

Glorifying God with Our Technology: Four Questions to Ask

May 26, 2017

by David Schrock

Over the past five weeks our adult Sunday School class has been considering [Discipleship in a Digital Age](#). In one sense, discipleship in any age concerns certain common disciplines in order to become like Christ so that we no longer live to ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:14), but to Christ (Galatians 2:20). If we want to grow into Christ, we must discipline ourselves for godliness (1 Timothy 4:7). But the question remains: In light of our increasing, whirling (digital) technology what additional disciplines might we need to embrace to walk by faith amidst pings, apps, and notifications?

Often, we know that Christ should be our focus and that we become like what we worship (Psalm 115, 135). But as we have discussed, technology pushes back on the user. Apps are designed by programmers to encourage certain behaviors and uses of the technology. We recognize that there are certain beneficial, helpful, and fitting uses of technology that help us in our spiritual walk and in spreading the Gospel. Yet, there are also ways in which our hearts and habits are being reshaped by the devices we hold. So how do we take the principles found in Scripture and apply them to an ever-changing digital age?

[For five weeks, we have given attention to biblical, theological, and practical truths, but now we need to put truth into action.](#) We need to think practically about the way smart phones and television, apps and artificial intelligence impact us, and better how we can use them to the glory of God.

And so, this Sunday we will consider a couple of “case studies,” where we can think about how our technology impacts us and how we can best use technology. We will look at smart phones, the iPhone in particular, and social media, particularly Facebook, to consider how we engage technology with discernment and discipline. If we do not consider such applications, how can we spur one another on towards love and good deeds with our technology, we will by default find ourselves following the patterns given to us by the inventors of the technology.

For those interested in preparing ahead or those who want to the pursue these case studies on their own, consider these four questions from [From the Garden to the City](#), by John Dyer (pp. 180–82). In evaluating our use of technology he asks four diagnostics about any given ‘tool’:

1. **Reflection:** How does this tool reflect God? How does it help me serve God, or cultivate/keep the earth?
2. **Rebellion:** What tendencies does this tool produce in me? How could I misuse this tool? What safeguards do I need to put in place?

3. **Redemption:** What areas of the fall can this tool help me overcome? How can I use this to relieve misery? Proclaim true, goodness, and beauty?
4. **Restoration:** In what ways am I trusting in this device that I should be trusting in God?

If you notice, these four questions loosely follow the four turning points in redemptive history:

1. **Creation** – how creation was made to reflect God
2. **Fall** – how creation rebelled against God
3. **Redemption** – how God is saving creation, namely men and women made in his image
4. **Consummation** – how God will one day restore all things

By answering these four questions, we can begin to consider how any tool is impacting us. By noticing the way any device or platform entices us to stray from God, or how any tool can be used to glorify God we are on our way to think more biblically about the world. And with renewed minds, we can begin to develop patterns and habits to help walk by faith; we can begin to push back and avoid the tendencies that lead us to walk by sight straying from God.

So join us this Sunday for this case study or use these four questions at your next lunch break. They are illuminating and sobering, but they also help us to consider well how to glorify God with all creation, including iPhones and Facebook.

For His Glory and your joy,

Pastors Rod and David S.