

Homebuilder's

Making Marriage Work in a Broken World

Lesson 14: Part 1 Technology and the Christian Life

Text: Genesis 1:26-28

The story has been told of two young fish swimming along when they met an older one. That older fish nodded at them and asked, "How's the water?" As they swam away, one turned to the other to ask "What's water?" And in much the same way, technology has become so integral and essential a part of our lives that we may have stopped noticing it.

- I. What is technology?
 - A. Technology is "applied science".
 1. God gave Adam and Eve what is called the Creation Mandate. (Genesis 1:28)
 - a. This mandate included the ideas of "subduing" and having "dominion" over the earth.
 - b. After the fall, this mandate became much more difficult.
 - c. The earth actively fights against us.
 - d. There are thorns and thistles—everywhere we turn we find that sin has corrupted the earth.
 - e. One way that people have learned to "subdue" the earth is through the use of technology.
 - f. Something does not have to be "digital" to be technology.
 2. Common grace.
 - a. Even non-believers have great capacity to develop new technologies.
 3. Technological advancement began very quickly after the fall. (Genesis 4:20-22)
 - B. Technology "amplifies power".
 1. Technology does things for us that we cannot otherwise do for ourselves.
 - C. Technology is "the invention of useful things to solve problems".
 1. Often, but not always, these problems are the result of the curse.
- II. Is technology good or bad or neutral?
 - A. The answer to all three questions is "no".
 1. All technology comes from and is used by people who are moral agents for good or bad.
 2. Technology can be used for good and bad, but it would be a mistake to label it in such a rigid way.
 - B. Technology is not neutral because we are not neutral beings.
 1. What is a knife made for?
 2. Think about how necessary knives are.
 3. What would life be like in a world with no knives?
 4. Knives are used for a lot of good things—preparing food, for example, would be much more difficult in a knifeless world.
 5. What if now, instead of being used for cutting food, the knife is being used to cut you?
 6. Well, now the knife isn't so "good" anymore.
 7. Now the knife becomes bad.
 8. So, is a knife neutral?
 9. Not as long as the human element is involved.

- III. What can technology never accomplish?
 - A. The human heart has longings that technology can never satisfy.
 - 1. You were made for more than stuff.
 - 2. Stuff is not “wrong” necessarily.
 - 3. However, we tend to pursue things as though those things could provide our lives with meaning.
 - 4. We make good things ultimate things.
 - B. Technology cannot satisfy your soul.
 - 1. Your deepest longings can only be met by Christ.
 - 2. You were made for worship.
 - 3. This is a reality that you cannot escape.
 - 4. Your heart is not neutral—your heart is constantly trying to find satisfaction in things.
 - C. Technology cannot replace in-person relationships.
 - 1. God designed humans as social beings.
 - 2. Technology often gets in the way healthy social interactions.

- IV. Technology is designed to addict you. (1 Corinthians 6:12)
 - A. The attention economy.
 - 1. You attention is one of the most valuable resources in the world.
 - 2. In 2023, the global net advertising revenue was \$853 billion.
 - 3. Quite literally we are “paying” attention.
 - B. The dopamine driven feedback loop uses your brain against you.
 - 1. Since our attention is valuable, tech companies have incentives to keep our attention.
 - 2. Technology has been designed to keep you coming back.
 - 3. Have you ever mindlessly scrolled?
 - 4. Have you ever found yourself in an endless cycle of watching video after video?
 - 5. According to a 2024 survey, 50% of Americans spend 5-6 hours on their smartphone every day. After work and school obligations are completed, many people are instantly locking onto their phone screen until the end of the day, and then repeating the pattern the next day.
 - C. Algorithms are designed to keep you coming back for more.
 - 1. An algorithm is a set of instructions that tells a computer how to perform a task or solve a problem.
 - 2. The problem being solved is how to maintain your attention.
 - 3. The tech shows you what you want to see for good or bad.
 - 4. This is why people go down a “rabbit-hole”.
 - 5. Here is the problem, algorithms are neither neutral nor can they determine what is true with any level of accuracy.
 - D. Once hooked, addiction to technology disrupts healthy living.
 - 1. How much of my media is for escape? And what am I escaping?
 - 2. Does my screen time leave me more recharged or more depleted?
 - 3. Is my media diet enriching my time with Christ or eroding it?
 - 4. How consistent is my personal devotional life?
 - 5. What does my prayer life look like?
 - 6. Is my communion with God drab and boring? Or is it alive?
 - 7. How do Christ-centered sermons and songs affect me? And what does this say about how I protect my heart for Sunday worship?
 - 8. Are my digital desires serving my God-given duties, or are they distracting me from them?