

from the desk of...#WWJP

By Tim Foley, Major

One day when I have absolutely nothing to do I am going to conduct some serious research on a day in the life of my Facebook newsfeed. I think it would be an interesting case study to document the types of postings that appear, the reasons the post was made, and the attitudes generated from a simple status update.

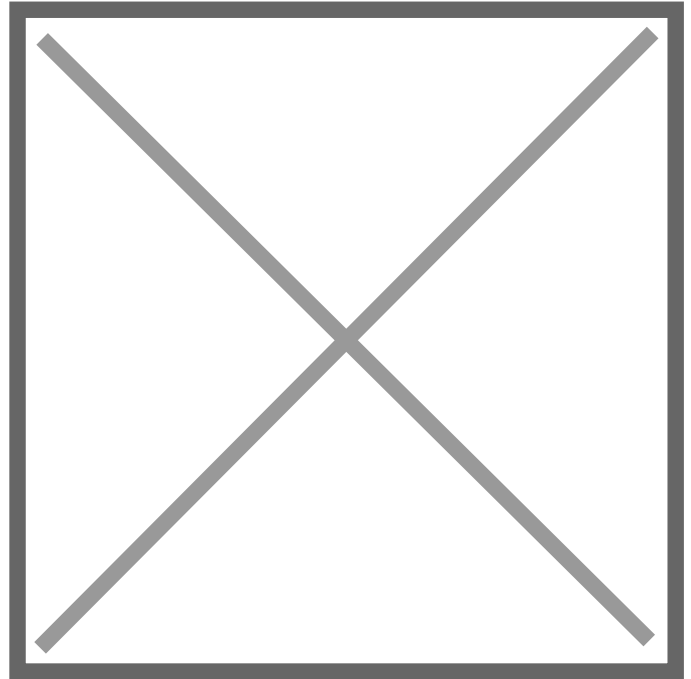
It's very interesting what pops up on my newsfeed. Sometimes it's a discouraging read that quickly gets my blood boiling. Other times it saturates my soul with joy, especially to see what God is doing in the life and ministry of many of my former students.

Here are some examples of the attitudes and things I read in a common day: cynicism, self promotion, conspiracy theories, snarkism, current health status, world travels, Scripture verses, beautiful photos of God's creation, what people eat, pictures of kids playing or napping, and ads for products I have no interest in. The list can—and does—go on.

What gets to me are the Salvationists who continue to make flippant comments about things pertaining to Salvation Army ministry, whether it be on policy and procedures, uniform wearing, and what not. In the back of my mind I think if it troubles you so much, why in the world are you still sticking around? And for goodness sake, why are you posting it for the world to see? It really doesn't change anything other than allowing the person to vent. And worse, it makes them look really bad. At least my perception of them is bent.

I have developed a love-hate relationship with all of this social media stuff. In 2006, when I came as staff to the training college, I was asked to develop a course that explored current trends. We are now in our eighth year of this course simply called "Emerging Trends." Back then I required all of the students to keep a Xanga account, which was one of the first major blogging sites. What cutting edge stuff that was!

Of course now the Internet is exploding with Facebook, Vine, Tumblr, and, as my father likes to call it, "Tweeter." In a weird way I sort of regret that we have all of this, and that I have actually encouraged people to use it. I am rapidly moving in the other direction now as I have seen too much negative impact from a sour posting by a person having a bad moment. Relationships have been broken and



reputations damaged because of status posts in various social media sites.

I make a concentrated effort to post on the positive side of things on my Facebook or blog. I don't want to be cheesy or come across as super spiritual, as that is really nothing but hiding behind my false self; it reeks of Phariseeism. One needs to be intentional and mindful of a posting because you never know who may read it or what sort of lasting impression it will leave.

So here are a few hashtags I would love to see pop up: #endingthenegative or #sanctifiedposts.

My new crusade is for #wwjp—What would Jesus post?

Let's keep the negative thoughts we have buried in our hard copy diaries. Remember those? When we post for others to read on our various social media outlets, let's do so with keeping the glory of God in mind. My aching heart will thank you.