

Discussion Questions

- 1) What is your first memory of a new technology, one that wasn't around when you were born? What was different about it compared to what came before? What is AI?
- 2) What is the significance of Genesis 2:15 for a biblical understanding of our relationship to technology?
- 3) What insights does the story of the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-11) provide into the misuse or abuse of technology?
- 4) In his book, *Responsible Technology: A Christian Perspective*, Stephen Monsa defines technology as “the human activity of using tools to transform God’s creation for practical purposes”. How does this understanding of technology compare/contrast to a standard secular one (“the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes, especially in industry.”)?
- 5) How might distorted views of who we are and what technology is impact how we live?
- 6) Is Jesus exception (Matt. 11:5)? What does Jesus offer that technology can't¹ (Matt. 11:28-30)?
- 7) Why do you think so many in our world are experiencing an epidemic of loneliness? What role(s) might the church have to play in helping to address this (Gen. 2:18; Heb. 11:24-25; cf. John 14:18-21)?
- 8) How do you see your faith informing or being informed by the way you create and use technology?



ALONE

- Loneliness is a health crisis worse than the risk of alcohol consumption, obesity, and air pollution. It is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.
- Recent survey in 142 counties found that 1 in 4 people struggle with loneliness.



“I believe that sociable technology will always disappoint because it promises what it cannot deliver. It promises friendship but can only deliver performances. Do we really want to be in the business of manufacturing friends that will never be friends?”

Sherry Turkle

Alone Together

¹ Two centuries from now, you can imagine the futurist replying: “Yeah, but we can do that too and even better. Technology gives enhanced sight to the blind, the lame can walk or ride, the sick no longer get sick, and the dead are uploaded to the cloud where they can live for ever and ever doing whatever they want.” Imagining the future fast approaching, we must consider, **what does Jesus offer that technology does not and cannot?**

A biblical theology of technology views technology as a tool created by God-given human ability, which can be used for good or ill depending on its purpose and application. It is a moral and creative outworking of God's mandate for humanity to "subdue the earth" and can be used to serve God, such as building the [Tabernacle](#), or for harmful purposes. The focus should be on how technology shapes us, whether it leads us closer to or further from God, and whether we use it in a way that honors human flourishing and community.

Key principles

- **Technology as a gift:** The ability to create technology is a gift from God, rooted in His own masterful skill and wisdom. God's assessment of His creation as "very good" includes the mandate he gave to humanity, suggesting human culture and technology are fundamentally good things.
- **Humanity's role:** As God's image-bearers, humans are called to responsibly manage and develop technology to serve God's purposes and foster human flourishing, not to distort His image.
- **Critical evaluation:** Christians should not adopt technology simply because it exists. It is crucial to critically evaluate its purpose and impact, distinguishing between efficiency and true effectiveness, and considering how it affects our habits, relationships, and experience of time and place.
- **Potential for misuse:** Like any tool, technology can be used for deception or harm. Satan can use it to spread false knowledge and lead people away from God. The goal of technology should not be self-aggrandizement but to serve others.
- **Integration with faith:** Technology can be used to spread the Gospel and disciple others, but the church must not become an "online-only" entity. Faith should be integrated with the use of technology, rather than simply seeing technology as a neutral tool for evangelism.
- **Transforming harmful technology:** Scripture provides a vision for the transformation of technology from harmful to helpful purposes. For example, weapons of war will be beaten into farming tools in the future Kingdom. Modern Christians employ technologies created by non-believers for ministry, but this doesn't necessarily make their use of technology inherently wrong.
- **Prioritizing community:** The Bible emphasizes the importance of face-to-face interaction and community over the content delivered through technology. We should prioritize deep, in-person relationships that foster intimacy and genuine human connection.

“Dive Deeper in AI Mode” summary below...

A biblical theology of technology views human innovation as a God-given capacity rooted in the creation mandate, but a capacity that is morally neutral in itself and can be used for both good and evil due to the Fall. The Bible provides principles for the responsible use of technology, emphasizing wisdom, love for others, and using it for God's glory.

Core Principles

- **Humans as Image-Bearers and Creators:** Genesis 1:26-28 states that humanity is created in God's image and given a mandate to "fill the earth and subdue it" and "rule over" creation. This implies a God-given capacity for creativity, ingenuity, and the development of skills and tools (technology) to order and steward the world.
- **Technology is Morally Neutral as a Tool:** Technology itself is neither good nor evil; its moral value is determined by the intentions and purposes for which it is used. A shovel is a tool, as is a computer; the sin is in the heart of the user, not the tool itself.
- **The Impact of the Fall:** The entrance of sin into the world means human creativity and technology can be distorted for selfish or destructive ends. Examples include the use of metallurgy for potentially harmful tools (Genesis 4:22) and the people at the Tower of Babel using brick-making technology to build a tower out of pride and a desire to "make a name for ourselves" rather than to obey God's command to fill the earth (Genesis 11:1-9).
- **Redemption and Wise Use:** God is in the business of redeeming a fallen world, and technology can be a part of this. The Bible encourages the use of technology with wisdom and discernment to honor God and love one's neighbor. Paul's use of letters and Roman roads to spread the gospel are examples of using the available technology of the time for God's purposes.
- **God's Sovereignty and Technology's Limits:** The Bible warns against trusting in technology as a savior or an ultimate solution for human problems (Psalm 20:7). Technology cannot change the human heart or provide eternal life; these are things only God can do.
- **Stewardship and Accountability:** Christians are called to be wise stewards of their time, resources, and technological abilities. The ultimate goal in all activities, including technological pursuits, is to glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Practical Implications

A biblical theology of technology calls Christians to:

- **Avoid extremes:** Neither reject all technology nor blindly embrace every new fad without careful consideration.
- **Ask "Should we?":** When new technology is developed, the focus should be on not just what we *can* do, but what we *should* do based on biblical principles.
- **Prioritize in-person community:** While technology is a valuable tool for connection, it should not replace the necessity of face-to-face relationships and the physical gathering of the church.
- **Be discerning:** Evaluate content and usage patterns, ensuring that technology helps rather than hinders spiritual growth and healthy relationships.