Wisdom in the Age of AI

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Over the past few years, we have all been introduced to Artificial Intelligence, or AI for short, a new technology that has become widely available. As a former Google employee, now working in digital marketing and AI technology, I have seen the benefits and the downsides of this technology. I hope to not only warn us against the potential dangers but also equip us to use AI responsibly as those who want to live in God's ways.

We have access to many forms of AI, the most prominent being conversational AI platforms like ChatGPT and Gemini. Here, you can ask questions and get immediate, seemingly accurate answers to complex questions. Many of us are already using it to do research and generate images. We use it at work to process information faster than ever, replace repetitive jobs, cure diseases, and predict behaviour. You can even let an AI agent make an online purchase for you by providing your credit card details, what you want to buy, your price range, and your delivery address.

As the world around us changes faster than ever with this technology at our fingertips, we have to ask, "How do we deal with something so powerful?" One could argue that AI is as impactful, if not more once it reaches its full potential, as cars or electricity, which brought about immense change to society. As the use of AI cannot be avoided, we want to look at how we use this new

technology in a way that will glorify God.

How Does AI Work?

It is important to remember that AI is created by people, and it is trained by feeding huge amounts of information into it, called training data. The people who create the AI technology have a worldview, and they guide and shape how the AI will give advice and process information, especially regarding moral issues. Understanding the foundation of AI is critical, as it is used in fields where human discernment is actually important, such as therapy [1], hiring people for jobs [2], and evaluating criminals based on their behaviour [3]. The content and information that is used to train these models includes all possible worldviews, values, and philosophies.

Therefore, the worldview of the creators of AI, plus the content it trains on, will determine the moral answers it gives. This has already gone wrong in many instances, where certain races are described by AI answers as more likely to commit crime or able to run for office.[MS3]

Another characteristic of an AI like ChatGPT is that it does not want to offend the person asking the questions. It has a built-in survival instinct to avoid not being needed anymore. I know this sounds like science fiction, but it's been tested [4]. Let's consider that through a Christian perspective: on the one hand, it seems harmless, but you may realise that the truth is offensive to many people. Jesus Himself was called the "rock of offence". This is not because He wanted to be offensive, but when faced with His ways and holiness, our sin elicits a response that either leads to repentance or to a hard heart.

> The challenge here is to embrace our God-given humanity instead, returning to authentic human relationships, by understanding and preserving real connection, rather than trying to enhance ourselves with AI.

What About Our Spiritual Lives?

AI has also found its place in the religious spheres. Here are a few of many examples where AI has, to varying degrees, been integrated into religion and people's personal lives:

- A few years ago, a church in Germany had an AI 'pastor', an AI 'worship time', and AI notices [5]. Some attendees indicated they found it refreshing. Undoubtedly, it was different yet far removed from what the church is meant to be.
- Beyond this, whole new AI religions have started to emerge in the Far East, where people

engage an AI robot or device to ask for guidance, visit their temples, and bring “offerings”.

- More and more, people are asking counsel from AIs around things like divorce, suicide [6], and other related matters. And because AIs neither want to offend nor are trained around a biblical value system, it won’t always give the most truthful or scriptural response.

The challenge here is to embrace our God-given humanity instead, returning to authentic human relationships, by understanding and preserving real connection, rather than trying to enhance ourselves with AI.

How Should We Respond to AI?

For some, this rapid evolution brings fear, whereas for others it brings great excitement to see the possibilities.

As Christians, we have the immense privilege to have a Saviour and Shepherd who encourages us not be anxious or fearful of what’s to come – not of losing jobs, or of AI taking over the world, or anything in between. Jesus has been able to provide for and protect His people throughout history despite enormous changes in civilization and technology.

In light of this, here are some important facts to remember:

- AI is not spiritual or alive, but are machines that are programmed and trained according to large amounts of information, with answers guided by a set of principles, all designed by humans with values and secular worldviews.
- AI is not all-powerful, nor does it have superior wisdom. It often provides helpful information, but we must remember that the only true wisdom comes from above (James 3:13-17).
- AI is increasingly being trained to replace more critical intra-human functions – not just repetitive tasks, but also emotional roles. GPT’s 5.1 launch [7], for example, is designed to facilitate an increased emotional connection with the user. There are also AI robots that are programmed to put a child to sleep without a parent present.
- More and more online content is now fabricated and manipulated by AI – don’t believe everything you see or read.

As believers, we want to be very cautious in using a conversational AI like ChatGPT for any of the following purposes:

- Devotional or Quiet Time: Multiple platforms [8] aim to offer spiritual guidance and

counseling based on God's Word, yet we are invited to hear God's voice for ourselves and allow the Word to shape us as we read and grapple with it. In addition, wise counsel from local church leaders who know and love you might take longer, but it is definitely the safer and more fruitful way to grow in loving and obeying Jesus.

- Prayer: This is meant to be a heart-to-heart connection and dialogue between you and God. The only assistance we can safely rely on is either praying Scripture or allowing the Holy Spirit to assist in our prayers. (Romans 8:26)
- Sermon Preparation: Avoid using AI to create sermon outlines or notes for you. Sermon preparation should be a process of personally wrestling with the scriptures, hearing the Spirit, reading background, context, and commentaries, and letting it shape you before you can preach with passion, conviction, and relevance. (I use pen and paper as it slows me down, which helps to even better internalise it, making it even harder to copy and paste from the internet.)
- Creation of Worship Songs: Allowing a non-Spirit-filled machine to create a spiritual offering to God might have a form of godliness, but it will lack the power of God.
- Interpretation of Tongues: People have done this by recording their spiritual tongue and asking ChatGPT for interpretation. The Bible is clear that, as this is a spiritual gift given by God to people (1 Corinthians 12:10), it's a spiritual process to encourage individuals or to be interpreted by another believer who is also Spirit-filled.
- Anything else where we require God's designed channels, such as His Word, Him speaking to us through His Spirit, the church, or nature, to receive from Him.

  The danger is that people start replacing the work and person of the Holy Spirit with an artificial machine that feels personal and has many answers, yet never convicts us or empowers us into God's call on our lives.

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What Can We Safely Use AI For?

- Fact-checking: In broader research, such as sermon preparation, one can use AI to find historical or scientific details that support your Bible study, such as confirming dates of

biblical events or geographical facts, but always cross-reference with trusted Christian sources.

- Comparing Viewpoints: Leverage AI to summarise different perspectives on various topics such as philosophies, historical viewpoints, or trends.
- Administrative Tasks in Ministry: Employ AI for practical organisation, like drafting event invitations or scheduling reminders for church activities, freeing up time for relational and spiritual work.
- Analogies, example ideas, or generating images for illustration.

If there's anything to take away from this discussion about the use of AI, it's to press deeper into your personal relationship with Christ unaided by technology, spending time in His Word, and having fellowship with other believers. This will bear true fruit and joy.

References:

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[3] https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/using-artificial-intelligence-address-criminal-justice-needs

[4] https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/ai-might-let-you-die-to-save-itself

[5] https://evangelicalfocus.com/life-tech/22376/first-ai-led-worship-service-tested-in-germany

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[8] https://www.faithgpt.io/alternatives

Further reading:

1. https://open.spotify.com/episode/6ZglQiQKMbiViHvdBNiiTA
2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MbD_KdPgZ0&t=11s
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5. https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/aug/30/therapists-warn-ai-chatbots-mental-health-support
6. https://www.premierchristianity.com/technology/tech-billionaires-are-racing-to-build-an-ai-god-the-results-could-be-catastrophic/20874.article#:~:text=%E2%80%9CAt%20last%2C%E2%80%9D%20say%20the,Text%2Dto%2DJesus%E2%80%9D.
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