in our daily routine tasks. The Internet has changed business, education, government, healthcare, and even the ways in which we interact with our loved ones—it has become one of the key drivers of social evolution. The changes in social communication are of particular significance. ... The Internet has removed all communication barriers.

The Internet Penetration Rate (IPR) is daily increasing across the globe. You can practically access internet from anywhere at any time. The advancement of wireless communications technologies has significantly made internet accessible everywhere. In many advanced countries, internet connection is available in the homes, churches, schools, buses, trains, ships, planes supermarkets e.tc. We can now access internet through several devices such as: desktop computers, laptops, notebooks, smartphones, tablets, smart TVs, smart glasses, game consoles, wristwatches, eBook readers, digital cameras, cars, and other home appliances.

It is practically impossible today for a youth who really wants to excel in his or her academics or career not to have anything to do with internet and we need to be properly guided, because the same internet that has a lot of benefits can also be a snare to many lives both physically and spiritually. It is a world of opportunity for good and evil lying side by side.

In *Deut. 30:19*, the Bible says “I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live.

Just as we can see in the above scripture that God said, He has set before us life and death, blessing and cursing but His counsel is not to choose between life and death but to choose life. There is life and death set before us in order for us to know that both sides exist, but the option of choice was not provided for us as there is no alternative to life. For God, death is not an alternative to life and therefore, anyone who decides to reject God and His offer of life by choosing the path of death has done that to his or her own peril.

The main objective of this seminar is to highlight the positives and negatives, benefits and detriments, advantages and disadvantages of using internet, and to counsel us to wholly abstain from the negative sides of it and stick to the positive sides of it. There is only one path to follow here. It is the path of righteousness. This is the path that can guarantee you complete victory here in this life and in the life to come. Compromising this path and indulging yourself in ungodly acts over the internet is tantamount to following a pathway of destruction and this will not be your portion in Jesus name.

POSITIVES

Internet has gained so much popularity all over the world. There is no any field about which you cannot gain knowledge with the help of internet. Below are few areas where internet can be of positive usage to us as youths and students:

- **ACCESSING AND OBTAINING INFORMATION:** You can get any information you need from the internet. It is the world biggest source of information. By using any of the search engines like Google, Bing, Yahoo e.tc, you can access any information you need. Google seems to be the best and the most used search engine in the world, by just typing the key word of the information you are looking for, google will search it out for you on the internet.
- **ACCESSING SERVICES:** You can access a lot of services on the internet. You can register for exams like WAEC, NECO and JAMB online and manage all your university admissions details, both local and international. You can pay your school fees, book tickets and sort out hostel accomodation online. You can practically access any services you need concerning your education online without travelling up and down for all these services.
- **ACCESSING CHRISTIAN RESOURCES:** You can access edyfing christian resouces like, messages, songs, issue papers and seminar papers online.
- **SOCIAL NETWORKING:** You can relate and felowship with people globally through social media platforms like facebook, twitter, whatsapp etc. You can interact with students from other institutions across the globe, make new friends and and share ideas. If you are working, you can relate with professional colleagues and share useful information concerning your profession.
- **GLOBALLIZATION:** Internet has made the whole world a global village. The entire world has now been gathered into a small screen. You can be in your village and connect yourself with someone in Australia or in Asia within a second. It has reduced travel costs and risks invloved in traveling from one place to another.
- **COMMUNICATION:** You can now sit in your small room and communicate with the whole world within seconds. You can send any document or photo through an e-mail or through any of the social media platform. You can do voice communication through skype, vibre, whatsapp. Etc.
- **E-LEARNING:** You can learn online by registering for courses online and take the exams online. You can practically learn anything online. Instead of travelling abroad for studies and conferences, you can sit at the comfort of your room and attend classes and serminars. We can see that almost all the schools resorted to e-learning during the lockdown caused by the COVID 19 pandemic.
- **E-CONFERENCE/RETREAT:** We can have online conference/retreat just as what we are doing now.
- **ONLINE SHOPPING:** it is practically possible to buy almost every item on the internet. You can access any of the online retails stores and order for all that you need and they will deliver to you in your house.

PERILS

Just as internet has numerous advantages, it can also have some harmful effect on the youths if not controlled. Below are some areas where internet can really become a perilous adventure:

- Accessing harmful, illegal and inappropriate materials
- Accessing ungodly music, video, porn sites, games etc
- Addiction to online social media
- Wrong and ungodly relationship
- Spiritual decadence
- Lack of control of personal information you shared online
- Waste of your time and your thoughts
- Loss of sleep and rest
- Mental health issues
- Exposure to fake news
- Exposure to adult information
- Introduction to prevalent social vices
- Loss of communication skills
- Poor grades from academic pursuits

CONCLUSION

If we must awake to righteousness and sin not as the Lord has admonished us, we must pay utmost attention to what we do on the internet. It has become apparent that internet can either be a blessing to us or be to our own peril, depending on the way we handle it. It is a gateway to both good and evil, but there is only one option for us in this matter; it is to tread the path of righteousness. It is to shun the negative sides of the internet and use it for our edification and academic excellence.

We can purpose in our hearts that we would not defile ourselves with the internet just as Daniel purposed in his heart in Daniel 1:8 that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies in his days.

Psalm 34:14 says, "*Depart from evil and do good*". I admonish you in the name of the Lord to shun every evil device on the internet and pursue what is right. You have a destiny to fulfil in God. Your generation is waiting for your manifestation and you must not allow the internet to jeopardize your destiny. The Lord bless you.

Maranatha!

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