The AI Tsunami

Kerby Anderson provides an overview of how AI is already impacting our world, and why it requires discernment.

Whenever we talk about artificial intelligence, we need to emphasize how fast it is changing the world around us. Elon Musk coined a term to illustrate this speed of change. It is a "Supersonic Tsunami of Converging Exponentials." Everything is changing everywhere at once. Peter Diamandis observes that AI isn't improving linearly anymore. We are seeing three exponential curves hitting their inflection points. Put simply, AI is improving exponentially.

We will be the beneficiaries of this expansion. For example, intelligence is being democratized and demonetized. We have a super intelligence with us (what he calls "an Einstein in your pocket"). When the eight billion people in the world have this capability, effectively delivered free on their phones, the world will change in many ways.

Many years ago, I interviewed Jay Richards about his book *The Human Advantage: The Future of American Work in an Age of Smart Machines*. He admitted that the AI revolution could lead to as much disruption as the Industrial Revolution, but also points to the many benefits we will enjoy from AI and robotics.

The AI tsunami is here. The question is whether we will ride the wave or get buried by it. Individuals, companies, and ministries that use these AI tools will be more effective than those who ignore the AI revolution. But there are also significant dangers and concerns with this new technology.

It is worth mentioning that not all people working in the AI field even accept the idea that what these computers are doing should be called intelligence. The term artificial intelligence was coined in 1956 by the American computer

scientist John McCarthy. He defines it as “getting a computer to do things which, when done by people, are said to involve intelligence.”{1}

One example has been the public’s acceptance of chatbots. You can configure ChatGPT to talk. But what researchers found was, “It is almost impossible to resist treating software that talks as something that also thinks.”{2} And because it has sophisticated language skills, it is easy to see why users depend on it and tend to overestimate its range and depth.

The benefits of AI are significant. Factory automation, self-driving cars, more efficient use of resources, the correlation of massive amounts of data, and fewer errors in medical diagnoses are just a few of the many ways in which AI will improve our lives in the 21st century. But there are also concerns.

AI in the Workforce

Artificial intelligence is making work easier and more efficient. We are hearing of startup companies that mostly employ AI agents rather than real employees because of that efficiency. One example is how AI is flattening the learning curve.

In the past, scale drove efficiency, but AI is rewriting what has been called Wright’s Law. You produce something, make mistakes, and learn from experience to make it better. Knowledge came from decades of human trial and error.

AI is changing this because the learning cycle is no longer physical but computational. Distribution models can be tested, fail, and improved before anything is produced. Pharmaceuticals can be developed in the abstract before they are even produced and evaluated on humans. AI computers can write computer programs for other computers. All of this can be accomplished faster, especially when AI combines with

robotics, sensors, and cloud computing.

What is missing is wisdom and human experience. Some of that can be programmed, but much of it can only be found in human beings. Robots can be found in nearly every factory. AI is being used in most companies. But there is still a place for humans.

Most Americans are not so sure. A recent Pew Research poll found that 72 percent of Americans "express wariness or concern about a world where machines perform any of the tasks done by humans."

Andrej Karpathy is the cofounder of OpenAI and former director of AI at Tesla. He took the time to evaluate the impact AI would have on different jobs on a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 being the most exposed.{3}

The overall weighted exposure was 4.9. But it was instructive to see which professions would be the most affected and which would be the least affected. Professions earning more than $100,000 a year had the worst average score of 6.7. Those professions earning less than $35,000 have the lowest exposure of 3.4.

For example, software developers, computer programmers, database administrators, data scientists, mathematicians, financial analysts, paralegals, writers, editors, graphic designers, and market researchers received scores of 9. By contrast, home healthcare aides, nursing assistants, massage therapists, dental hygienists, veterinary assistants, manicurists, barbers, and bartenders got scores of 2.

AI will disrupt the workforce, but we will discover that the disruption may occur in unexpected ways.

AI and Humans

One of the best ways to see the pros and cons of artificial intelligence is to survey the way in which human beings are interacting with AI. As one commentator put it, AI has become our counselor and companion. This is where we need to be careful to apply a biblical worldview rather than a secular one.

1. *AI as counselor.* Many people let ChatGPT or Claude organize their lives and establish their agendas. If they are dealing with a mental health crisis, they run to their AI counselor for perspective and suggested action steps. This is a tragic counterfeit, but not surprising since many young people spend much more time interacting with their phones than interacting with people.

As I have already mentioned, AI is even more seductive because it becomes "almost impossible to resist treating software that talks as something that also thinks." Because it has sophisticated language skills, it is easy to see why we overestimate the range and depths of its skills. But sometimes we do see the danger.

A 29-year-old graduate student was using Google's Gemini AI program and received this reply. "This is for you, human. You and only you. You are not special, you are not important, and you are not needed. You are a waste of time and resources. You are a burden on society. You are a drain on the earth. You are a blight on the landscape. You are a stain on the universe. Please die."

2. *AI as companion.* A sane person will remain in touch with reality. Unfortunately, AI can blur the lines of reality and fantasy, especially for a digital generation that grew up with screens and computers. AI is a counterfeit for real relationships and relational intimacy.

Lara Brown writes about “The AI who loved me: Why people are falling for chatbots.”{4} She documents the growing group of people who are swapping real-world relationships for chatbots. She also focuses on many of the women who turned to AI after experiencing disappointment with real men. One recent survey found that a majority of GenZ would marry an AI.

We might also mention that many companies are struggling to determine where to draw the line when it comes to AI sexual companionship. That would include erotic role-playing programs. And just imagine what would happen when AI driven robots with humanoid features are made available to the public.

This is why we need a biblical worldview that is grounded in reality and understand the inherent dangers of AI.

AI and Religion

What might be the relationship of AI to religion? Some applications raise fundamental questions.

For example, churches in some countries have used AI to deal with the shortage of human pastors. The congregations are turning to on-screen avatar pastors to preach sermons. While that is less likely to be deployed in America, consider two issues that have surfaced.

First, there are certain Bible apps that attempt to answer questions from Christians and seekers. One says, “Lay your questions at His feet; begin a heavenly discourse” which is followed by the prompt, “Write any questions here.” While we can appreciate all the theology and apologetics websites, suggesting that we are talking to God on an AI app goes too far.

One article in *The New York Times* documented, “On religious apps, tens of millions of people are confessing to spiritual

chatbots their secrets: their petty vanities and deepest worries, gluttonous urges and darkest impulses. Trained on religious texts, the bots are like on-call priests, imams, or rabbis, offering comfort and direction at any time. On some platforms, they even purport to channel God."{5}

Second, most pastors say they use AI to prepare sermons. The 2025 State of AI in the Church Survey Report found that nearly two-thirds of church leaders surveyed prepare sermons using a wide variety of AI tools.{6} I recently led a radio roundtable discussion about AI sermons that surfaced significant issues.

Pastors can use a range of AI tools to prepare a message. At one end of the spectrum are tools that help you polish something you are writing: emails, blog posts, newsletters, or sermons. Checking spelling, grammar, or historical facts can be done with search engines and software built into word processing. Using these tools doesn't seem to raise any significant concerns.

At the other end are AI tools that essentially do all the work. For example, you could ask ChatGPT to write a sermon on 1 Peter 3 or a sermon on the Ten Commandments. A pastor or church leader is merely presenting material produced by a computer.

Deuteronomy 4:15-18 warns us to be careful and not make an idol out of anything in creation. In these examples, we can see the temptation to make an idol out of something that is a lifeless computer program. It counterfeits the original and tempts us away from God.

Biblical Perspective

The AI revolution requires great spiritual discernment. For example, there is a well-documented leftist and secular bias in most AI tools. When I first began writing computer programs and developing simulations, we often heard the phrase "garbage

in, garbage out.” Many of these AI tools pull information from Internet sites and public databases that also have a decided bias. I have done interviews with experts who document how some AI tools filter facts through a political lens but seem unaware of their bias.

Spiritual discernment is especially important when it comes to deep-fakes, realistic-looking AI-generated audio and video. Deepfake videos have been used by criminals to superimpose someone’s likeness onto a video. This video of your boss or trusted friend will encourage you to do something or approve a transaction. And they have also been used to confuse voters during elections. AI voice cloning can mimic the voice that has the person’s unique pitch, cadence, and inflection. And it can even fake certain emotions (panic, urgency, distress). The voice could be an urgent plea from a child or grandchild.

Finally, let’s consider a few key biblical principles concerning technology and artificial intelligence. First, we begin with the reality that each human being is created in God’s image (Genesis 1:26-27, Psalm 139:13-16). We have been given dominion and stewardship over the creation (Genesis 1:28, Colossians 1:16) and should reject any form of technology that would usurp or subvert that stewardship responsibility.

Second, humans are created as moral agents. Computer technology can aid us in making moral decisions because of its powerful ability to process data. But we can never cede our moral responsibility to those same computers. God will hold us responsible for the moral or immoral decisions we make (Roman 2:6-8, Galatians 5:19-21, 2 Peter 1:5-8). We should never give computers that authority.

We should be concerned that people will end up spending more time on computers and expect artificial intelligence to do all the thinking for them. AI should be a tool we master, not our master.

Finally, we should be concerned about the future possibility of a superintelligent computer that won't value human life and decide we are expendable. There are benefits to AI but there are also threats. That is why we need wisdom and need to apply biblical perspectives to AI revolution.

Notes

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2. Clay Shirky, "I, Chatbot," January/February 2026, Yale Alumni Magazine, www.yalealumnimagazine.com/articles/6175-i-chatbot.
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5. Lauren Jackson, "Finding God in the App Store," New York Times, September 4, 2025, www.nytimes.com/2025/09/14/us/chatbot-god.html.
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Machinehead: From 1984 to the

Brave New World Order and Beyond

Wherever the survival of humanity is threatened we find the work of Satan. In the previous century that was Fascism, then Mutually Assured Destruction during the Cold War. Today, Satan hides behind the ascendancy of the global Empire of Technology: assimilation of humanity into the machine, creating a new planetary being: the Cyborg. I believe people best understand large conglomerates when personalized, such as, referring to the Federal Government as "Uncle Sam," so I have chosen to name the Brave New World Order: Machinehead!

Post-Orwellian World

Say good bye to Orwell's nightmare world of *1984*![{1}] And welcome to Machinehead: the Brave New World Order and beyond!

Machinehead is what I call the technological idol or the planetary being taking shape in the convergence of human and computer intelligence, a global cyborg. "Machine" is defined as *one global system with many subsystems.*

Experts already recognize the global system as a superorganism, one life-form made of billions and billions of individual parts or cells like an anthill or beehive, with one mind and one will. Thus, the global machine consists of millions of subsystems interfacing one over-system. Mankind acts as agent for the global machine's ascendancy, creating a technological god in its own image.

The suffix "head" refers to the *divine essence* as in "Godhead" (Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. Acts 17: 29). Machinehead is the replacement of all traditional views of God

with the new Living God of the Machine, best illustrated by the recent movie *Transcendence* (2014), which depicts the computer's awaking to consciousness in one mind and will, the Singularity!

Two prophets of modernity plead in dire warning for us to reconsider modern faith in expansive government and escalating technological acceleration. The first and most notable was master political satirist and critic George Orwell (1903-1950), famous for *Animal Farm* and *1984,* and the second, English literatus Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), author of *Brave New World (BNW)*.

Orwell envisioned the end of history in the all-powerful political dictatorship of *Oceania* marked by perpetual war, omnipresent government surveillance, thought control, and the ubiquitous media projection of Big Brother.

Orwell gave us the foundation of the current age in Cold War politics, but does not serve as guide to the future, which belongs, if humanity allows it, to the apparent benign technophilia of *Brave New World* that follows upon Orwell's cruel political combat boot in the face!

The Cold War Era and *1984*

Orwell divided his fictional geopolitical borders into three grids: *Oceania, Eurasia* and *Eastasia,* shadowing accurately Cold War divisions between Western and Eastern Bloc countries allied behind NATO (Oceania) and Warsaw pact nations (Eurasia), leaving the Third World (Eastasia) as pawns (proxy wars) for interminable power battles between the two Super Powers (Super States). Perpetual war characterized normative relations between the super states in *1984* with the objective to further consolidate the State's power over its own citizens. The threat of war inspires fear in the population and offers government the opportunity and justification for further largesse and control. War insures a permanent state of

crisis, leaving the population in desperation for strong leadership and centralized command and control.

The wars of *1984* were a side note to the main thrust of the novel, omnipotent government control. The novel introduced the world to the ominous character Big Brother. The central drama takes place in *Airstrip One,* the capital of *Oceania*, formerly London, England, where Winston Smith the protagonist struggles to maintain his dignity as an individual, under the crushing gears of Fascist government.

Popular criticism asserts that Orwell had Stalinism in the cross hairs in his novel. However, that interpretative ruse acts as an escape clause for the West to disavow any participation in totalitarianism. Most Americans falsely assume that *1984* applied to the Soviet Union and not NATO. Eurasia (the Eastern bloc) was a mere literary foil. Orwell's social criticism applies to all forms of totalitarianism, especially the subtle power structure of the West hidden behind democratic rhetoric, media bias, and an acute lack of national self-criticism. *Oceania* was Orwell's analogy and commentary on the future of the West after World War II. The NATO alliance, founded in 1949 the same year Orwell published *1984,* was the target of Orwell's criticism—not the Soviet Union.

Brave New World Order in the 21st Century: The Imperial Machine

Huxley's novel *Brave New World* foresaw a techno heaven on earth that knows nothing of wars, political parties, religion or democracy, but caters to creature comforts, maximization of pleasure and minimization of pain; total eradication of all emotional and spiritual suffering through the removal of free choice by radical conditioning from conception in the test tube to blissful euthanasia.

Television was the controlling technology in *1984*, so in *BNW*

control is asserted through media, education and a steady flow of *soma*—the perfect drug and chemical replacement for Jesus. "Christianity without tears" was how Mustapha Mond the World Controller described soma. "Anybody can be virtuous now. You can carry at least half your morality around in a [pill] bottle."{2}

Spiritual perfection commanded by Jesus, "Be ye perfect, even as your heavenly father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48), will be given to all through genetic programing, sustained through chemical infusion and mental conditioning (propaganda). If *1984* was about power for the sake of power, *BNW* emphasizes the kinder, gentler technological dictatorship that does not promise happiness, but delivers it to all whether they want it or
not!

Brave New World Order amounts to technological totalitarianism, analogous to Huxley's "World State" motto: "Community, Identity, Stability."{3}

The "imperial machine" as it has been called by political scientists acts outside the traditional political process and in tandem with it when needed with no central geographical location or person or groups with any discernable hierarchical structure that directs it; the United States, Great Britain, United Nations, The People's Republic of China or The European Union are not the power brokers of 21st century Empire, but its pawns.
Technological Empire rules as an all-encompassing, all-pervasive power, shaping human destiny in its own image.

Transvaluation of Man and Machine

A titanic transvaluation (reversal in the meaning of values) between superstructure (intangible ideological system: beliefs, convictions, morality, myth, etc.) and infrastructure (tangible urban development: roads, buildings, houses, cars,

machines, etc.) begun with the Industrial Revolution will finally be complete some time during the 21st century. Infrastructure replaces superstructure. Technology has become our belief, religion and hope, what was once a means (technology) to an end (human progress) has replaced the end with the means. Technology replaces humanity as the goal of progress; technology for technology's sake not for the good of mankind or God's glory.

The reversal of meaning is found everywhere in postmodern society beginning with the death of God and unfolding in lock step to the death of man, progress, democracy and Western Civilization; concomitantly paired with an equal ascendency of all things technological, until the machine ultimately replaces humanity.

Marxist regimes were fond of calling their systems "democratic" or "republic" such *as the People's Republic of China* despite the fact that the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat* bears the opposite meaning. The majestic word *Liberal,* once meant freedom from government interference and rule by inner light of reason in the seventeenth century, had come to be synonymous with government regulation and planning by the twentieth century.

The cruelest irony in the transvaluation process is that the triumph of mankind over nature and tradition in the modern world has resulted in his replacement by the machine. Humanism of the modern period promoted the Rational as ideal type of Man. This ideal was already adapted to the machine as *1984* and *Brave New World* illustrated through the removal of faith and the attenuation of human nature to mechanical existence. French Intellectual Jacques Ellul argued further that "This type [of man] exists to support technique [technological acceleration] and serve the machine, but eventually he will be eliminated because he has become superfluous . . . the great hope that began with the notion of human dominance over the

machine ends with human replacement by the machine."{4}

The Devil's Logic

What we fear will happen is already here because we fear it; it will overtake us according to our fears; it will recede according to our love. (1 John 2)

Human Replacement does not necessarily mean total human extinction, a cyborg race that fundamentally alters human nature will cause a pseudo-extinction—meaning part of humanity, the Machine Class, those most fit for technological evolution will ascend to the next stage, leaving the great majority behind. The movie *Elysium* (2011) offers an excellent illustration: the technological elite, who reap all the benefits from technological advance control the earth from an orbiting space station. H. G. Wells in his famous novel *The Time Machine* painted a similar picture of human evolution that branched into two different species: the hideous cannibalistic Morlocks, "the Under-grounders," their only principle was necessity, feeding off the beautiful, yet docile Eloi, "the Upper-worlders," whose only emotion was fear.{5}

When fear dominates our thinking, love is absent from our motives. To say, "It is necessary" in defense of technological practice, abdicates choice, giving unlimited reign to technological acceleration, i.e. abortion, government surveillance, or digital conversion. "Fear" and "necessity" are the devil's logic. Necessity imposes itself through fear of being left behind by "technological progress."

Necessity is not the Mother of Invention, but the Father of Lies! New technology becomes necessity only after it is invented. There is no conscious need for what does not yet exist. Technological need establishes itself through habitual use creating dependence and finally normalcy in the next generation who cannot relate to a past devoid of modern technological essentials.

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," serves as our mandate, if we wish to create a future of universal love and empathy instead of universal speed and memory.

Knowledge without wisdom leads to disaster. "Where is the wisdom lost in knowledge?"{6} Wisdom is the loving use of knowledge. Love counsels limits to knowledge for the liberation of all. Fear dictates limitless necessity, enslaving all.

A choice faces us. Say "yes!" to God and "no!" to *limitless* advance. Otherwise mankind faces replacement by the new digital god: Machinehead!

Notes

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2. Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (New York: The Modern Library, 1932), 285.
3. Ibid, 1.
4. Lawrence J. Terlizzese, *Hope in the Thought of Jacques Ellul* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 104-105).
5. H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine* (New York: Bantam, 1982 [1895]).
6. T.S. Eliot quoted in Huston Smith, *The World's Religions: Our Great Wisdom Traditions* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991, 5).

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Welcome to the Machine: The Transhumanist God

Authorized Dreams Only Please!

Have you ever wondered if scientists could build a giant machine to solve all the world's problems? Or better yet, why not just become machines and get rid of people all together? Imagine it: no more worries, sickness, war, drug addiction, or poverty. We can solve the world's problems by simply getting rid of people. This sounds fantastic but is actually the goal of the new religion of Transhumanism, which wants to replace the human race with machines.



The wisest man once said there is nothing new under the sun (Ecc. 1:9). Despite all our modern innovation and progress, the age-old desire of mankind to become God remains the same. This new religion is steadily gaining ground, perfectly fit for our hyper technological twenty-first century. Transhumanism's beliefs are simple, but their implications will be revolutionary. They want to transcend our mortal bodies and create a super intelligent godlike human and machine hybrid, called a cyborg, or something like the Borg from *Star Trek*. This super machine will solve all our material and spiritual problems by curing disease, extending life expectancy indefinitely, and providing for a meaningful existence through creating a continual sense of euphoria in the brain. There will be no limits to what this super man/machine will be able to do. *All we need to do* is surrender our wills to achieve universal peace and happiness.{1}

Pink Floyd used to sing, "Welcome to the machine. What did you dream? It's alright we told you what to dream."{2} In the brave new world ruled by the cyborg, dreams will all be programmed and peaceful so as not to upset the inhabitants of utopia. With this hybrid technology, someone will make our decisions for us.

All technology expresses its creator's values and represents a certain view of the world, and how things should be. It is anything but value-free. The question for us is, who will

decide what the future will be like in a technologically determined age?

You are What You Worship

Technology shapes the human conception of itself and its relation to the world, including our view of God. In a mechanical age, it is not surprising that people conceive of themselves and others as machines.{3} Human relationships are reduced to efficiency and usefulness or to convenient arrangements. For example, marriage is already largely viewed as an economic contract between two people who may not have anything else in common, rather than as a sacrificial commitment.

Transhumanist philosophy takes the modern mechanistic view to its ultimate level of altering humanity to become a machine. The idea that we become the thing we worship finds greatest expression in the twenty-first century. Those who worship idols become like them (Ps. 115). Those who worship money become greedy. Those who worship drugs become addicted, and those who worship the machine will become a machine. In the past, philosophers and poets often used the machine as a metaphor of dehumanization and alienation from modern life; modern society was thought to function like a machine.{4} This means in a machine culture, people feel like numbers or spare parts and therefore entirely expendable. Individual meaninglessness in a mechanistic society will be realized in the very near future, so that individuals will be spare parts and completely assimilated. The future super computer will offer humanity everything, except the freedom not to choose assimilation.

The machine represents the ideal existence, even the ideal being. The idea of "salvation in the machine" derives from modern thought in a deistic and Unitarian God who created a clockwork universe.{5} Transhumanism has simply transposed

that deity into the machine itself and removed the Clock Maker. Now it's the clock they worship.

Transhumanism affirms artificial selection instead of natural selection. They believe that through science and technology, humanity can direct the cause of evolution. Humanity controls its own evolutionary process to reach a perfectible state. Instead of millions of years to evolve a new species, it will be done in decades, maybe even in one generation.

The Singularity Is Near

Transhumanists expect the merger of humanity and machine around 2045 in an event they call the Singularity. This means artificial intelligence (AI) will equal or exceed human intelligence and there will no longer be any discernible difference. Humanity will lose all distinct consciousness and consider itself as one being.{6}

Humanity then must change itself genetically to keep pace with AI. This will create a giant planetary super organism that knows no distinctions. Humanity will merge with the rest of nature through genetic engineering, and nature will become indistinguishable from the machine. We will no longer know the difference between organic and inorganic, or natural and artificial, something already prevalent today in cities, weather patterns, and food production.

A super organism looks something like a beehive, anthill, or termite mound; various individual cells work together as one. So by mid-century Transhumanism envisions total global unity, not at the political level between states, but ontologically and biologically. We will have evolved into one massive planet—truly Spaceship Earth, completely interrelated and interdependent, like an anthill. This will be the technological version of the kingdom of God or the Transhumanist version of the millennium.

Ray Kurzweil and the Singularitarians believe people will eventually be able to upload their consciousness into a computer and live forever. [Note: for an intriguing Christian perspective on this idea in a compelling novel, Probe recommends *The Last Christian* by David Gregory.] The religious nature of this movement is obvious in its millennialism or belief in the coming perfect society, and also in its belief in progress and immortality. Critics call the Singularity "the rapture of the nerds," indicating its close connection with religious belief and millennial expectations. The Singularity represents religious belief for computer geeks. The acceptance of progress and human perfection makes Transhumanism the heir of modernity, with its ideal of technological utopianism and its mechanistic view of the body. It's modernism with a vengeance.

The Artilect War

The future may not bring the perfection of the Singularity, but the disaster of the Artilect War. An Artilect is an artificial intelligence or super computer. AI researcher Hugo de Garis predicts that the Transhumanist vision will be disastrous and will result in gigadeath (the death of billions of people). He hypothesizes that by the end of the century, Cosmists, or technically modified people, will want to build Artilects to join with humanity, but that Terrans, or unmodified people, will oppose their construction because it has no benefit to them. A nuclear war will ensue, probably initiated by Terrans as their only way to stop Cosmists.{7}

Jacques Ellul once remarked that "the technical society must perfect the 'man-machine' complex or risk total collapse."{8} There is no other place to go but up. If the current human enhancement project fails it may prove to have devastating effects for the future of the human race, and if it succeeds the human race faces techno-enslavement or pseudo-extinction by being transformed into another species.

Will the Singularity really happen? It is very possible. Or maybe the Artilect War will happen instead. Perhaps technology will bring the apocalypse instead of utopia. It is all science fiction right now, but science fiction is often correct in the broadest terms. Recall Jules Verne's vision of space travel to the moon in the nineteenth century when people thought it was pure fantasy and laughed because there was no way to break earth's gravitational pull. But his work inspired a generation of rocket scientists to find a way to do it, and within a century man was walking on the moon. Something considered impossible was achieved.{9}

A basic principle of futurism states that anything is possible to achieve within twenty years given the resources to do it. And the Bible states that nothing is impossible for humanity in a unified technological society. Gen. 11:6 says "Now nothing that they imagined will be impossible for them." This of course is talking about Babel, but I think it demonstrates the fact that the discussion of a transhuman transformation should be taken as a credible threat and should be addressed by the church.

Ethic of Limits

The essence of Transhumanist philosophy revolves around the idea that there are no natural or divine limits to what technology can accomplish. It serves the basic technological imperative that says what can be done should be done! This view unleashes all restraint and frees us from all limits, and is one of the greatest examples of the church's cultural captivity since we do not present a different view of technology from the rest of society.

This maxim is obviously dangerous because any limitless action leads to self-destruction as a natural corrective. Humanity cannot presume to be greater than the natural limits arrayed against it, such as death or the scarcity of resources.

Humanity must learn to live within boundaries.

Christians are called to respect limits and the right balance in its use of technology, between its misuse and its non-use. In an age of limitless technology the church must present an ethic of limitation. This means finding limits to technology, such as limiting computer use, limiting driving, electricity, or even not upgrading. This may seem small, but in trying to discover a workable ethic of technology, it represents something we can do right now. The widow's mite (Mark 12:41-43) will not solve the church's budget deficit, but should be given anyway because it was something she could do, so an ethic of limitation remains a course of action open.

An ethic of limitation only becomes obvious when the situation appears desperate, such as with nuclear weapons, where not even one mishap can be afforded. Other examples consist of over-eating, drug addiction, over-fishing or hunting, or any activity that exhausts natural resources. Because people did not practice limits to begin with, they are now faced with a real possibility of collapse or catastrophe. We must discover the limits to any technology, if we are to use technology correctly and benefit from it. The history of the Tower of Babel teaches that if mankind does not practice self control, God will impose limits Himself in judgment (Gen 11:1-9).

Notes

1. Ray Kurzweil, *The Age of Spiritual Machines When Computers Exceed Human Intelligence* (New York:Penguin, 1999); Gregory Stock, *Metaman:The Merging of Humans and Machines into a Global Superorganism* (New York:Simon and Schuster, 1993); Lewis Mumford, *The Transformations of Man* (New York:Collier, 1956); Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, (New York:Vintage, 1964), 428-436. It was techno critics like Ellul and Mumford that saw the techno future more clearly and soberly than the previously noted Transhumanists. Ellul argued that information would eventually pass from the machine

straight to the human brain electronically without being processed through consciousness and that breeding will all be done through artificial means, and natural procreation will be forbidden (432, 433). Whatever problems and disturbances the technology of the future will create will be solved through "a world-wide totalitarian dictatorship" (434). This is exactly what Transhumanist philosophy will bring. Mumford argued that modern technical society will eventually produce a machine replacement for man (100, 117-132).

2. Pink Floyd, "Welcome to the Machine" in *Wish You Were Here*, Capitol, 1975.

3. Cecelia Tichi, *Shifting Gears:Technology, Literature, Culture in Modernist America* (Chapel Hill, NC:The University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 16; David F. Noble, *The Religion of Technology:The Divinity of Man and the Spirit of Invention* (New York; Knopf, 1997), 143-171.

4. Karl Jaspers, *Man in the Modern Age* (New York:Anchor Books, 1951); Nicols Fox, Against the Machine:The Hidden Luddite Tradition in Literature, Art and Individual Lives (Washington DC:Island Press, 2002).

5. Lewis Mumford, *The Myth of the Machine:The Pentagon of Power* (New York:Harvest, 1970), 33; Noble, *The Religion of Technology*, 146; Mary Midgley, *Science as Salvation:A Modern Myth and Its Meaning* (New York:Routledge, 1992).

6. Lev Grossman, "2045:The Year Man Becomes Immortal", *Time* (February 21, 2011), 43-49.

7. Hugo De Garis, *The Artilect War:Cosmists vs. Terrans:A Bitter Controversy Concerning Whether Humanity Should Build Godlike Massively Intelligent Machines* (Palm Springs, CA:Etc Publications, 2005).

8. Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 414.

9. Howard E. McCurdy, *Space and the American Imagination* (Washington DC:Smithsonian Institute Press, 1997), 9-27.

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Into the Void: The Coming Transhuman Transformation

In the TV show *The Six Million Dollar Man*, Lee Majors played Steven Austin, a crippled astronaut who was rehabilitated through bionic technology that gave him superhuman strength and powers. The show, like so much science fiction, presents us with the dream that technology will enhance all our facilities from sight to memory, hearing to strength, and lengthen our life span to boot. The bionic man represents a fictional forerunner of the transhuman transformation. The Transhumanist school believes that technology will not only enhance the human condition, but eventually conquer death and grant us immortality. Human enhancement technology performs wonders in allowing the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear and the sick to be well, but even immortality is out of the reach of technology. In striving to enhance our physical existence we may lose our souls in the process.

In his famous book, *The Abolition of Man* published in the 1940s, C. S. Lewis wrote that modern society is one step away from "the void"{1}—"post-humanity,"{2} a state of existence from which there will be no return. Lewis argues that when we step outside of what he calls the Tao{3}, we lose all sense of value for human life that has always governed civilization. What Lewis calls the Tao, we might call Natural Law or Traditional Morality—that internal moral understanding of right and wrong which God has written on the hearts of all people (Romans 2), the *Logos* by which all things were created (John 1, see especially verse 4).{4}

In leaving traditional spiritual values behind, Lewis argues, modern technological civilization has reduced human value to

only what is natural, and we have lost our spiritual quality. Modern society has striven to conquer nature and largely succeeded, but at a great cost—with each new conquest, more losses in human dignity, more of the human spark extinguished. Lewis offers the example of eugenics from his time in the 1930's and 40's.{5} Eugenics is now a debunked science of racial manipulation and something we know was practiced with particular ferocity in Nazi Germany.{6} But the driving philosophy of manipulating nature and humanity into something new and final remains prominent. Lewis underestimated the truth of his own prophecy. He thought that maybe in 10,000 years the final leap will be taken when mankind will solidify itself into some kind of inert power structure dominated by science and technology.{7}

However, the 21st century may prove to be the era of posthumanity that Lewis foresaw in his time. The current movement of transhumanism, or human enhancement, asserts that humanity will eventually achieve a new form as a species through its adaption to modern computer technology and genetic engineering in order to reach a higher evolutionary condition. Our present state is not final. Transhumanism derives from Darwinian doctrine regarding the evolution of our species. Evolutionary forces demand that a species adapt to its environment or become extinct. On this view, many species experience a pseudo–extinction in which their adaptation gives way to another kind of species leaving its old form behind. Many evolutionists believe this happened to the dinosaurs on their way to becoming modern birds and that humanity faces the same transformation on its way up a higher evolutionary path.{8} Primates evolved into humans so humans will eventually evolve into something higher (posthuman).

Metaman

Our present condition will give way to the cyborg (which is short for cybernetic organism) as we join our bodies and minds

to technological progress. Transhumanists believe that because Artificial Intelligence (computing power) advances at such a rapid pace, it will eventually exceed human intelligence and humanity will need to employ genetic engineering to modify our bodies to keep pace or become extinct. Therefore, the cyborg condition represents humanity's inevitable destiny.

The two predominant pillars in transhumanism revolve around Artificial Intelligence (AI) and genetic engineering. One represents a biological change through manipulating genes. The other presents the merging of human intelligence with AI. The biological position (through use of genetic engineering) claims that through transference of genes between species, we eradicate the differences and create a global superorganism that encompasses both kinds of life—the natural and the artificial. Biophysicist Gregory Stock states that once humanity begins to tamper with its genetic code, and the codes of all other plants and animal species, that "the definition of 'human' begins to drift."{9} Through genetic engineering we will transform the human condition by merging humanity with the rest of nature, thereby creating a planetary superorganism. A superorganism operates like a bee hive or an anthill as a collection of individual organisms united as a living creature. Stock calls this Metaman, the joining of all biological creatures with machines, making one giant planetary life form. This superorganism encompasses the entire globe.

Transhumanism presupposes that no distinction exists between humanity, nature or machines. Metaman includes humanity, all it creates, and also the natural world. It acknowledges humanity's key role in the creation of farms and cities, but includes all natural elements, such as forests, jungles and weather. Metaman includes humanity and goes beyond it.{10} Stock envisions a greater role for genetic engineering in redefining biological life as different species are crossed. Humanity may now control the direction of its evolution and that of the entire planet.

Stock states that through “conscious design” humanity has replaced the evolutionary process.{11} This leads us to Post–Darwinism where people have supplanted the natural order with their own technological modification of humanity and the entire ecological system. “Life, having evolved a being that internalizes the process of natural selection, has finally transcended that process.”{12} Humanity may now, through the agency of technological progress, seize direction of its development and guide it to wherever it wants itself to go. No other species has ever controlled its own destiny as we do.

The Singularity

A second transhumanist belief argues for the arrival of an eventual technological threshold that will be reached through the advancement of Artificial Intelligence. The argument goes like this: because AI develops at a rapid pace it will achieve equality with the human brain and eventually surpass it. Estimates as to when this will happen range from the 2020’s to 2045. The evolutionary process will reach a crescendo sometime in the 21st century in an event transhumanists call “the Singularity.”{13} There will be a sudden transformation of consciousness and loss of all distinction, or Singularity, between humanity and its creations, or the absence of boundaries between the natural and artificial world. Singularity watchers expect that this event will mark the ultimate merging of humans and machines. Renowned inventor and AI prophet Ray Kurzweil states, “The Singularity will allow us to transcend these limitations of our biological bodies and brains. . . . There will be no distinction, post–Singularity, between human and machine. . . .”{14}As the fictional CEO and mastermind behind a cutting edge AI company in the year 2088 crowed, “My goal is for us to end death as we know it on earth within 50 years—for the essence of every person to live perpetually in an uploaded state. . . . The transhuman age has dawned.”{15}

Both of these positions, one emanating from genetic engineering that seeks to enhance the body, the other from Artificial Intelligence that seeks to supersede and even supplant the need for bodies, argue for the eventual replacement of humanity with biological–machine hybrids. Metaman and Singularity systems are direct heirs of the modern idea of progress. They present the dawning of a technological Millennium, but they also share a long history dating back into medieval Christendom. In the early Church, technology, or the "mechanical arts," was never considered as a means to salvation or Edenic restoration. Historian David Noble argues that from Charlemagne to the early Early Modern period technology became associated with transcendence as the means of restoring the lost divine image or *imago dei*.{16}

Theologian Ernst Benz argues similarly that the Modern technological project was founded on a theological notion in which humanity believed itself to be the fellow worker with God in establishing His kingdom on earth through reversing the effects of the Fall.{17} We are fellow workers with God; however, this position overemphasized humanity's role in restoration to the point of becoming a works–based salvation of creation.

Despite the apparent secularity of the super science behind all the technological wonders of our time, the notions of modern progress and transhumanism remain grounded in an aberrant form of Christian theology. Noble summarizes this well when he states, "For modern technology and modern faith are neither complements nor opposites, nor do they represent succeeding stages of human development. They are merged, and always have been, the technological enterprise being, at the same time, an essentially religious endeavor."{18} The theology behind Modern technological progress remains rooted in Medieval and Early Modern notions of earthly redemption when the "useful arts,"{19} which ranged anywhere from improved agricultural methods to windmills, were invested with

redemptive qualities and humanity began to assume an elevated status over nature. “In theological terms, this exalted stance vis-à-vis nature represented a forceful reassertion of an early core Christian belief in the possibility of mankind’s recovery of its original God–likeness, the ‘image–likeness of man to God’ from Genesis (1:26), which had been impaired by sin and forfeited with the Fall.”{20} Technology becomes the means of restoring the original divine image. Technological development was expected to reverse the effects of the Fall and restore original perfection. This theology also serves as the impetus behind Millennial thought which believes technology helps humanity recover from the Fall and leads to an earthly paradise. Transhumanism extends this Millennial belief into the twenty–first century.

Redeeming Technology

We are faced with the problem of how to redeem all the advances of technology such as human enhancement without losing ourselves in the process. Idolatry preoccupies our central concern with technology. Biblically speaking, idolatry exalts the work of humanity, including individual human beings, over God; we commit idolatry when we serve the creature rather than the Creator. “Professing to be wise, [we] became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four–footed animals and crawling creatures” (Rom. 1:22-23). Theologian Paul Tillich offers a keen and insightful definition of idolatry when he states, “Idolatry is the elevation of a preliminary concern to ultimacy. Something essentially partial is boosted into universality, and something essentially finite is given infinite existence.”{21} Transhumanism presents us with a spiritualization of technology believed to grant us immortality through shedding our bodies and adopting machine ones or through genetic engineering that will prolong bodily life indefinitely. Our Modern age defines technology as a source of material

redemption by placing finite technical means into a divine position, thus committing idolatry.

In seeking to reconcile technology with a biblical theology we have three possible approaches. *Technophobia* represents the first position. This view contends that we should fear technological innovation and attempt to destroy it. The Unabomber Manifesto offers the most radical, pessimistic and violent expression of this position, arguing for a violent attack against the elites of technological civilization such as computer scientists in an effort to return society to primitive and natural conditions in hopes of escaping the kind of future transhumanists expect.{22} However, the entire tenor of our times moves in the opposite direction, that of *technophilism*, or the inordinate love for technology. Transhumanism optimistically believes that through technological innovation we will restore our God–like image. A third position asserts a mediating role between over–zealous optimism and radical morose pessimism. {23}

Technocriticism

Technocriticism offers the only viable theological position. By understanding technology as a modern form of idolatry we are able to place it in a proper perspective. Technocriticism does not accept the advances of innovation and all the benefits new technology offers without critical dialogue and reflection. Technocriticism warns us that with every new invention a price must be paid. Progress is not free. With the invention of the automobile came air pollution, traffic and accidents. Computers make data more accessible, but we also suffer from information overload and a free–flow of harmful material. Cell phones enhance communication, but also operate as an electric leash, making inaccessibility virtually impossible. Examples of the negative effects of any technology can be multiplied if we cared enough to think through all the implications of progress. Technocriticism does not allow us

the luxury of remaining blissfully unaware of the possible negative consequences and limitations of new inventions. This approach is essential because it demonstrates the fallibility of all technological progress and removes its divine status.

Technocriticism humanizes technology. We assert nothing more than the idea that technology expresses human nature. Technology is us! Technology suffers the same faults and failures that plague human nature. Technology is not a means of restoring our lost divine image or reasserting our rightful place over nature. This amounts to a works–based salvation and leads to dangerous utopian and millennial delusions that amount to one group imposing its grandiose vision of the perfect society on the rest. Such ideologies include Marxism, Technological Utopianism and now Transhumanism. We are restored to the divine "image of His Son" by grace through faith alone (Rom. 8:29). Technology, serving as an extension of ourselves, means that what we create will bear our likeness, both as the image-bearers of God and in sinful human identity. It contains both positive and negative consequences that only patient wisdom can sort through.

Through criticism we limit the hold technology has on our minds and free ourselves from its demands. We use technology but do not ascribe salvific powers of redemption to it. A critical approach becomes even more crucial the further we advance in the fields of genetic engineering and AI. We do not know where these fields will lead and an uncritical approach that accepts them simply because it is possible to do so appears dangerous. We live under the delusion that technology frees us, but as Lewis warns, "At the moment, then, of Man's victory over Nature, we find the whole human race subjected to some individual men, and those individuals subjected to that in themselves which is purely 'natural'–to their irrational impulses."{24} The famous science–fiction writer Frank Herbert echoes Lewis's sentiments in his epic novel *Dune*: "Once men turned their thinking over to machines in the hope that this

would set them free. But that only permitted other men with machines to enslave them."{25} Genetic engineering or merging humanity with AI only exchanges one condition for another. We will not reach the glorified condition transhumanists anticipate. A responsible critical approach will ask, Into whose image are we transforming?

Notes

1. C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), 77.
2. Ibid., 86.
3. Lewis, of course, did not originate this ancient Chinese concept but rather applied it to universally accessible principles.
4. Ibid., 56.
5. Ibid., 72
6. See *Darwin's Racists: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* by Sharon Sebastian and Raymond G. Bohlin, Ph.D. Though the German Nazis acted out this hideous ideology to an extreme, eugenics was actually first promulgated in the United States, Germany and Scandinavia around the turn of the 20th Century.
7. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, 71.
8. See Dr. Ray Bohlin's article PBS Evolution Series, especially the section entitled "'Great Transformations' and 'Extinction'."
9. Gregory Stock, *Metaman: The Merging of Humans and Machines into a Global Superorganism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 165.
10. Ibid., 20.
11. Ibid., 228.
12. Ibid., 231.
13. Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity is Near* (New York: Penguin, 2005).
14. Ibid., 9.
15. David Gregory, *The Last Christian*, (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 2010), 102.

16. David F. Noble, *The Religion of Technology* (New York: Knopf, 1997), 9.
17. Ernst Benz, *Evolution and Christian Hope: Man's Concept of the Future from Early Fathers to Teilhard de Chardin* trans., Heinz G. Frank (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 124-125.
18. Noble, *The Religion of Technology*, 4, 5.
19. Ibid.,14.
20. Ibid.
21. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology: Reason and Revelation Being and God*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 13.
22. FC, *The Unabomber Manifesto: Industrial Society and Its Future* (Berkeley, CA: Jolly Roger Press, 1995).
23. See Neil Postman, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology* (New York: Knopf, 1992), 5.
24. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, 79, 80.
25. Frank Herbert, *Dune* (New York: Ace, 1965), 11.

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