

Grade 12 Catechism Lesson Plan

Chapter 9: Christian Life and the Media

Duration: 45–60 minutes

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand how media influences thoughts, values, relationships and behaviour;
2. Critically evaluate media content and distinguish truth from manipulation;
3. Identify responsible and Christian ways of using media;
4. Recognize the potential of media for evangelization and the service of society.

2. Introduction

- **Who is Controlling Whom?"**

Begin by asking students:

"If you post something today and receive no likes, comments or shares, how would you feel?"

Then ask:

"Why do we seek approval through social media?"

"Can what we repeatedly watch slowly change the way we think?"

"If a news report confirms what we already believe, do we automatically accept it as true?"

Show two contrasting headlines about the same event and ask students which one they would believe and why.

Conclude: "Media do not merely inform us; they can influence what we think, what we value and even how we behave. As Christians, the challenge is not to reject media, but to use it with wisdom, freedom and responsibility."

- **“The Invisible Influence”**

Begin with this situation:

“Imagine that for one week, you could use your phone only for calls and essential messages. No Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp status, reels or news. What would you miss the most?”

Allow a few students to respond.

Then ask:

“Why do we feel we are missing something when we are disconnected?”

“How much of what we desire—our appearance, lifestyle, opinions and even our fears—is influenced by what we repeatedly see online?”

“If something is seen by millions of people, does that automatically make it true or good?”

Then say:

“The most powerful influence of media is not that it tells us what to think, but that, over time, it can influence what we consider normal, desirable and acceptable. Therefore, Christian maturity requires us to ask not only, ‘What am I watching?’ but also, ‘What is this content doing to me?’”

This leads naturally into Cultivation Theory, Mean World Syndrome, negative influences, discernment and responsible media use.

3. Presentation of the Lesson

A. The Influence of Media Media

Television, cinema, newspapers, the internet and social media—have become an integral part of modern life. Constant exposure can influence our attitudes, choices and understanding of society.

Cultivation Theory explains that repeated exposure to certain ideas or behaviours can make them appear normal. This may contribute to the Mean World Syndrome, where continuous exposure to violence makes people perceive the world as more dangerous and people as more violent than they actually are.

B. Purposes of Media

Media can:

Inform – provide knowledge and news.

Instruct – educate and develop understanding.

Entertain – provide relaxation and inspiration.

Build relationships – connect people and strengthen communication.

Interpret – help society understand events and issues.

Create vigilance – expose injustice, corruption and social evils.

Stabilise/Reinforce – keep important issues alive in public consciousness.

C. Negative Influences When used irresponsibly, media can:

protect vested interests and spread misinformation;

distort personal relationships;

encourage violence;

promote unhealthy sexual attitudes;

create unrealistic standards of beauty;

cause FOMO and anxiety;

lead to excessive dependence on mobile phones (nomophobia).

D. Christian Discernment Christians are called to:

approach media critically;

practise moderation and self-control;

reject content contrary to Christian values;

use media for good;

respect cyber laws and the dignity and privacy of others.

Before sharing information, apply the Three Sieve Test: Is it true? Is it kind? Is it helpful?

E. Media and Social Responsibility

Media professionals have a responsibility to promote truth, justice, compassion and morality. Media should act as the conscience of society, expose social evils and contribute to the common good.

F. Media and Evangelisation

Media can become powerful instruments for proclaiming the Gospel. Through social media, videos, podcasts, articles and other digital platforms, Christians can communicate faith, hope, truth and values and reach people beyond geographical boundaries

4. Activity

Activity I – ““Post or Pause?””

Divide students into small groups. Give each group 3–4 situations, such as:

A shocking news story is circulating on WhatsApp, but its source is unknown.

A friend posts an embarrassing photograph of another student.

An influencer promotes a lifestyle that conflicts with Christian values.

You receive a message encouraging people to help a poor family.

For each situation, students must decide:

POST – SHARE – VERIFY – REPORT – DELETE – OR PAUSE

They must justify their choice using the Three Sieve Test: Is it true? Is it kind? Is it helpful?

Conclude the activity by asking: “What kind of Christian witness do my digital choices give?”

Activity II. “The Media Mirror”

Divide the class into small groups. Give each group one area:

Group 1 – Beauty & Lifestyle

Group 2 – Violence & Entertainment

Group 3 – Relationships & Social Media

Group 4 – News & Misinformation

Group 5 – Faith & Christian Content

Ask each group to discuss:

What message does media commonly communicate in this area?

How can repeated exposure influence young people?

What Christian value could be weakened or strengthened?

What should a responsible Christian do?

Each group presents one media message → one possible influence → one Christian response.

For example:

Media message: “Everyone must look perfect.”

↓

Possible influence: Comparison and dissatisfaction with oneself.

↓

Christian response: Recognize the dignity and worth of every person as created by God.

End by asking the whole class:

“If your social-media feed were a mirror of what is shaping your mind, what would it reveal?”

That gives you a strong transition to Romans 12:2 — “Be transformed by the renewing of your minds...”

5. Bible verse

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” — Romans 12:2

6. Practical Application

My Digital Discipleship

Ask students to make a personal “Digital Discipleship Commitment”:

- Before I watch, like, comment or share, I will:
- pause and think;
- verify before believing or forwarding;
- respect the dignity of others;
- avoid harmful or immoral content;
- control my screen time;
- use media to spread truth, kindness and Christian values.
- Challenge them to post or share one meaningful piece of content during the week that promotes hope, kindness, faith or social responsibility.

7. Conclusion

Media is a powerful tool. It can shape minds, divide people or bring people together. As Christians, we are called not merely to consume media, but to use it responsibly—to seek truth, protect human dignity and become witnesses of Christ in the digital world.