

Chapter 10: Technology

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A Biblical-Theological Approach to Transforming Technology

Introduction

How technology has changed the world is obvious to anyone who became an adult by the turn of the century. Life before the turn of the century meant talking to friends on a landline phone, reading the paper to find out the news, going to work or class, and visiting the library to conduct research on a topic. Now, we have a plethora of mobile phones, social media applications, video conferencing, online news, online classes, and a sea of information, all available at our fingertips.

How did it all change so quickly? Simply speaking, the advent of the Internet triggered exponential growth in the pace of technology development, the technology industry, and the use of technology across the globe. This exponential growth is not unique to this era; technology cycles have always occurred throughout history, as Moore's Law has shown.¹¹³ The difference is that where technology cycles previously took millennia, then centuries, then decades, now they take only a few years and or even just months and can be seen by anyone of us in our day to day lives.

These changes make one wonder about some things. If mankind had not fallen in the Garden of Eden, would God have allowed us to reach this stage in technological development much faster, without the millennia of suffering and death? When His Kingdom comes on earth, will we develop technologies even faster, beyond imagination, without the hindrance of sin? These are the types of questions about which Christians involved in technology think.

For the better part of the past two decades, I have been working with Christians around the world in using technology for their ministries. Through this time, I have come to view technology in a positive way, as a good gift of God and a tool to better accomplish the task of the Kingdom; however, I have to accept that not everyone takes my view. Technology was used in history in many bad ways, and that misuse continues today. Nonetheless, my view has always been that our good, loving God in His providence is guiding history in a righteous, true way and that good or bad technology will ultimately be judged under His authority. We can, therefore, positively accept much of the technology we see as tools to further God's Kingdom. Overcoming the "mountain" of technology is critical for the development of a mega-strategy of evangelism in this era or in any era.

¹¹³ Gordon E. Moore, "Cramming More Components onto integrated circuits," *Electronics*, Volume 38, Number 8 (April 19, 1965).

In this chapter, I will be exploring three areas of technology: using technology in evangelism, distinguishing truth amidst a sea of disinformation, and finally, developing a Kingdom worldview for Christians in technology. For each area, I will look at the theological, biblical, and historical background for why each area is important, consider what is being done in each area, and put forward a mega-strategy for that area.

Technology in Evangelism: Background

Many definitions can be found for the word *technology*, but I want to consider a definition applicable to our discussion. For the purposes of evangelism, I would like to propose a definition for *technology* as any tool that allows humans to extend our reach within the boundaries of our current state of finitude, namely time and space. Others have alluded to this definition of the word *technology* as they have observed the impact of technology through the centuries. When Samuel Morse invented the telegraph, one of the first its observers wrote, “Time and space has been completely annihilated.”¹¹⁴ C.S. Lewis noted, “For magic and applied science alike the problem is how to subdue reality to the wishes of men.”¹¹⁵

The fact is, humans are finite, while God is infinite. As the Lord said through the Prophet Isaiah, “‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.’” (Isaiah 55:8-9). As this verse shows, the Bible teaches us that our Creator completely transcends us, which means He transcends the limits of our reality. Augustine of Hippo surmised that time itself is an objective reality that God created and believed that only the creation is bounded by time.¹¹⁶ Our reality may be limited by the finitude of time and space, but a variety of technologies have allowed humans to extend our reach within the boundaries of these limits.

It was the technology of writing that first allowed our Biblical ancestors to take God’s word from oral traditions to written scriptures and to translate them into Greek for the whole world to receive. This is God’s word, originally spoken at a certain time and place in history and gathered together with other recordings over thousands of years for any other person in any time or place to read. When the

¹¹⁴ Rebecca J. Rosen, “Time and Space Has Been Completely Annihilated,” *The Atlantic*, February 14, 2012, accessed July 1, 2020.

¹¹⁵ C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Collins, 1978), 46.

¹¹⁶ Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions, Book IX*, translated by J. G. Pilkington, originally published in *The Early Church Fathers and Other Works* (Edinburgh: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1867).

Apostle Paul was confined in jail, God's word overcame the limits of time and space of Paul's solitary prison to reach all of us who read those letters today.

A look at Paul's mission strategy makes it clear that he went to the largest cities in order to spread the name of Jesus more widely and rapidly. Why were the largest cities important? They were centers of commerce because technology and civilization had advanced to reach a global scale with the empire of Rome. Again, technology helped overcome previous time and space limits.

It was a synergetic moment in history when Luther's 95 Theses could be widely published as a result of the invention of Gutenberg's printing press, the first mass communication technology. This invention allowed the Reformation leaders and their followers to gather around the simple idea of returning to the Scripture and accepting justification by faith through grace alone. Without the technology of the printing press overcoming previously existing time and space limitations, it would have been much more difficult for the Reformers to overcome the power of the institution of the Catholic Church.

Seafaring technology allowed the Gospel to cross oceans into the New World. Further advancements in travel by land, ocean, and air continue to spread the Gospel to unreached people groups.

Recording technology is perhaps the clearest example of technology allowing the Word of God to be preached across time and space. A person can now go online and listen to full sermons that Billy Graham preached decades ago. No longer are those sermons limited to the thousands present in those large stadiums; anyone in any time or place can hear his preaching. These advances just go to show how the grace of the Holy Spirit has no boundaries in time and space.

History has shown that the work of God's Kingdom has advanced as Christians have utilized whatever technology is available for evangelism. The technologies that transcend time and space have advanced the Gospel beyond former limits. Indeed, we must look at all technologies and discern how a particular technological tool can be used to save souls.

Technology in Evangelism: Global Strategies Today

Christians have been at the forefront of innovation for centuries. Alfred North Whitehead and J. Robert Oppenheimer, both renowned philosophers and scientists of our era (but not Christians themselves), have said that modern science was born out of the Christian worldview.¹¹⁷ Although the Catholic Church as an institution has

¹¹⁷Francis A. Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live* (Old Tappan: Revell, 1976), 132.

well-known conflicts with innovation, many renowned technology and science innovators came from a biblical worldview. Some of these include Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), and Samuel Morse (1791-1872), which shows us that it is possible for technological and scientific innovation to develop out of those with a Christian worldview. At the present time, however, the realm of technology and science is almost completely secularized. Still, there are Christians today with an innovative mindset who are utilizing a wide variety of technologies in evangelism across the globe. Many of these organizations go under the radar since they are not gathering large in-person crowds like mega churches do. Instead, they reach individuals at any time and any place with the good news of Jesus Christ, including hard to reach places around the globe.

Global Media Outreach

The mission of Global Media Outreach (GMO) is to “share Jesus online in every country of the world and help believers grow their faith using cutting-edge technology.”¹¹⁸ It accomplishes this goal by placing ads across the Internet and social media, reaching people who are seeking answers about God. GMO then presents the Gospel across its vast array of websites and other media. Seekers are given the opportunity to pray to accept Jesus into their life as their Lord and Savior, which includes a click of the “yes” or “no” button. Either option will lead them to connect with an online missionary who will further their discipleship with a variety of biblical resources and guide them to a local church.

To date, GMO has presented the Gospel to over 120 million unique IP addresses, and over 16 million individuals have clicked “yes,” indicating a decision to follow Christ. Languages in which GMO reaches out include Arabic, Chinese, English, Farsi, French, Hindi, Portuguese, Russian, Indonesian, Spanish, Turkish, and Urdu. Many of the people whom GMO reaches are in the hardest to reach part of the world, places where clicking “yes” on an Internet browser may be the only way to indicate a decision for Christ.

Internet Churches

Congregations gathering on the Internet do so at varying degrees. At the fully immersive end of the spectrum, Virtual Reality Church gathers on the Altspace VR social platform where congregants attend from home using their own virtual reality technology headsets. Congregants are represented by avatars and can virtually attend services at their mega church campus and have fellowship in their virtual social gathering places.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Global Media Outreach, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://globalmediaoutreach.com/>.

¹¹⁹ Virtual Reality Church, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.vrchurch.org/>.

Internet Churches also gather in virtual worlds like Second Life and gaming environments like Roblox. These churches are accessible through any computer. Again, congregants are represented by avatars. The Robloxian Church, which exists literally within the game of Roblox, preaches the Word of God mostly to teenagers and young adults who play the game.¹²⁰

Churches with an Internet Presence

Many larger churches have a strong Internet presence with their own church platforms. These include Church of the Highlands, North Point Community Church, and Saddleback Church. Life.Church has the largest congregation, with over 70,000 members, and it even offers its online platform for free for any church to use.¹²¹ Since these churches have a strong, well-established infrastructure, they provide the potential for in person discipleship that internet evangelism and churches cannot provide.

Web and Social Media Efforts

A variety of efforts are being made to bring the Gospel using websites and social media. Many of these organizations use the same methods that the growing numbers of influencers use to grow their follower base. In fact, creating popular content is now being strategically studied. No longer are viral videos created spontaneously; instead, they are created intentionally. Ministries like The Bible Project are using many of these methods, while GotQuestions.org uses search engine optimization strategies to answers questions people have about the Bible through their website.

Technology in Evangelism: Mega-Strategy for the Future

As long as technology keeps developing at the exponential pace it is now, the use of technology in evangelism will continue to expand. With every new technology that is developed, new churches and ministries will use that technology for evangelism. Some of these new methods may eventually eclipse traditional methods used now because these technologies will help us evangelize in hard to reach places where we could not share the Gospel before. They will also help us evangelize hard to reach people who ordinarily would not respond to the Gospel but may be more receptive over a new technology medium.

¹²⁰ The Robloxian Church, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.therobloxianchristians.org/>.

¹²¹ Life.Church, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.life.church/>.

This inevitable expansion in the use of technology for evangelism will require new theology, specifically in the area of soteriology. We know this will happen because soteriological questions are already starting to arise from current use of technology in evangelism. For example, take the case of a person who visits GMO's pages and is asked to make a decision on accepting Jesus Christ. If he or she clicks "Yes," should we consider that person a Christian? Of course, the answer to that question is something known only to God; however, as Christian leaders, we also need a sense of our congregation and to whom we are preaching. Another example is the case of an individual who wants to be baptized in a church over virtual reality. Through a virtual headset, the individual is virtually asked baptismal questions by the minister, who is also wearing the virtual headset. Then the individual's virtual avatar is immersed in virtual "water." Is this considered a true baptism? Later in the service, the entire congregation, via their virtual avatar, eats the virtual "bread" and drinks the virtual "wine." Is this a holy communion given before God?

Now, project this setting into the future when we go beyond simple virtual reality technology and get into the realm of holographic projections with tactile technology. This development means that people from around the world can gather simultaneously in a virtual room; it looks and feels like they are actually interacting while gathered in person. The people are not physically gathered, but it looks and feels physical, so how do we deal with baptisms and holy communions?

Any mega-strategy for world evangelization must factor in the inevitable developments of technology and the theology needed in this new environment. Christian leaders should anticipate these developments, organize relevant theology, and be more accommodating to new methods and traditions that will happen in new technology mediums.

Also, as new technologies come out, Christian leaders should collaborate together on how the new technology can be used in a mega-strategy on evangelization. When we work separately, then we divide resources and duplicate work. Technology is well established as an industry where collaboration can happen easily. Take, for example, the many open source platforms that are widely used and developed together. Moodle, which was developed collaboratively, is an open source online education platform used by over one billion students.¹²² Christian leaders must collaborate together and ask themselves how they can work together for the same vision of the Kingdom that we all have. We live in a world where 3.5 billion people own a smart phone, so how can we work together to get the Gospel

¹²² Moodle, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://moodle.org/>.

on everyone's smart phone?¹²³ What collaborative strategies do we need for app development, marketing, community interaction, and more in order to accomplish this?

Any viable path to collaboration will need to use technology to mediate this collaboration; therefore, we need technology platforms to facilitate the collaboration among Christian leaders. A mega-strategy will not happen behind closed doors with a handful of leaders. It will happen in the open, on technology platforms that bring together churches, denominations, ministries, and companies.

It also will not be just one technology platform that brings everyone together. The key cultural mountains identified in this book have different needs for collaboration, so different types of platforms will need to be developed. Think about the difference between Facebook and LinkedIn or Twitter and Instagram.

Something that all these platforms have in common is that they will need to span time zones and language barriers. Technology tools will need to be primarily asynchronous, able to facilitate ideas and cooperation even when leaders are not awake at the same time. Artificial intelligence can be used to bring out the most important personalized content and help with translation issues. An example of one such platform that is being built for collaboration in missions is called "Connect." It is built by an organization of which I am a part, the Global Great Commission Network.¹²⁴ The platform has asynchronous tools to share discussion topics, news, events, prayer topics, and much more. The platform brings together mission agencies and ministries that are focused on discipleship and the work of the Great Commission, as the name implies.

Distinguishing Truth: Background

One of the primary advances that the Internet created was the advent of the information age. A flood of information on any subject or news item is available to almost anyone, anytime, anywhere. While this tool has advanced the acquisition of knowledge for all people, it has also created a major problem in terms of distinguishing truth.

The problem is particularly bad for news articles that now, quite appropriately, have the moniker of being "fake news." Every major news organization clearly has the political bias of the authors in their writing. It is now very difficult to find news

¹²³ Statista, "Number of smartphone users worldwide from 2016 to 2021 (in billions)," accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/330695/number-of-smartphone-users-worldwide/>.

¹²⁴ Global Great Commission Network, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.ggcn.org/>.

articles that stick to succinct, clear, and obviously factual information because simple news articles do not draw any attention and the economics of news agencies require a political bias. Beyond that, most people are now getting their news through social media, which will always be qualified with personal commentary from the person sharing the news.

The current situation is that regular people can now acquire as much knowledge as they desire, but they then have the task of figuring out what information they can trust. How can regular people distinguish truth? How does anyone distinguish truth? This problem has faced mankind since the Fall of Adam.

Most people in the world would say that they can determine truth by adding up all the facts. This theory is why we have such a plethora of “fact-checking” websites that claim to reveal the truth. News organizations also write fact-checking articles that claim truth amidst their sea of fake news. In actuality, however, these fact-checking articles are very often biased and can also be called fake news themselves. The conclusion is that there is no method in the world that can give us definitive truth.

Christians can appreciate this method of adding up all the facts to find truth. Indeed, this is the premise for natural theology. Romans 1:20 says, “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.” This verse means we can look out into the world and extract truth by looking at all the facts we see in the world because God created this world; however, natural theology is limited because humans are limited. As much fact-checking as we can do, we are still finite. Our finitude does not allow us to reach the infinite absolute truth of God. The same problem that fact-checking websites have is the same limitation Christians have in using natural theology, which is why revealed theology is needed. The Bible reveals God’s absolute truth to us in an immediate way, so having a Biblical worldview is important. While we may not be able to interpret every news item and social political issue when it first appears, a Biblical worldview gives us the framework we need to begin to navigate it.

As Christians, we claim that truth, “logos,” was fully incarnate in Jesus Christ, which means that more than a knowledge base of truth, our basis for truth is the person of Jesus. Our primary view of truth comes through the channel of faith and our personal relationship with Jesus, and then secondarily, it comes through knowledge. Faith and a personal relationship with Jesus allow us to interpret truth in the world in ways that the method of extraction and fact-checking cannot do since those methods rely solely on a knowledge base of truth.

Christianity has a long history of dealing with issues of truth based on the absoluteness of God. In the flood of information that has come through the

advancement of technology and Internet, Christians remain best equipped. The revelation of the person of Jesus Christ and a Biblical worldview give us all we need to take hold of the mantle of truth in this world.

Distinguishing Truth: What is Being Done Today

The problem of truth amidst the flood of information and content is well recognized by the large technology companies. In particular, Facebook and Google have faced strong criticism from various ideological streams on their handling of information, especially fake news and misleading content.

The fact is that it is impossible to hire enough people to sufficiently filter the flood of information, news, and content on the Internet. Even if there were enough people, there would inevitably be bias and differences in how people would filter the information, which is why the large technology companies are building artificial intelligence technologies to automatically filter the information posted on their websites. However, artificial intelligence comes with its own set of problems. As people browse content on the Internet, what they will often notice is that related content appears right next to what they are looking at. This is artificial intelligence technology working to give more content and information about what they are interested in. The problem of truth comes in when artificial intelligence technology leads a person down a “rabbit hole” of content whereby he or she loses perspective on the bigger picture. For example, let’s say a person starts looking at conspiracy theories on YouTube and finds a video that interests him or her. Looking at recommended videos of other people speaking about similar topics could get that person stuck into a rabbit hole of conspiracy theories, making him or her lose perspective.

In essence, artificial intelligence is creating self-perpetuating distorted worldviews in people. As they look at some content, the technology self-perpetuates them into a false sense of how things really are. The danger of artificial intelligence isn’t robots taking over the world as in movies, but it is in people being swallowed up by false information, lies, and distortions.

While major technology companies are investing in artificial intelligence technologies related to truth in content, there are currently no major Christian efforts in developing this type of technology. Instead, Christians have focused on the overall impact of artificial intelligence as it relates to ethics, rather than how it relates to distinguishing truth. For example, the Evangelical Statement of Principles

on Artificial Intelligence, endorsed by 65 evangelical voices, was made in 2019.¹²⁵ It is an excellent statement covering a wide range of ethical concerns, but it lacks any engagement in the area of truth.

One area where Christians are engaging in truth on the Internet is with online news. For example, *The Christian Post* and *Christian Today* are major online newspapers covering world news items from a Christian perspective. These news organizations use search engine optimization tools to make sure those searching on the Internet will find them when browsing a particular topic.

Distinguishing Truth: Mega-Strategy for the Future

For any mega-strategy of evangelism, revealing truth and being part of the flow of information in the world is crucial. Christians should consider this area a critical component for Kingdom work to penetrate into the world. If we overlook it, we run the risk of losing control over information and the world's perception on truth. Of course, truth will always be revealed, but Christians should be a part of revealing that truth.

First, as previously mentioned, no major Christian efforts are being made to develop artificial intelligence technologies related to filtering information on the Internet. Since it is people's first point of contact with information, it is very important area. It is also a massive undertaking to develop this type of technology, which is why most of this work is being done by the large technology companies. Nonetheless, there are steps that Christians should take now, including recognizing Christians who are in the technology industry and are working in information artificial intelligence. Giving them a platform from which they can spur discussion can increase Christian exposure to this area and influence development of these technologies.

Second, Christians must endeavor to publish more good, holy, and true knowledge. The Bible keeps it simple; there is the knowledge of good and evil, which means there is good, holy, and true knowledge and then there is evil, depraved, and deceitful knowledge. Most information and news on the Internet is full of half-truths, using the same strategy as the Devil, which draws people into evil knowledge.

The battle for information is becoming a battle over which kind of information can overwhelm the other. Christians can be part of this battle of information by simply

¹²⁵ The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, "Artificial Intelligence: An Evangelical Statement of Principle," April 11, 2019, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://erlc.com/resource-library/statements/artificial-intelligence-an-evangelical-statement-of-principles/>.

creating good, holy, and true content that comes from the Bible and a proper Biblical worldview. We can do this on the individual level on our social media postings with blogs, videos, prayers, and devotions. It can also be done on the institutional level with ministries focused on getting searchable content and news on the Internet. Therefore, developing communications technology is also very important. It is simple really. Technology is the best tool for communication. The world leverages technology to flood the world with secular information. Christians must do the same, leveraging technology to flood the world with the holy knowledge of the Lord.

Third, education remains important on all levels from primary schools to higher education. It is important to educate truth and to strengthen our next generation's ability to distinguish truth by teaching with a biblical worldview in education. In addition, efforts should be made for increased usage of technology in education. Allowing the next generation to become accustomed to learning on the Internet will help them in the future as they strive to create good, holy, true knowledge for the Internet.

Of course, there are many institutions that are using technology in education, and I want to highlight one institution that has been using online education for decades. South Africa Theological Seminary has over 3000 students in 80 countries.¹²⁶ The institution has faculty members all around the world, coordinated by a staff in Johannesburg. The institution is accredited by the South Africa ministry of education. They are an example of an evangelical institution using technology to educate the next generation to distinguish the truth.

Kingdom Worldview: Background

Perhaps the biggest challenge might be bringing Christians who are in the technology field over into working for the Kingdom. Inherent postmodern worldviews exist within the industry, making it difficult to embrace a Kingdom worldview. These inherent worldviews are by no means held by every Christian who works in technology, but they are still commonplace because of the nature of the industry. I will explain three postmodern attitudes, standing side by side in the technology industry, with which many deal, either knowingly or unknowingly.

The first is an attitude of scientism and the need to have empirically verifiable information. This is an attitude of needing provable data to understand reality. This attitude tends to be critical of anything invisible, intangible, or unproven. In the same way, technologists tend to proceed systematically, based on what is empirically provable first, before moving forward. For example, the "lean startup"

¹²⁶ South Africa Theological Seminary, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.sats.edu.za/>.

method tries to get proof of a concept for a new technology by seeing if a lean, cheap beta-version of the technology works well before investing more time and money.¹²⁷ Likewise, Christians in technology want this empirically verifiable information before moving forward on anything, including Kingdom work.

The second is an attitude of existentialism, common across this post-modernist age, but especially manifested within the system of the technology industry. An existential attitude starts from the individual, finding his or her own purpose, meaning, and structure in life. The technology sector responds well to the existential needs of an individual, by providing systematic career paths, while still giving plenty of autonomy. Based on certain certifications, qualifications, examinations, and experience, people move along fairly structured paths across the industry, irrespective of the company. In fact, technologists tend to move around companies quite a bit in their careers. This is also about a systematic way of looking at life—study at a good college, get a nice internship, graduate, find a nice company, get promoted, get an increase in salary, become financially stable, get married, buy a house, have children, retire, and travel. This is a common life path that individuals in technology hope to accomplish for themselves.

An outgrowth of the first two attitudes is, finally, a nominalist attitude. This attitude treats everything and everyone on a one to one basis, rather than seeing universal ideas and meaning. Engineers tend to focus on what is in front of them and what they can see, rather than on what is unseen. Innovative ideas and thoughts that break through to the community with interconnectedness are not common among engineers. Rather, it is the rare technology entrepreneur who breaks through the nominalist attitude and innovates the industry—these are exceptions from the typical engineer. Examples of those who break through include the big names in technology whom we would expect, including Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, and Elon Musk.

In a world without answers for post-modern worldviews, the technology industry has a comparatively good response. It is one thing to win over a person to Jesus Christ, but it is quite another thing to win over a Christian in the technology industry into giving his or her life for the Kingdom.

Kingdom Worldview: What is Being Done Today

Now that I have described the kind of worldviews with which Christians in technology must deal, the next step is to consider how they are being addressed. How can a Biblical-Kingdom worldview overcome these three attitudes? Unfortunately, there is not one resource or ministry dealing with these three

¹²⁷ The Lean Startup, “The Lean Startup Methodology,” accessed July 1, 2020, <http://theleanstartup.com/principles>.

attitudes together, side by side. Instead, various ministries are trying to address them individually, bringing the Bible or Kingdom purpose to believers and non-believers alike who have these worldviews.

Biologos

Biologos.org is a website started by Francis Collins, Director of the National Institutes of Health and a renowned biologist who led the human genome project.¹²⁸ Its mission is to let the church and the world see the harmony between the Bible and science. Generally speaking, the authors of the website are evangelicals who uphold the authority and inspiration of the Bible and at the same time affirm the evolutionary creation of God. For those growing up in the modern education system and the scientific worldview, theological writings like those seen in Biologos.org are critical for them to fully accept the truth of the Bible.

Global Great Commission Network (GGCN)

The late Dr. Ralph D. Winter wrote extensively about the need for a global-level association of mission agencies, which led to the organizing of a 2010 meeting in Tokyo, on the 100th anniversary of Edinburgh 1910.¹²⁹ Following the Tokyo 2010 meeting, the Global Great Commission Network was started to serve mission agencies, churches, and ministries that are striving to see all people disciplined in our generation. I previously mentioned one of the key networking tools developed by GGCN called Connect. Connect is a secure technology platform for mission leaders around the world to connect, communicate, and collaborate together globally. Platforms like Connect are critical for Christians in using technology to go beyond their individual silos and to interact with organizations on a global level.

IT Degrees with a Biblical Worldview

Several institutions in biblical higher education offer technology degrees. The Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE) represents over 200 institutions of biblical higher education in North America. Their requirements for accreditation include an emphasis on a biblical worldview for all degree programs, including undergraduate degrees with at least 30 hours of core Bible/Theological studies.

Columbia International University, Prairie College, and Olivet University are a few examples of ABHE-accredited schools that offer technology degrees with a biblical basis. These programs are drastically different from getting a technology degree at a typical secular institution. Students matriculate through the programs by taking

¹²⁸ Biologos, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://biologos.org/>.

¹²⁹ Global Great Commission Network, "Dr. Ralph D. Winter and GGCN," accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.ggcn.org/dr-winter-ggcn/>.

Bible-core classes and getting spiritual formation through Chapel and Christian service requirements, while also taking technology courses that will help them professionally in using technology to help build the Kingdom.

Apologetics Ministry Ravi Zacharias

Ravi Zacharias started his apologetics ministry in 1984, and it has grown to nearly 100 speakers around the world.¹³⁰ Throughout his ministry, Zacharias emphasized a coherent worldview that only the Bible gives satisfactory answers to four big questions: origin of mankind, meaning of life, morality, and destiny. The focus on worldview has had an impact on millions of Christians and non-believers who have grown up in a modern secular worldview and need answers from the Bible.

Kingdom Worldview: Mega-Strategy for the Future

Bringing Christians in technology into a Kingdom worldview is critical for a mega-strategy of evangelism. Many Christians are working in the technology field, but very few Christians are using their technological skills for the Kingdom. Perhaps the first step in discipleship is giving a convincing argument for the Kingdom to Christians who are well settled in their technology careers.

In the case of the scientism attitude, technologists have a desire for empirically verifiable information for the vision of the Kingdom. What data can the Church provide to show that we are making a tangible impact in building the Kingdom? How will we know when we reach the goal of building the Kingdom? Short of that, what are some key milestones and data points to show we are making progress? These are the kinds of questions that technologists with a scientific worldview will ask when they are making a decision to commit to a vision.

It is for this reason that I believe Dr. Ralph D. Winter was the most influential missiologist of the past century. From his engineering background, he revolutionized statistics and analytics in missions. Where before, mission agencies worked country by country, Winter popularized the term “unreached people groups.” Instead of reaching each country, we need to find out which people groups are unreached and send missionaries to them. In essence, Winter reframed a tangible goal for the Kingdom and gave us a new way to make clear milestones to show we are making progress in the Kingdom. One of the ministries he started, The Joshua Project, still continues to track these statistics to this day.¹³¹ If we are to win Christians to the idea of using technology to work for the Kingdom, continued expansion of this type

¹³⁰Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.rzim.org/>.

¹³¹The Joshua Project, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://joshuaproject.net/>.

of research and data analysis for the Kingdom is necessary to address this scientism attitude.

The existential attitude is a difficult one to tackle because of the systematic nature of the technology industry that gives clear outcomes for those who pursue this career path. For most Christians in technology, faith becomes a footnote. Their job gives them a seemingly clear purpose to create a nice tool, and creating that tool is a clear, tangible result that gives them meaning in what they are doing. When asked to compare that to their walk of faith, they ask, “What can the Kingdom do for me? What tangible purpose can I see for my life?”

Fortunately, technologists are a logical bunch, and the answer to these questions can be taken to their logical conclusion. Technology moves so quickly that any technology created now tends to become obsolete in a few years. Of course, technology developed now is meaningful because it contributes to future development; however, because how it will impact the future is unclear, it is common among engineers to feel empty when their technology becomes obsolete.

Several questions arise at this point: Does anything I do have any lasting value? What is the impact in future generations? What impact does it have for history? The evidence is clear about what the Bible teaches us. Earthly treasures rust and are destroyed, but heavenly treasures are eternal. What we are doing now during our short time on earth has lasting eternal impact only if it is for the Kingdom of God. Even the best technological tools will become obsolete in some years, but anything for the Kingdom of God will last eternally.

Our preaching, writing, and counseling with Christians in technology should all have this Kingdom framework in mind. What we are doing now has meaning only because it is dependent on the eternity of God. Technologists know better than anyone how finite we all are. As theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher said, we have an absolute dependence on God.¹³² In other words, we depend on going towards an eternal purpose, and that purpose is the Kingdom. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 8:24 that “in this hope we were saved,” meaning we depend on the hope of historical salvation. We are already saved by Jesus Christ, yet we depend on the eternal dream Jesus gave us for the Kingdom of God as we live. This is the clear position the Bible teaches us, but much of it is lost to people. So much preaching, writing, and counseling cedes to existentialism. Salvation in Jesus Christ has become escapism from the world, rather than impacting the world for the Kingdom. Any mega-strategy for evangelization must have clear Kingdom preaching in it.

Finally, the nominalist attitude needs to be overcome so Christians in technology can actually make a difference for the Kingdom in this world. As mentioned,

¹³² Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999), 33.

nominalism limits the engineering worldview to only what is in front rather than what is beyond it all. So even if an engineer has some creativity bubbling up inside, it is limited by the nominalist worldview. Many technology entrepreneurs have been able to overcome the nominalist worldview and innovate technology as we see it, but what happens even to them is that their creativity runs up against the next level of nominalism. In many cases, even the most innovative technology entrepreneurs are just innovating within the social structures of the world. That is why we have so many social media companies.

Of course, from a secular perspective it is possible to keep finding more levels to break through, but Christians in technology have more to offer. We have the Kingdom worldview from the Divine one, which means we have the infinite worldview that is not limited by the secular structures of the world. Christians in technology must realize this deep meaning of the position they are in and be able to lead. We must not stand behind and allow the secular world to lead us, but we must lead innovation from the front. I believe God gives us this potential because He gave us Jesus Christ and the cross and the dream of the Kingdom before us.

It is just as Luke wrote about Apostle Paul in the Book of Acts, saying, "Boldly and without hindrance, he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 28:31)." That exhortation comes to all of us in technology to dream about the Kingdom and live boldly in Jesus Christ.