

## **Made in God's Image: What A.I. Can (and Can't) Tell Us About Ourselves**

The Bible teaches that humans are made in God's image (Imago Dei), giving us creativity, intelligence, and moral responsibility. Technology, in many ways, reflects this—helping us extend our abilities and solve problems. But what happens when artificial intelligence starts to show creativity, make decisions, and even imitate human thought? Does this challenge our understanding of what it means to be made in God's image? This session explores how AI is shaping the world and what it means for faith. How should Christians think about these advancements? What are the responsibilities that come with innovation? And how can we ensure technology is used in a way that honours God and upholds human dignity?

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### **1. Imago dei – Man created in God's image**

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." Gen. 1:26

Traditionally, the concept of "man in our image" can be interpreted through several essential traits:

- **Rationality:** The ability to think logically and make decisions based on reason.
- **Creativity:** The ability to generate new and innovative ideas.
- **Morality:** The ethical sense and ability to distinguish between right and wrong.
- **Autonomy:** Independence in thought and action.
- **Free will:** The possibility to freely choose between different options.
- **Self-reflection:** The ability to analyze and evaluate one's own thoughts and actions.
- **Willpower:** The determination to achieve goals and overcome obstacles.
- **Action:** The ability to turn thoughts into concrete deeds.
- **Relationality:** The ability to interact and build relationships with others.

### **2. Imago homini – Technology created in the service and image of man**

"During the mechanical ages, we extended our bodies in space. Today, after more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system into a global embrace, eliminating both space and time concerning our planet. Rapidly, we are approaching the final phase of human extensions – the technological simulation of consciousness, when the creative process will be collectively and corporately extended to the entire human society, just as we have already extended

our senses and nerves through various media." Marshal McLuhan, Understanding Media – The Extension of Man.

Marshall McLuhan considers that every technology, if designed correctly, is an "extension of man" or of the human body. In other words, just as God created man in His image, man is creating technology modeled after his own image (Imago homini). Technology is made as an extension to help us function better, make life easier, and enable us to achieve goals greater than ourselves.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is defined as a technology capable of performing tasks that were once possible only for humans. Among these capabilities, AI can independently rationalize, be creative, assume moral values, display autonomous behavior, and achieve goals. Essentially, AI is capable—or is expected to be in the near future—of exhibiting almost all the characteristics of "the image of God in man."

- When embedded in a software system, AI can pass the Turin test, and can beat a human at Chess or Go.
- When embedded in a humanoid robot, AI does a good job at imitating humans, with potential for frightening applications.  
([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLbQBRdL\\_OE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLbQBRdL_OE))
- When embedded in a human being, AI enables humans to achieve tasks once impossible (ex. Neuralink,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyBFPPUW76E>)

### 3. How should Christians think about these advancements? What are the responsibilities that come with innovation

		Can people control technology?	
		NO Technology is autonomous	YES Technology can be controlled
Does technology have moral value?	NO Technology is neutral.	<b>Determinism</b> Technology is the driving force of history to improve things and produce development.	<b>Instrumentalism</b> Technology can be used for anything we want and does not affect us in any way.
	YES Technology is linked to values.	<b>Substantivism</b> Technology is the driving force of history, but it does not always improve things.	<b>Critical Theory</b> Technology is a driving force of history, but people can control and reshape both technology and history.

We should be aware that AI is here to stay and it is already affecting many of our decisions, whether we acknowledge it or not. It is a technology with the potential for great advancements for humankind, but it also has the potential to lead to its destruction. Christians might approach technological advancements by considering the following:

- **Stewardship:** Viewing technology as a tool to care for creation and serve others responsibly.
- **Ethical Use:** Ensuring that technology is used in ways that align with Christian values, promoting justice, compassion, and the common good.
- **Discernment:** Critically evaluating the impact of technology on human relationships, community, and spiritual well-being.
- **Responsibility:** Acknowledging the potential consequences of innovation and striving to minimize harm while maximizing benefits.

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