A. THE SOURCE

Romans 12:2 (The Message) • "Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."

Matthew 6:24 (NIV) • “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other.”

Philippians 4:8 (CEV) • “Finally, my friends, keep your minds on whatever is true, pure, right, holy, friendly, and proper. Don’t ever stop thinking about what is truly worthwhile and worthy of praise.”

(See additional passages in student material.)

B. WHAT’S TO BE SAID ABOUT “TECHNOLOGY AND THE CHRISTIAN”

Technology has always impacted human lives, but today’s teens live in a world in which technology is changing so fast and affecting so many areas of their lives, it’s hard for adults to keep pace. While no technology is good or bad in and of itself, every new technology poses moral choices. Many of today’s new technologies offer entertainment choices and new ways to communicate—which means that Christian teens need to make smart decisions about whether to use these technologies in ways that will help them grow in Christ, or pull them away from Him.

C. WHERE WE’RE GOING WITH “TECHNOLOGY AND THE CHRISTIAN”

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:
1. Think about the ways in which technology affects their lives.
2. Recognize the need to make good choices about their use of technology.
3. Assert their own control (through the Holy Spirit’s power) over the technology in their lives.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) none; (Activity B) “Technology Time Sheet” handout (p. 120), pencils.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons, pencils, paper, chalkboard or flipchart.

Applying • Chalkboard or flipchart.
BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE’VE BEEN

Allow 10 minutes at the beginning of class for students to:
1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.
4. Review the “Applying” section of their Friday lesson (if needed).

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

>> Song service
>> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist Mission for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
>> Service project reports

BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively and with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Break the class into groups of three or four.

Get set • Say: Your group is stranded on a deserted island in the middle of the South Pacific. You have a small generator, and each of you is allowed to bring one item that requires electricity to operate. As a group, decide what each of you will bring, making sure the whole group agrees on the choices.

Go • Allow five to 10 minutes for the groups to make their decisions about what each person will bring, and report back to the class as a whole.

Debriefing • Ask: Why did you choose the items you chose? Were you thinking of things that would help you get off the island? Things that would make your life easier while there? Did anyone have to be talked out of a selfish choice that wouldn’t benefit the others? Could you see any problems that might arise from any of the things you chose to bring? Is there one piece of technology you absolutely couldn’t live without? Why?

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Pass out the “Technology Time Sheet” handout on page 120.

Get set • Give everyone a pencil.

Go • Allow five to 10 minutes for everyone to fill out the time sheet. Invite class members to share their results. Calculate the total amount of time and the average amount of time class members spend using these technologies.

Debriefing • Ask: Do you think the amount of time you spend with your electronic entertainment equipment is too much, or just right? (Or, do you wish you had more stuff so you could spend more time on it?) Do you have any “unplugged” time? How is our society becoming too dependent on technology? Why are some people bored if they don’t have electronics to entertain them? What can we do about that?

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

Present the following ideas in your own words:
What happens at your house when the power goes out? Is it hard to do your homework without using a computer? Apart from the technologies that sustain our everyday life—light, heat, power to cook food—much of our entertainment and interaction with other people depends on technologies. When we lose the technology, do we lose the power to communicate, to learn, to entertain ourselves?

What about camping trips? (We’re talking roughing it here—tent camping with no frills, not “camping” in your RV with the satellite dish attached!) Some people love camping trips for the chance to “get away from it all.” Others start freaking out as soon as they’re in a place where there’s no cell phone service and they can’t pick up a signal. Maybe we should all take more camping trips. Learning to get along without technology for a while might help us evaluate it better once we get back into civilization. Because the reality is, the power outage or the camping trip won’t last forever. We live in a wired world, and we have to choose what we plug in to and how we use the power.

**4 CONNECTING**

**A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM**

Present the following ideas in your own words:

Today we’re surrounded by technology that didn’t exist when the Bible was written. How can a book written by hand on parchment scrolls have anything relevant to say about the wired world of the twenty-first century?

It’s true that you won’t find laws in Leviticus about how to use your laptop, nor can you read Paul’s letter to the Philippians on the best games to choose for your X-box. But the Bible’s principles for living as God’s kingdom agents in a fallen world apply to DVDs and text messaging just as much as they did to idol worship and animal sacrifices.

If God rules in our lives, then God comes first.

And everything else that we choose to use, do, or spend time on has to stand or fall by a single standard: Is it drawing us closer to God or is it pushing us away from Him?

Maybe you find that to be a tough standard to apply to your “technological toys.” But it’s the only standard the Bible allows. We’re told to choose whom we’ll serve, and then fill our minds and our lives with the things that honor God and help bring His kingdom to life in this world. Nothing else matters.

**B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION**

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath’s section of the lesson.

Share your own experiences with the class about technological changes you have seen in your lifetime. **Ask: In your own lives, in the past few years, what new technologies have you seen? Can you think of anything that we use today that wasn’t being used just a couple of years ago? What about the future—what kind of technological changes could you imagine seeing?**

Remind students how the new technology described in the lesson illustration impacts the moral choices we have to make.

**Ask: What types of moral choices do we have to make about technology? What new choices might we find ourselves faced with in the future?**

**C. CONNECTING TO LIFE**

Pose the following scenario:

A friend who’s just become a Christian comes to you and says, “I’m throwing out all my DVDs. Oh, and I’m giving away my TV, my computer, and my Nintendo system.”

“Whoa . . . just a second,” you say. “What’s come over you?”

“I want to live for Jesus 100 percent!” your enthusiastic friend says. “And there’s so much
garbage on TV, so many worldly messages in the music, so much violence in the movies and games, and so much porn on the internet. I don’t see how I can keep all that and still follow God.”

What do you think? Is your friend going off the deep end, or could they be making a smart decision? What reasons would you give for either agreeing or disagreeing with their choice?

Now, let’s imagine that your friend comes back a week or so later and says, “You know, I got rid of some of the worst DVDs, and some of the really violent games, but I’ve still got the DVD player, the TV, and the computer. The internet is still hooked up. I’m not sure what to do. Does the Bible have anything to say about using this stuff? Is there a way I can make good choices about all this stuff and still be a Christian?”

Ask: What would you tell your friend? Look at the Bible verses in Wednesday’s Bible Insight section of the student lesson. What principles can you pull from those verses that might help your friend make better choices? What other Bible verses can you add that might help?

After posing this scenario, break the class into groups and allow 10-15 minutes for each group to look through the Bible texts provided and others that they can come up with. Ask each group to generate a list of five biblical guidelines they could share with this friend. When the groups have finished, ask each group to share their list with the class as a whole. Write the guidelines (with Bible references where possible) on a chalkboard or flip-chart at the front of the room.

**A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY**

On a chalkboard or flipchart at the front of the room, write three columns: “More,” “Less,” and “Not at All.” Ask students to refer back to the “Technology Time Sheet” from the beginning activities (or, if that handout was not used, just to think about their use of technology in their everyday lives).

Ask: As a Christian, are there things you’re using technology for that you know you shouldn’t be doing? Are there things such as watching TV or surfing the Web that you think you should be doing less of? Are there things like listening to Christian music, or sending encouraging emails to friends who are feeling down that you should be doing?

Have class members brainstorm ideas for things that should go in each of the three columns—things that they personally think they should do more, less, or not at all when it comes to using technology.

Debriefing • Ask: These are some good decisions we’ve talked about making. Do you think you’ll actually put them into practice in your everyday life? What might make it difficult for you to apply these decisions? (Peer pressure, habit, laziness) What could make it easier for you to make these good choices? (Asking God to help through the power of the Holy Spirit, being accountable to parents and Christian friends, keeping a journal or other record of the time we spend with technology)

**B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

1. Are there times when it’s better just to say no and refuse to use a certain technology (such as TV or the internet) altogether? When (if ever) might that be a good choice?
2. Do you think machines are taking over our lives? How are they changing our lives? Should they be stopped? If so, how?
3. Does the internet offer opportunities to grow as a Christian? If so, how? If not, is there any value in having it?
4. Should Sabbath be an “unplugged” time for technology? Is it at your house? What advantages or disadvantages might an “unplugged Sabbath” offer?
5. How do newer technologies make our
choices more difficult? Is it more difficult to be a Christian today than when your parents were growing up? If you think it is, does that have anything to do with the technology we have today?

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

We’ve seen today that technology has a huge impact on our lives, and it leaves us with a lot of choices to make. I hope you’re thinking seriously about how you use the machines in your home—and about how they use you. Let’s all resolve to be in charge of the technology we use—to make Christ-centered choices about what we’ll watch, listen to, and do. We’ll need God’s power to help put those choices into practice, but it can be done. Jesus is just as real and important in the twenty-first century as He was in the first. He can walk with you just as He walked with His disciples on the dusty roads of Galilee. Just ask Him. He’s waiting to be invited.

FOR LESSON ELEVEN:
THIS HANDOUT IS FOR THE BEGINNING ACTIVITY.

Technology Time Sheet

Directions: In the average day, list how many hours you spend doing each of the following:

- Listening to my MP3 player
- Playing video games
- Texting on my cell phone
- Using the internet
- Watching TV
- Using other computer functions
- Watching videos
- Downloading apps on my cell phone

Do you do some of these activities at the same time? Which ones?

What do you do when you’re not doing any of these things?
Sabbath
FOR STUDY

» Memory Text: “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2, NKJV).

» Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior: “For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things that will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards.”

» Ellen G. White, Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, pp. 98-100

KNOWLEDGE SHALL INCREASE

Everything around us has gone through a transitional process so great that most young people will not know what an album or rotary phone is. Did you know there used to be phone booths scattered around on street corners or in stores? For 25 cents you could call your parents if you got stranded and needed a ride. And if you had to call someone outside of your area code, you could expect to pay long distance charges. Today just about everyone carries a phone in their pocket and can call anyone anywhere. TVs went from black and white to color. They were large boxes that are now just inches deep and can hang on walls. During the past 45 years movies changed to videotapes to DVDs to websites—just a click away. Check out the differences in the car your family drives and the original Model T! The Wright brothers’ first flight was 120 feet in 12 seconds at 6.8 mph. Did you know a commercial plane today will fly at 540 mph! Even as recent as the 1990s people would stay in touch by sitting down and writing a letter—by hand—then put it in the mail, waiting weeks to receive a reply. Today you are just a text away from communicating with someone—anywhere in the world! We can watch, listen to, and be in contact in seconds. Technology has changed our world and our lives forever.

We are never far from our computers, phones, and electronic devices. Computers are now small enough that we have them in our homes and in our classrooms. No one needs to pull out an Encyclopedia Britannica volume in order to do research. Information on any topic is just a click away. Technology is here to stay, and it is a challenge even to keep up with the changes happening today. What matters is how we use technology and how we allow it to change us. How do you think you’d feel if you couldn’t use your iPad on a long trip to Grandma’s? When was the last time you went a day or even an hour without using one of your devices? How do you manage the information highway and remain faithful to the standards God has given?
Sunday
RESPONDING

» Read Philippians 4:8.

» The new girl at your school is different. She's always been homeschooled. Her family doesn't own a TV. And when a teacher assigns you to find some information on the internet for homework, the new girl asks if she can go to the library and look it up. “We don’t have the internet in our home,” she explains. “We believe it brings in too much garbage that a Christian doesn’t need. Just like TV and videos. We’d rather live a simpler life.” At lunchtime the new girl sits at your table. One of your friends says, “Are you serious about not having a TV or the internet? You’re living in the Dark Ages!”

» Are you going to get involved in this conversation? Does the new girl have a point? Or do you agree that her family is taking things too far?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

» Read 2 Corinthians 10:5; Ephesians 5:15-17; Philippians 4:8.

» Everything we do reflects whether we have a relationship with God or not. How we spend our time. What we look at. What we listen to. The things we find to do and invest our time and energy in. We are either building a character to fit into this world or we are building a character to fit into God’s kingdom.

» What are the things that occupy your time and energy that keep you from building a character for eternity?

Unscramble the words and then use them to fill in the blanks below.

tsiaga ecneidebo ytivitpac thguoht yreve stlaxe egdelwonk gnignirb stnemugra

"Casting down _________ and _________ high thing that _________ itself _________ the _________ of God, _________ every _________ into _________ to the _________ of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5, NKJV).

Tuesday
REFLECTING

» Read Psalm 119:9.

» Technology touches every part of our lives. So how do we, as Christians, relate to this ever-changing world? The internet brings both blessings and curses. So much information at the tips of your fingers—Bible study guides, encyclopedias, health tips, instant connection to faraway friends. Yet through the same connection comes material that is not uplifting or edifying.

» As Christian teens today, you have far more choices to make than teens 10, 25, or 50 years ago did. Each new technology offers us choices. Will we use the internet to download apps for building a character for heaven? Or will we use the internet for our selfish pleasure? Will we view material featuring death and destruction, or ones that show people caring for and helping one another? Will our music players play music that honors God or glorifies Satan? Will we use the cell phone to send a text message with an encouraging word, or send messages spreading gossip about an unpopular class-
So many choices. And because we’re on Jesus’ team, every choice we make matters.

**Wednesday**

**BIBLE INSIGHTS**

» Answer the questions below after looking up the verses.

1. How can a young person live a clean life?  
   Psalm 119:9

2. How should a Christian do everything?  
   1 Corinthians 10:31

3. What should Christians keep their minds on?  
   Philippians 4:8

4. Where should you fix your attention?  
   Romans 12:2

5. What do you need to decide today?  
   Joshua 24:15

**Thursday**

**CONNECTING**

» Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.

» Review the memory text.

» Whether you’re a techno-geek who always has to have the latest hardware and software, or whether you’re still trying to figure out how to use the technology in your home, you can’t deny that technology affects your life. It’s changing our world. You have to make the choice—to use it wisely or foolishly.

» A TV set, a DVD, an MP3 player, a cell phone, a computer—they’re all just tools. They’re no more “good” or “bad” in and of themselves than a hammer or a screwdriver. You can use a hammer to build a house for a homeless person. Or you can use it to hurt someone. Extreme examples? Sure. But the message is clear. Technology is a tool. We’re the ones with the brains. We’re also the ones created in God’s image, the ones to whom He has given His Word as a guideline. We get to make the choice.

» Don’t let technology rule your life. Take charge. Decide what you’ll use, and how. And then ask the Holy Spirit to help you do it all to the glory of God.

**Friday**

**APPLYING**

» Read Joshua 24:15.

» What’s the piece of technology you use the most? Your computer? Your cell phone? Your music player? Your game system?

» Write a letter to that piece of technology, explaining that as the human being, you’re in control and you intend to be the boss. Explain that as a Christian you have certain choices to make, and lay down the law. For example, you might want to tell your DVD player that there are certain shows you just won’t be watching anymore. You’re the boss—make sure your habits reflect what you believe in your heart.