



# WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

THE RIDGEWAY LONDON NW7 1RN

TELEPHONE 020 8906 2211

November 1, 2006

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS

Re: Dangers of Misusing the Internet

Dear Brothers,

“Keep your senses, be watchful.” These words of warning found at 1 Peter 5:8 were provided under inspiration to alert Christians that our adversary, Satan the Devil, seeks opportunities to attack the spirituality of Jehovah’s servants, both young and old. Repeatedly, the ‘faithful slave’ has issued balanced counsel and warnings concerning use of the Internet. (Matt. 24:45) Unfortunately, some Christians have been harmed spiritually by failure to heed such counsel and warnings.

The Internet can be a useful tool for finding information. The July 22, 1997, *Awake!*, page 4, stated regarding the Internet: “It offers a rapidly growing collection of information, with topics ranging from medicine to science and technology.” For example, [www.watchtower.org](http://www.watchtower.org) is used as the official website of Jehovah’s Witnesses. The content is carefully scrutinized before being posted, and the website is closely supervised by responsible overseers. Thus, it has proved to be a useful tool in disseminating Bible truths and receiving information from sincere individuals who wish to be contacted by Jehovah’s Witnesses. However, the Internet also has a negative side that Satan is using to harm those who are inexperienced.—Prov. 22:3.

Reports from travelling overseers and bodies of elders relate that some Christian youths are using websites that are designed to allow them to exchange information about themselves. Some post their own websites for this purpose. Often this is done with little or no adult supervision or scrutiny of the content. At times parents know nothing of their child’s involvement with these websites. Information on these websites is often questionable, if not totally unacceptable, for Christians. Such websites are part of an online community where literally millions of persons share information about themselves. This information usually includes the individual’s personal identity along with a physical description, including age and sexual orientation. Users often lie about who they really are. (Ps. 26:4, 5) It is not uncommon for photographs to be posted, sometimes showing provocative poses or captions with sexual innuendoes. (Eph. 5:3, 4) Inexperienced Christians may view this as the frivolous fun of youths, not realizing that such websites are often not restricted but open to all on the Internet. (2 Tim. 2:22) Such sites can be visited by unscrupulous non-Witnesses, including sexual predators who post on these sites graphically immoral commentary, sometimes accompanied by photos.

Parents, if your children have access to the Internet, it is vital that you continually monitor their use of it. If you are unfamiliar with the Internet, valuable information to help you in giving parental supervision can be found in the series of articles in the July 22, 1997, *Awake!*, pages 3-13. The cover series is entitled “The Internet—Is It for You?” Helpful

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information is also contained in the articles “Chat Rooms—What Should I Know About Them?” and “Chat Rooms—How Can I Avoid the Dangers?” found in the September 22 and October 22, 2005, issues of *Awake!*

Please review this information with your children, including older teenagers. Become familiar with what your children are accessing on the Internet. As a parent, it is your responsibility to help your children to become ‘full grown in their powers of understanding’ regarding the potential dangers involved in their use of the Internet.—1 Cor. 14:20.

Inappropriate use of the Internet is not limited to home computers. Today, the Internet can be accessed by many hand-held devices, such as mobile telephones, making it easier to view these sites in privacy. Like a computer, a mobile phone can be a useful instrument. But if not properly supervised, these seemingly harmless instruments can also be used by Satan and his world to corrupt the minds and morals of our young ones. In a kind, yet forthright way, parents will want to discuss these concerns with their children and thus protect them from any moral contamination or harm caused by inappropriate content that may be transmitted through these and other electronic devices.—Eph. 6:4; Jas. 4:17.

As we approach the conclusion of this system of things, Satan will use every means possible to try to destroy the spirituality of Jehovah’s servants, including our Christian youths. May we all work diligently to avoid becoming ensnared by Satan’s crafty acts. (Eph. 6:11, 12) Parents, if you find that your children have become involved in accessing unwholesome websites of any kind, whether by computer or mobile phone, we urge you to take appropriate steps to readjust them in harmony with what is outlined in God’s Word and our Christian publications.—Gal. 6:1.

Please accept an expression of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

*Watch Tower B. & J. Society*  
OF BRITAIN

PS to the body of elders:

This letter should be read to the congregation at the first Service Meeting after its receipt. Thereafter, it should be circulated among the elders. The letter should not be posted on the noticeboard.

If you learn that a Christian youth in your congregation is involved in inappropriate use of the Internet, be sure to inform the youth’s parents. Encourage them to assist their child in harmony with what has been outlined in this letter. Offer assistance to the parents as needed. This might include meeting with both the parents and the child to offer Scriptural counsel and encouragement. Articles found in our Christian publications can also be used. With your assistance, it is hoped that Christian parents will help their children to have their “perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong” when using the Internet.—Heb. 5:14.