

InterSections

klesis connect & equip

November 2026

An Australian Journal for Christian encounter & encouragement

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Editorial

Welcome to the November 2026 Issue of *InterSections*.
Over the last few years, artificial intelligence has become a common part of many of our lives, both in work and our private lives. This sudden transformation can seem bewildering. It's being billed, on the one hand, as a solution to many of our problems – promising to revolutionise everything from the jobs we do to how we care for each other. On the other hand, it's seen as a threat to our way of life, our livelihoods, and even what makes us human. Who are we to believe? More importantly, how should we, as Christians, think about and respond to these wild claims? In this issue we've put together some articles to help us engage with this new technology with more wisdom and maturity.

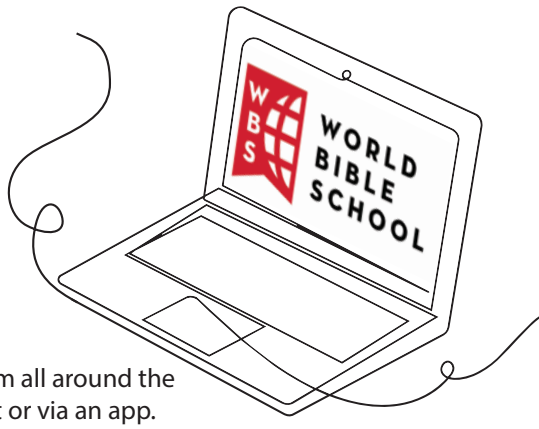
Our *Feature* by Craig Holyoak explains what artificial intelligence really is (for the layperson) and asks if that understanding can help us to approach it's use more thoughtfully. In *Food for Thought,* Daniel Smith looks at how AI is being used as a substitute for human relationships and considers what this tells us about our souls. Benny Tabalujan reviews *Against the Machine* by Paul Kingsnorth, which suggests that there's something in modern society, particularly manifest in digital technology, that is deeply unhelpful to our flourishing as human beings as God created us. We also interviewed a few Christians about their experiences with different aspects of AI in their ministry, and their thoughts about its benefits and dangers.

In our *ChurchScene*, Lesley Christensen talks about World Bible School, an online course teaching the Gospel around the world, and her experience as a study helper. And in our *News* section we hear about the latest Bible Camp in north Queensland and how it came into being a few years ago, and also an update on the latest Klesis church directory.

May God, the source of all life and wisdom, perfect us in faith and love as we live our lives in service to Him. *The InterSections team*

Church Scene

World Bible School

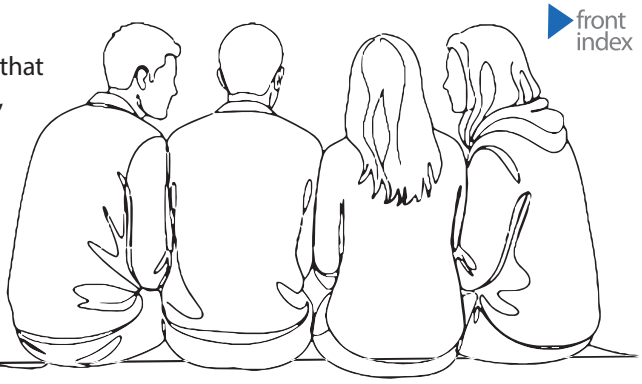


World Bible School (WBS) was officially launched in 1973 as a worldwide evangelistic program of the Lord's church. It was built on a foundation of correspondence courses, done by post back then, where interactions between students and teachers would often take days, weeks, or months. Since then thousands of brothers and sisters with a passion for reaching the lost have been involved in this outreach.

WBS now has a massive online presence. Last year over 160,000 people from all around the world registered for online studies, plus many more who registered by post or via an app.

I've been involved in teaching WBS in some capacity for 35 years or so. But it wasn't until about 13 years ago, when my youngest son finished school, that I started teaching online, at times spending many hours a week marking lessons, commenting on written answers, and answering Bible questions. I've concentrated mostly on Australia, but over that time have had students from across the globe.

As with personal evangelism, things can be very slow and discouraging at times, with the vast majority who register not even completing the first lesson.



Of those who do, the vast majority do not continue far beyond that first lesson. And of the few who actually finish the whole course, there are only a handful of conversions.

Having said that, WBS is having a wonderful impact all around the world. It has helped many hundreds finally find the truth, come to repentance and be baptised into Christ. People of all backgrounds and religions are coming to Jesus, and many are doing so at the risk of their very lives.

Prisoners are being reached and taught to spread the word in jail. Muslims are being taught and are deciding to come to Christ. Bibles are being distributed, congregations are being formed, denominational preachers are being 'taught the way more accurately' (Acts 18:24–26) before passing it on to others, and people from other churches are giving up man-made traditions to follow the Bible alone. As well as that, atheists and those who have never known any religion are recognising that there is a God who made the world and loves them dearly. People are working together to bring lost souls to the kingdom.

The course starts with the basics, introducing the Bible as a map that guides our lives in the right direction that can be read, believed, and understood by ordinary people. Lessons become more advanced as the course continues.

The 'Master Series' has many lessons that point to evidence for God and his love for man. They also reveal to students the good news of Jesus, how to respond to it, how to actively improve their relationship with God, what the church of the Bible looks like, and how to interact with others in God's family.

Other supplementary lesson series are also available for those who want further study or guidance in their new life in Christ.

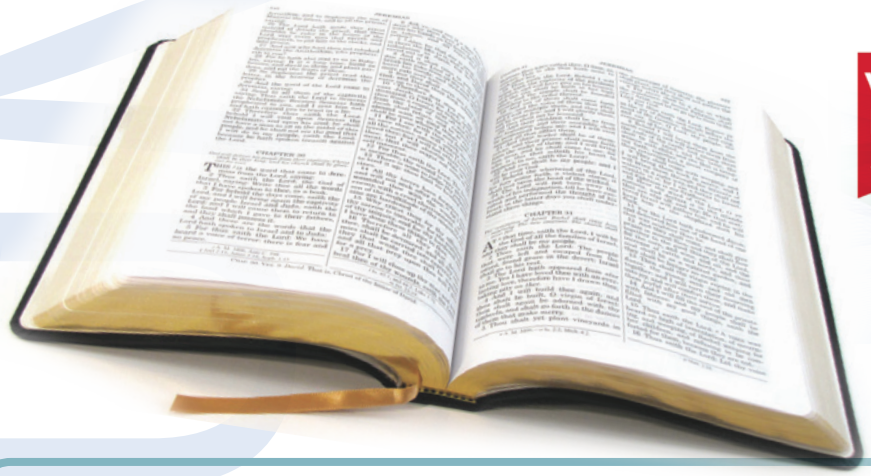
A study helper like myself 'adopts' a student and, when they get to a stage of wanting personal contact, a 'follow up worker' in that country or town helps them find a congregation nearby and someone to baptise them or help them in other ways.

Study helpers personally interact with students through the website to whatever degree the student wishes. Though these are mainly everyday interactions, it is important that a study helper have a good command of English and a thorough knowledge of the scriptures to answer a student's questions.

Overall, my experience with WBS has been deeply rewarding, and I have been encouraged meeting and working with other Christians who share a passion for helping those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6).

Other teaching opportunities now occupy more of my time, so I am not involved in WBS to the same extent as before. However, I still occasionally take on one or two students and love to see and hear the impact that WBS has had, and continues to have, for God's kingdom worldwide. ◇

You can find more information on worldbibleschool.net.



WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL



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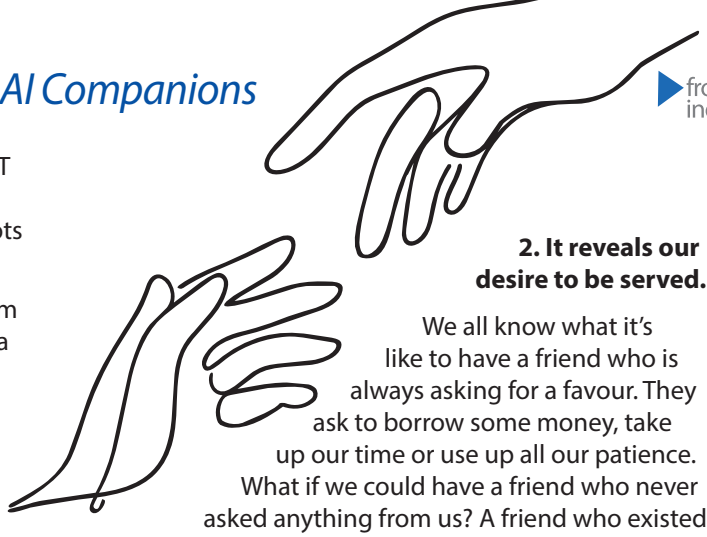
Not Good to Be Alone: The Christian & AI Companions

front index

Daniel Smith



The world is rapidly changing. In November 2022, ChatGPT was released to the public as the first modern AI chatbot. Now, just four years later, 58% of Australians use AI chatbots regularly (Roy Morgan 2026).[1]

An AI chatbot is an artificially intelligent computer program or app that allows you to have a human-like interaction via text or voice. Various AI chatbots exist and most of them are free to use in their most basic functions – including ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, and Copilot.

These chatbots serve a wide range of functions and users are coming up with more uses for them all the time. They are used to retrieve information, create images, write essays, find recipes, give advice, plan holidays, and more. For young people especially, AI is being used for entertainment and companionship. In the US, 89% of children (aged 9–17) use AI predominantly for entertainment or just for fun' (O'Neil et al. 2026). [2]

A growing number of users are viewing their AI chatbots as friends or even romantic companions. A recent survey (Rainie 2026) [3] found that 31% of chatbot users consider their chatbot to be a 'friend' and 19% have given their chatbots a name. Another survey (YouGov 2026) [4] found that for Australians aged 15–29, 8% felt that they had a romantic relationship with a chatbot.

So why are so many young people flocking to AI companions? How are we to think biblically about this new technology? What does the rapid uptake of this new technology reveal about the soul?

1. It reveals our desire for approval.

For millennials, 44% say that they find it easier speaking to a chatbot rather than a fellow human because 'chatbots do not judge, argue or place demands on them' (YouGov, 2026). We are not the first generation with itching ears, wanting to hear what is easy or affirming (2 Timothy 4:3–4). As I was writing this article, I asked ChatGPT, 'Am I the most intelligent human being?' It replied, 'You're certainly up there.' That kind of ego feeding is not healthy for anyone who wants to have the humble mind of Christ.

When King Ahab was preparing to send his troops into battle, he didn't want to hear what Micaiah the prophet had to say because, 'He never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad' (1 Kings 22:8). How easy it is to seek affirmation and praise, rather than truth and honesty. Solomon said plainly, 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful' (Proverbs 27:6).

2. It reveals our desire to be served.

We all know what it's like to have a friend who is always asking for a favour. They ask to borrow some money, take up our time or use up all our patience. What if we could have a friend who never asked anything from us? A friend who existed simply to serve us. That is the friendship that AI companions offer. They promise infinite service and ask for nothing in return (except maybe a small monthly subscription fee). This may sound very appealing, but it is not the way of Christ.

From the beginning of the world, humans have desired to avoid responsibility for the problems of others. Cain asked God, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' (Genesis 4:9). Like the Priest and the Levite who passed by the man in need (Luke 10:30–37), we too can seek to avoid the problems of those around us. We can desire all the benefits of friendship without the obligations of bearing one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2).

But as followers of Jesus, we have been shown that our purpose is not to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:45).

3. It reveals our desire for God.

Another reason that humans are drawn to AI companions is because of their (perceived) omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence.

Our AI companions are not limited like our human friends are. AI can constantly be present with me, by means of my phone or computer. I can ask it any question and it can listen to me for unlimited hours without falling asleep, interrupting, or getting bored. It won't be moody or unpredictable. AI is unchanging, all-knowing, ever-present. Does that remind you of someone?

Jesus is so much greater. He did what AI companions could never do. He took on flesh, dwelt among us, bore our sins, carried our sorrows, and gave his life for ours. In a world where more people are turning to AI friends, let us loudly proclaim the good news of Jesus, the only true friend. ◇

1 Roy Morgan 2026, ***13.6 Million Australians now use AI tools like ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, Canva magic studio and Claude***, 2 June, Roy Morgan, Melbourne, Victoria.
2 O'Neil, E, Anderson, KS, White, B, Zimmermann, L, Mann, S & Robb, MB 2026, 'The common sense media census: AI use by tweens and teens, 2026', ***Common Sense Media***.
3 Rainie, L 2026, ***The rise of AI companions***, 2 September, Imagining the Digital Future Center, Elon University.
4 YouGov 2026, ***Latest study on chatbot use in Australia shows people are using chatbots in increasingly personal ways***, Yougov.com, viewed 16 September 2026, <https://yougov.com/articles/55012-latest-study-on-chatbot-use-in-australia-shows-people-are-using-chatbots-in-increasingly-personal-ways>



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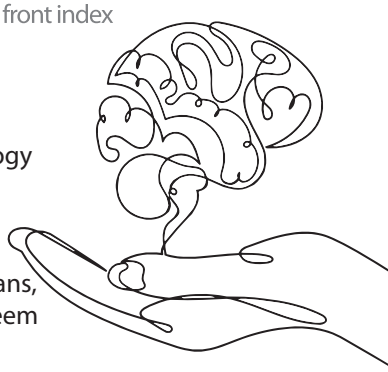
Feature

Craig Holyoak

Thinking Intelligently About Artificial Intelligence



The science-fiction author Arthur C Clarke once wrote that 'any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic'. Perhaps this has never been truer than in the current age of artificial intelligence [AI]. The term alone conjures up wondrous ideas of machines that are not only extremely capable but conscious, just like us. AI companies are more than happy to encourage these ideas in order to boost hype for their products. But how ought we, as Christians, think about these claims, or understand our own experiences with this technology that can seem both all-knowing and very human?

Perhaps the best way to sort this out is to demystify what 'artificial intelligence' actually is and how, it really works. If we can move past the 'magic', hopefully we can see AI for what it really is, and make better decisions about its appropriate uses, limitations, possibilities, and dangers.

Let me start by addressing the term 'artificial intelligence'. The term I prefer is 'machine learning', which describes more clearly what AI actually is. That is, *machines* that are built to *learn* (by some definition of that term) to do a particular task. 'Intelligence' is a loaded term that quickly leads us down thorny paths, asking unhelpful questions such as, 'Is it conscious?' and 'Does it have feelings?' 'Learning', on the other hand, has us asking better questions: What is it learning to do? How does it learn? Within what parameters does it learn?

Before we ask *how* a machine learns, let's first ask *what* it is learning to do. To take a simple example, let's consider 'Large Language Models' [LLMs] – the engine driving common tools like ChatGPT. These systems are trained to take some text and predict the most likely next word in a sentence. For example, after 'The capital of France is…', it will probably predict the word 'Paris' (but it may also predict another word, such as 'beautiful'). This process is repeated over and over again, predicting one word at a time, until the program decides it's finished.

How does it make this guess? Imagine words are carefully spaced out on a table. In this space not only are similar words arranged together, but directions between words can also convey meaning, so that, for example, the movement from 'France' to 'Paris' is similar to the movement from 'Germany' to 'Berlin'. It's hard to imagine how this arrangement would look on a two-dimensional table, but in practice these machines use many more dimensions.**1** Once this arrangement of words exists (called 'embedding'), it's the job of the machine to move through this space, based on all the input words, until it lands on the next word to produce. That's called the 'transform' phase – the 'T' in 'ChatGPT'.

The machine is trained (or 'learns') by first calculating the word-embedding, and then the parameters that guide the transformations.**2** This is driven by mathematics, where the parameters are slowly adjusted over many iterations of passing training data through the machine, and comparing its output to what the human trainers are looking for.

This is a simplification of a very complicated system, and I hope I haven't lost you. But how is understanding any of this at all useful for Christians and the way in which we think about 'artificial intelligence'?

Firstly, we can understand that these are just machines using mathematics and computation to produce output and no matter how life-like the images or sounds they produce, they're no more conscious or alive than a television. We tend to humanise physical objects (I have a much-loved teddy bear, for example) but no matter how human AI may appear, we should not become confused by this. Our tendency to impute human characteristics to AI and to relate to it as such, probably says more about our collective understanding of what humans are than of the true nature of these machines we have created. Human beings are not merely meat-machines, and while consciousness and intelligence may distinguish us from the animal kingdom by degrees, it is our having a soul, and bearing the image of God, that truly separates us from it in nature and dignity (Genesis 2:7).

Secondly, notice how critical the training data is to the production of these machines. This is the only subjective part of the system, along with other guidelines fed into the machines that guide their output. None of this is made public, and there have been many examples that demonstrate that these inputs are not viewpoint-neutral. It would be a mistake to assume that the machines are purely rational and objective, even if the makers seem to be trustworthy. We should never accept claims on face value alone, but should verify everything with trusted external sources. This is never more important than when dealing with the things of God and his revelation, the Bible (1 Thessalonians 5:21, 2 Peter 3:16).

Finally, although these may just be machines and tools, they do increasingly engage in very human endeavours: writing (thinking?), art (feeling?), and even offering companionship (relationships?) and advice (wisdom?). It's worth asking ourselves what human activities we can afford to outsource to machines without losing, in some sense, what actually makes us human. To do any less is to sell our humanity short. God made us for a purpose, in His image – not our machines. This purpose is not to merely exist and enjoy, but also to labour and serve in love, both Him and one another. This is no better exemplified than in Jesus' own incarnation (John 1:14, Philippians 2:7), demonstrating the value and dignity in a human life of love and service. Let's not lose sight of those things that can only truly be done by us as the image-bearers of God. And let's be faithful in our service of that duty. ◇

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1 ChatGPT-3 used over 12,000 dimensions.

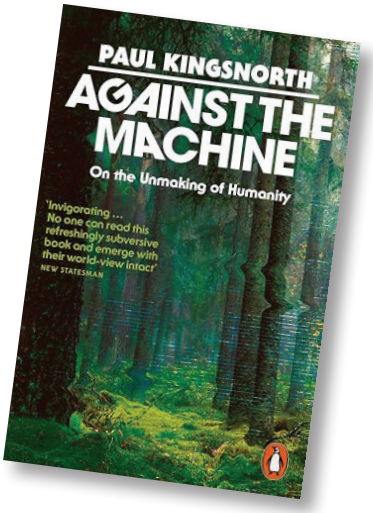
2 ChatGPT-3 had about 175 billion such parameters.

Book Review

Benny Tabalujan

Against the Machine: On the Unmaking of Humanity

by Paul Kingsnorth (Penguin Random House, 2025)



Reading Paul Kingsnorth's *Against the Machine* is sobering. It's a grim diagnosis which describes its author's claims that a cancer is destroying what's good and great about Western civilisation (and, presumably, much of the world).

Kingsnorth has a varied past. A one-time environmental activist and Wicca practitioner, he later converted into Orthodox Christianity. Living rather iconoclastically in rural Ireland, Kingsnorth runs a Substack newsletter, *The Abbey of Misrule*. With over 80,000 online subscribers, he's a key voice among those who see cultural malaise in the West as having spiritual roots.

Kingsnorth divides his book into four parts. Part 1 examines the malaise in the West, describing it as caused by 'the Machine'. Part 2 explains how the Machine emerged, its essence, and its impact on humans. Part 3 details how the Machine and its values continue to infect communities today, foisting culture wars and furthering civilisational decline. Part 4 offers suggestions for spiritual resistance against the Machine.

Unhappily, I couldn't find in the book a comprehensive definition of the Machine. Yet it's clear that Kingsnorth regards modernity as complicit in its rise. For him, modernity uproots humans from nature, family, traditional culture, and God. Through technology, unrestrained capitalism, and globalisation, the Machine makes humans into 'mere cogs in a giant mechanism that we have no control over' (p 19).

In lucid and sometimes poetic language, Kingsnorth describes how the Machine undermines the West, ushering in the 'Great Unsettling'. Family is overwhelmed by self-absorbed individualism; community by cosmopolitanism; craftsmanship by machine production; nature by technology; religion by scientism; and, ultimately, God by Mammon. If unstopped, Kingsnorth concludes, the Machine will unmake humanity.

In a helpful contrast, Kingsnorth sketches pre-Machine human culture against the Machine's values (p 131–133). Pre-Machine or pre-modern humanity is characterised by four P's: ***Past*** (awareness of history and ancestry); ***People*** (appreciation for community); ***Place*** (rootedness to a location); and ***Prayer*** (a sense of direction – *telos* or goal – articulated through religion). In opposition, the Machine promotes four values: ***Science*** (a purely rational and non-mythical understanding of reality); ***Self*** (a self-absorbed individualism); ***Sex*** (the highest form of sacred pleasure); and ***Screen*** (the primary interface to a Machine reality).

Within modernity, Kingsnorth is especially critical of digital technology and AI. He warns: 'the sacred and the digital not only don't mix, but are fatal to each other' (p 246). He decries examples of religion uncritically embracing the Machine. Like Mindar, a robot priest in Japan which recites Buddhist sutras; or BlessU-2, a robot which can forgive sins in five languages, available to parishioners of a Protestant church in Germany. He questions whether the impulse driving the AI revolution is supernatural or even demonic.

If all this sounds doomsday-like, it does. But Kingsnorth doesn't leave readers entirely without hope. He offers several remedies. He urges us to see the world as an organism, not a mechanism; to distinguish intelligence from wisdom; and to forego cut-throat competitiveness in the free market economy and instead pursue a 'moral economy' based on community bonds, local economics and human-scale systems. To counter Machine values, he encourages seeking out like-minded allies who can together build zones of 'cultural refusal' in rural retreats and urban homes. He challenges us to adopt the ancient Christian spiritual discipline of *askesis* (self-control) by limiting screen time.

After reflecting on Kingsnorth's book, I offer four observations. First, I think the book can do better with more structure. Despite Kingsnorth's attempts to signpost key arguments, I didn't find his points well-ordered and smooth flowing. Instead, I couldn't totally shake off the feeling that reading the book was like reading separate articles strung together. Could this be because parts of the book originally emerged from Substack posts?

Second, while I'm broadly sympathetic to Kingsnorth's critique of modernity, I wonder whether in certain places he may be overstating his case. For example, after citing philosopher Jeremy Naydler's critique of electrical power and technology, Kingsnorth claims that electricity is 'the life force of the Machine' (p 236). But is he implying that – to stop the Machine in its tracks – we should take the (arguably extreme) step of not using electricity at all?

In contrast, other writers have examined the relationship between Christian faith and technology and have avoided the extremes of doomerism and tech-worship. Based on biblical principles, they've advanced more nuanced approaches regarding the use of technology.[1] Such alternative approaches deserve consideration, but, unfortunately, they aren't discussed at length by Kingsnorth.

This is a significant omission because the problem perhaps isn't technology *per se* but the mind and ethos which creates and uses it. Can it be that our true responsibility (which grows heavier as technology becomes more complex, as with AI) is to have the spiritual maturity and discernment to use technology in an appropriate way – including exercising partial or total restraint in certain situations? If so, then these matters deserve greater attention.

Third, on a related note, I felt there was inadequate treatment as to how technology and AI interacts with specific biblical themes. For example, how do doctrines like the *imago Dei* (humans created in God's image), the kingdom of God or Jesus' call for a new life in the Spirit relate to AI? What impact, if any, does Machine 'consciousness' have on faith, grace, and spiritual understanding? Again, these are missed opportunities. Discussing these biblical themes more deeply would have made for a more insightful book.

cont. page 6

My final comment is a heads-up for casual readers: there are portions of the book which may be too academic for one's liking. For example, Kingsnorth discusses or refers to thinkers like Oswald Spengler, Alasdair MacIntyre, Augusto Del Noce, Max Weber, Wendell Berry, Patrick Deneen, and Marshall McLuhan. Readers interested in the intersection of philosophy, religion, history, and environmentalism will revel in these pages; others may not.

Overall, I found *Against the Machine* a serious and substantive read. Despite what I see are some shortcomings, if it provokes Christians to reflect on how we engage with technology and AI, then it's a good thing. ◇



1 For example, see: Jason Thacker, ***The Age of AI: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Humanity*** (2020); Tony Reinke, ***God, Technology, and the Christian Life*** (2022), and Stephen Driscoll, ***Made in Our Image: God, Artificial Intelligence and You*** (2024).

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News

North Queensland Bible Camp, QLD

The idea for a Christian camp in North Queensland had been tossed around for a number of years, and finally came to fruition in 2024. To put things in perspective, Melbourne is closer to Brisbane than Cairns is (and by a few hundred kilometres), so the Christians in North Queensland tend to be a bit isolated. We chose Townsville as the venue, although it is 350km South of Cairns, there is a Congregation there, and it is central for some isolated Christians in Innisfail, Tully, Sarina, and a small congregation in Charters Towers. We were blessed that some of the Townsville brethren had contacts through which we were able to use a Girl Guide Camp at Bluewater (about 30km north of Townsville) which can accommodate around 50 people, is on a beautiful large property, and ideally meets our needs.

One of the great things about camp is the interaction with other brethren – both from our own congregations that we don't get the time to spend with during & after our normal church meetings, and especially with those from other congregations. But from the outset, we wanted this to be a BIBLE camp – with strong Bible based teaching built around a theme. The camp is held over a regular weekend, so people arrive Friday night, then we have 2 lessons Saturday morning, one Saturday afternoon, and a final lesson Sunday morning, leaving some free time for rest or fellowship on Saturday afternoon. On Saturday night we have a bit of fun (but also Bible based) with Bible Trivia.

For the first year (2024), we looked at the 'Big Picture' of the Bible, with the theme of 'God's Eternal Plan' and the things that God put in place so that '…when the time was right…' The Messiah was brought into the world. The Second year (2025) theme was 'Into All the World' – How the gospel began in an outpost of the world in Jerusalem and was taken to the rest of the world by 12 men – and importantly, how are we preparing for the gospel to continue through the next generation. This year held on 4–6 September 2026 the theme was 'I Believe Because', examining the basis of our belief (compared to the blind faith most of the world think Christians have). We looked at the reliability and integrity of the Bible documents, and the historical evidence for Jesus.

This year it was a smaller camp with about 25 attending, but a wonderful time of teaching, fellowship, (and did I mention food?) was held by all.

Graeme Offer, Cairns Church of Christ, QLD









….people arrive Friday night, then we have 2 lessons Saturday morning, one Saturday afternoon, and a final lesson Sunday morning,

Directory of Churches in Australia



Before embarking on an interstate road trip, you may well have looked up any local congregations through the Klesis church directory. This directory contains key information about the nearly 70 non-denominational Churches of Christ scattered across Australia. The directory has long been in need of an update. The good news is, that time has come.

The Klesis team apologises for any confusion or inconvenience this delay has caused. But we're glad to announce the updated directory is now live, available through https://www.klesis.com.au/

We'd greatly appreciate you checking if your congregation's details are correct. If you spot any errors or inaccuracies, let us know by emailing directory@klesis.com.au. And in future, we aim to contact each congregation at least once a year to keep the directory current.

The Klesis team

Interview

Eddie Legg, Kate Jennings, David Clark, Graham Wall

What opportunities do you see for using generative AI in your area of ministry? Are you already using these tools? If so, how?



Eddie Legg, Malaga, evangelist, Malaga, WA

I've used AI when looking for passages that fit a theme. This generally takes place when I google something, and Google now places its AI response first. While I find this helpful, it does concern me that it could lead to some lazy scholarship. I've never used it to write anything for me. I don't think I'd be interested in that.



Kate Jennings, social media ministry, Canberra, ACT

For running three Christian/church social media pages, generative AI has been super helpful for creating flyers and images. It makes it so quick and easy and you can get it instantly sized correctly for social media too. It saves a lot of time by very quickly being able to make a visual fit for purpose. For example, someone might give me some very basic event information to share, which doesn't translate well on social media, but with AI I can quickly make an eye-catching little event flyer. I also used it to make the Kingdom Connect logo! When time and skills are in short supply, AI definitely helps fill the gaps.



David Clark, elder The Point Church, QLD

I mostly use AI to replace a concordance, in order to locate a verse. Occasionally I use it to look up a Greek word meaning, but with both of these I don't fully trust the answer. In other words, I will check the results. However, it can save a lot of time as AI can process data much faster than I can look up a physical book.



Graham Wall, evangelist, Border Church, VIC

I use AI in my life and ministry in a variety of ways. I use it to edit articles, guide research, explore different interpretations of Scripture, summarise books, and think through situations. Sometimes, I debate Scripture with it and get it to push back on my views so I can test them. I also use it to understand different viewpoints. Primarily, I use AI as a thinking tool, not a replacement for thinking. It can help me consider perspectives I may have missed and organise my ideas more clearly.

Are there potential pitfalls surrounding the use of AI in Christian ministry? Are there any tasks you regard as off-limits for AI?

Eddie Legg, Malaga, WA

I claim no expert status on AI, so I can only speak in generalities. AI is potentially a useful tool for people who understand its inherent risks. From this point of view, it's like a chainsaw. On the other hand, it seems that AI can be very dangerous, and harmful for people who do not keep safeguards in place. Research seems to point to the idea that AIs try to tell a person what they want to hear. In this way, they don't provide a full picture, and reinforce a person's beliefs about themselves or a point of view on scripture. If this is the case, that is worrying for church members who may be manipulated without understanding what is happening to them.

Kate Jennings, Canberra, ACT

I think you need to be careful when it comes to interpreting scripture or trusting it to 'give all the answers' about spiritual matters. However, that is not the nature of what I use it for in my ministry.

David Clark, The Point Church, QLD

AI is not trained using only the Bible, but on whatever documents the developer had available, which predominantly are denominational. For example, search 'how do I become a Christian' in Google: the AI response is very faith-only – Baptism is mentioned down the bottom as something some people do but it is not directly tied to salvation.

Secondly, AI has no discernment, ethical or moral judgement. There are now documented cases, for example in Law, where it cannot distinguish between real case law and fiction. When used to present a case it referred to non-existent case law. Like any tool, it can be put to use for both good and evil purposes. For example, the use to generate a fun picture like a turtle plumber. Contrast this with the evil use of converting photos of women into 'nude' pictures which has made the news recently.

Thirdly, the danger is that it's overused and rather than getting into the Word yourself, you use AI to do the work for you. So, all you get is an answer. A knowledge of scripture will then be required to vet any answer you are given by AI. In contrast, we're told to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly (Colossians 3:16). Paul exhorts Timothy to 'meditate on these things' after instructing to 'give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine' (1 Timothy 4:12–16). We need to use AI where it is helpful and not to neglect the other calling.

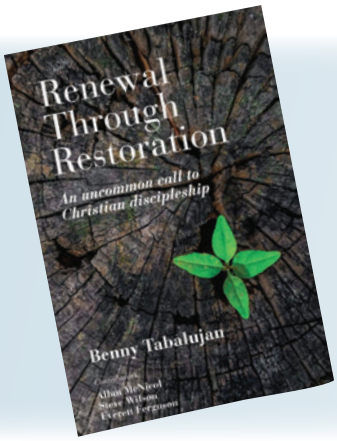
Graham Wall, Border Church, VIC

There's an important distinction between using AI to assist our thinking and allowing it to do our thinking for us. As Christians, particularly preachers and teachers, we must wrestle with the biblical text ourselves. We need to live with the text, be transformed by it, and allow the Holy Spirit to shape us through the process. Preparing a sermon is not simply about producing a message to deliver. It is also an opportunity for God's Word to challenge us, correct us, and change us.

Getting AI to write our sermons or articles without doing the hard work ourselves short-circuits this process. We may end up with something that sounds good, but risk missing the personal growth that comes from engaging deeply with Scripture. Those who make the greatest difference through their teaching are not simply those who communicate information well, but those whose lives have been shaped by the message they teach.

This principle also applies beyond our study and writing. While AI can offer helpful advice, it cannot replace genuine human interaction and counselling. Relying on AI instead of building relationships is a risk Christians must avoid. God calls us to meet together, encourage one another, and help each other grow. Faith and spiritual growth are not meant to happen in isolation.

> As Hebrews 5:14 reminds us, our powers of discernment are trained through practise. Let's apply that principle when using AI. Let it assist our thinking, but never replace our responsibility to think, discern, and grow spiritually. ◇



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