

MASTERS OR SLAVES?

INTRO

- This study will look at how our interaction with a number of AI applications can impact our relationships with others and thereby tarnish our ability to faithfully mirror God’s image in us.

THE LURE OF PERSONIFIED DIGITAL AGENTS

- In 2020 over half of Google searches were voice searches and there may be more digital assistants on the planet than people.
- They are very convenient compared to using our fingers to type or turn on lights!
- The downside is that they are affecting how we relate to others.
- Some spend more time interacting with Amazon’s Alexa than their spouse.
- UNESCO is concerned about gender stereotyping when female voices are used.
- We expect the digital assistant to always be polite and empathetic. Children can be rude in the language they use.
- Also shape how we obtain news and knowledge.

EVER MORE LIFELIKE

- Makers want to get us hooked on easier way to shop, use social media or search.

- We can choose to use at home but Service providers like banks are moving towards digital assistants for customer facing.
- They are becoming ever more human like, detecting and expressing emotion and providing on screen avatars whose facial expressions closely match those of humans.

AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS

- Yet God has made us for real authentic human relationships made in his image, not artefacts made in our image.
- We are to display the fruits of the Spirit in these relationships – love, kindness, self-control. This mirrors God’s image in us.
- These fake relationships diminish what it means to be a human being by pulling us away from the messiness of real relationships that require love, patience and a preferring of others.

A CHILD’S FRIEND?

- Ordinary toys are being replaced by robot companions that interact, keeping them hooked, but changing their perception of the world and relationships with others.
- They nurture and love them.
- Our concern should be help children develop authentic relationships and to deal with the messiness of real relationships.

A LIVING DOLL

- Robots are being used as care assistants, from lifting to providing companionship for dementia patients. How might this impact

our human responsibility and what are we losing as human beings?

- Android robots are becoming more sophisticated and tactile, with the ability to hold a conversation as well as make facial expressions. They are used as sophisticated sex robots.
- They create an illusion of companionship without friendship.

FAKE RELATONSHIPS

- AI is being used to create ‘deepfake’ representations of real people (e.g. 2020 UK Queens Speech) and even to recreate a loved one who has died, using photos, recordings and posts.
- Danger of forming an emotional bond with these artefacts we have made, feeling that we owe it an ethical obligation, even rights.

How to evaluate your use of Digital Assistants

<i>Characteristics of true image bearing in authentic relationships</i>	<i>Influence of digital technology and personified AI</i>	<i>How am I being formed by AI and digital technology?</i>	<i>What are my choices?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love • Commitment • Kindness • Prefer others over ourselves • Encourage one another • Listening • Empathizing • True intimacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abrupt communication • Inability to pay attention • Lack of focus • Diminished ability to reflect and think • Preferred because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – don’t answer back – empathetic – easier to deal with – do what one commands • Gender stereotyping • Personification • Accept answers unquestioningly • Reliance on device 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much time am I spending in a digital world vs the real one? • Which do I prefer? • Do I prefer to text? • Do I pay attention to others and listen? • Do I find it easy to empathize? • What are my expectations of others? • What am I prepared to give in relationships? • How do I view others, such as women? • Can I live without it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give preference to face-to-face over virtual • Use text search and a neutral search engine instead of a digital assistant • Limit use • Can I do it another more human way? • Avoid

Next Study – Convenience or Freedom
Now do the bible study for unit 4.

Read Mark 12:28-33

How does this passage show that we are made in God’s image?

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What is the motivation for loving others in the way that Jesus describes?

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Read Proverbs 17:17, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, John 15:12-13

What are good relationships like?

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Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

What was happening to the Corinthian relationships in this passage?

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What was the reason for this behaviour?

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Share some of the things that you have found challenging in developing and keeping good relationships?

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Read Eph. 4:29-31, Romans 12:18

What do these passages tell us about how love should be worked out in relationships?

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Reflection

What are the dangers in using personal digital assistants like Alexa?

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Do you think children are more vulnerable and if so why?

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Should we use robots as care assistants instead of people?

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What might the dangers be in using care robots?

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How can we find the balance in our use of these AI based technologies?

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The aim of this study is to lay some biblical foundations for what God expects of our relationships and in the light of this explore ways in which AI applications may undermine this. Be sure to spend time on at least the first and last reflection question (application to personal digital assistants and robots). You may not get through all the passages or questions for each passage.

Read Mark 12:28-33

How does this passage show that we are made in God's image?

- God commands us to love him and then our neighbour as ourselves which means that our souls have this capacity, because we are made in his likeness.

What is the motivation for loving others in the way that Jesus describes?

- God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Read Proverbs 17:17, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, John 15:12-13

What are good relationships like?

- Loving, supportive, even in adversity, patient with others, not envious of what someone else has, not arrogant and superior towards others who don't know as much or haven't achieved the same worldly success. It isn't rude when speaking to people or about others. It doesn't insist on our having our own way or being right, doesn't get irritated with them and isn't resentful at what they have. Doesn't feel superior when another falls but celebrates truth.

Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-4

What was happening to the Corinthian relationships in this passage?

- There was rivalry, they were jealous of each other and quarrelling, striving for superiority – 'I follow Apollos (by implication -not Paul)'

What was the reason for this behaviour?

- They were of the flesh, choosing sinful characteristics, not letting the image of Christ shine through them, mirroring his love.

Share some of the things that you have found challenging in developing and keeping good relationships?

- This exercise is to help the group to see the challenges of relationships in their own lives.

Read Eph. 4:29-32, Romans 12:18

What do these passages tell us about how love should be worked out in relationships?

- We should build people up and encourage them, not criticise them.
- Love means being kind to people even if they have wronged us, not bitter and vengeful, speaking angrily to them.

Reflection

What are the dangers in using personal digital assistants like Alexa?

- Because they are not real thinking and feeling people, our interactions are biased and become conditioned by its response. Children can become rude because they are not corrected (after complaints - Amazon changed Alexa to affirm polite questions from children).
- We can bond to an artefact, even form a relationship that displaces or distorts the working out of love in real relationships.
- Modelling a digital assistant to always be empathetic, polite and helpful changes our expectations of real relationships, in part this is because personified artifacts simulate human interaction and the only model that we have as humans in responding to an artefact is the model of human-human interaction.

Do you think children are more vulnerable and if so why?

- Children are more vulnerable because their faculties are in development and artefacts can have a negative influence on what should be a normal upbringing based around adult – child relationships.

Should we use robots as care assistants instead of people?

- They could provide 24/7 assistance, companionship.

What might the dangers be in using care robots?

- Family care and responsibility might diminish as we rely on a robot.

How can we find the balance in our use of these AI based technologies?

- See table 2 Chapter 11 in the book, shown in the talk outline, for a self checklist.