

The Dangers of Technology

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Jules Verne, H.G. Wells, Mary Shelley, Isaac Asimov, Steven Spielberg, James Cameron, and Christopher Nolan. All of these have thrilled and fascinated millions with the dangerous idea: What if technology takes another leap forward to the point that it has advanced beyond our control? What dangers lie ahead with the next tech boom?

While science fiction is fun to think about there are some very real dangers technology provides that need to be considered by Christians. God's word provides principles that apply, even to the latest gadgets. So many of these advancements can be used to promote the cause of Christ in an authorized way if we avoid the potential pitfalls.

Technology provides instant access to information. I'm happy to see tablets in the worship assembly. While I often prefer to literally turn the pages of my Bible I've enjoyed the benefits provided by an electronic copy. Some find the tablet helpful to increase the font size of the sacred text or to utilize a search bar to find the desired verse, and the study helps available in some Bible apps are incredibly useful! But beware of distractions from messages and emails pushed to the front while you are worshipping God. Concordances and lexicons are okay, but focus on the sermon and do your in-depth study at home. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). "How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor. 14:26).

Technology provides excuses to forsake the assembly. The ability to stream a worship service online has so many benefits. Sickness or unavoidable circumstances can keep the Christian from the assembly, which removes the saint from his family and from spiritual nourishment. While it is good for the Christian who is home sick to listen in or watch worship services online, no one should think that this is an adequate substitute for faithful attendance. You cannot be a part of the assembly or teach and admonish the brethren through the computer screen. "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:24-25).

Technology provides opportunities to speak before we think. Social media can allow you to encourage and edify quickly. Such should be used to the glory of God. However social media is constantly asking the individual, "What are you thinking right now?" We might be tempted to post before we think and disobey the command, "Do all things without murmurings or disputings" (Phil. 2:14). If we "share if you agree!" without checking the facts we become talebearers (Lev. 19:16). "Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? There is more hope of a fool than of him" (Prov. 29:20). The truth of the matter is that we are better communicators when we use our facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice along with our words. It is very difficult to express your true feelings with words alone and so a seemingly harmless post too often turns into a needless argument.

It needs to be the prayerful consideration of every Christian that we use this technology for the good it offers while avoiding the dangers. Our words, actions, and thoughts must be by faith, authorized by the Lord (Rom. 14:23; Col. 3:17; Phil. 4:8).