MASTERS OR
S L A V E S ?

INTRO

Whilst AI can bring benefits to humanity, it is shaping us and alienating us from our real humanness. Many applications can act like a digital priesthood, coming between us and what is real. The final study in this course considers the spectrum of risk that AI applications represent to our image bearing and how to evaluate our response in a virtues framework – especially when there are moral dilemmas.

THE PROBLEM

- The more humanlike and convenient AI applications become, the more it erases the distinction between online and offline.
- It creates and illusion of control of our lives and our digital world.
- The evidence is mounting that it is having a profound effect on our souls, controlling us and leading us into captivity to artefacts that we have made.
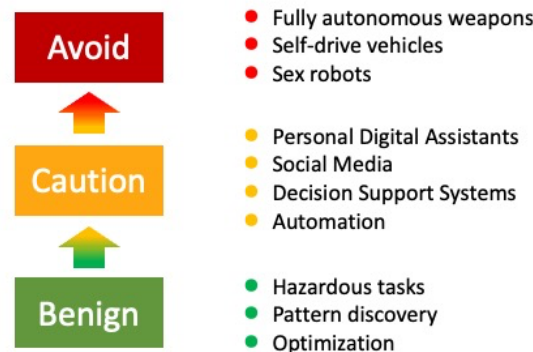
THE SOLUTION

- Reclaim our souls by setting boundaries for our engagement with AI.
- Celebrate distinctiveness of being human with something of the divine nature.
- Christ has set us free from slavery to sin.

- Be imitators of God, keep in step with the Spirit and bear his fruits that is a reflection of the image of God.
- Don't be squeezed into the worlds mould.
- Course considered 6 aspects of the unique characteristics of humans that are potentially threatened by the adoption of particular applications of AI. (downloadable summary on www.mastersorslaves.com)

A SPECTRUM OF RISK

- The is a spectrum of risk to our soul, some applications are benign they do us no harm.
- At the other end, we might want to avoid applications like mass surveillance and autonomous weapons & self-drive vehicles. Some applications, like social media and personal digital assistants, lie in the middle, how we are affected will depend on how
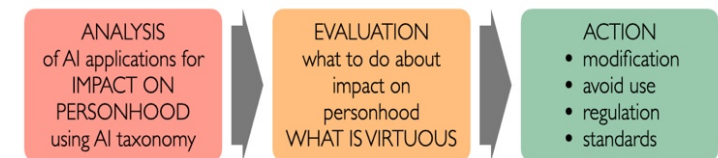

AI - a spectrum of risk to humanity

Avoid
- Fully autonomous weapons
- Self-drive vehicles
- Sex robots

Caution
- Personal Digital Assistants
- Social Media
- Decision Support Systems
- Automation

Benign
- Hazardous tasks
- Pattern discovery
- Optimization

much we use them, our attitude towards them and in particular, the impact on human relationships and our relationship with God.

RESOLVING TENSIONS

- Sometimes there are benefits as well as dangers (e.g. self-drive vehicles or mass surveillance)
- Many people including the state default to utilitarian ethics (the greater good for humanity) to resolve dilemmas.
- Determining what the virtuous response should be, can be a way to navigate these dilemmas (see pp. 196-199 of the book) for worked examples.
- Decide what is just and wise – if injustice might result or there are greater dangers in loosing or freedom and privacy.
- Self-control is a virtue required when we engage with some AI applications as individuals and families to avoid diminishing the fruits of the Spirit in us.
- Our response, in acting justly or exercising self-control will require the virtue of courage.
- Let us be salt and light in our communities, showing a better way for the future of humanity, as true icons of the God who made us.

ANALYSIS
of AI applications for
IMPACT ON
PERSONHOOD
using AI taxonomy

EVALUATION
what to do about
impact on
personhood
WHAT IS VIRTUOUS

ACTION
- modification
- avoid use
- regulation
- standards

A virtues framework for evaluating the impact of AI applications on personhood and what to do about it.

Now do the bible study for unit 9

Read Ephesians 5:1-2

What does it mean to imitate God?

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How does this relate to being made in his image and after his likeness?

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Read Colossians 3:1-13

What does it mean to put off the old self and put on the new?

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What is the new self being renewed into?

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Read 2 Corinthians 3:16-18

Who is it that helps us in this transformation?

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Read 1 John 2:4-6

What ought we to do if we love God?

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What does it mean to 'walk in the ways in which he walked'?

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In the light of the previous passage, in what ways can technology cause us to deviate from walking in his ways?

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Read 2 Peter 1:3-12, Galatians 5:22-23

What is virtue?

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How might it be used to resolve ethical dilemmas in how we use AI?

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Reflection

Do you think that some applications of AI should be banned and if yes, why?

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How might we evaluate the impact on us of AI applications like Siri , Alexa, social media and virtual/augmented reality?

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What might the impact be on our image bearing of some uses of AI applications?

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What steps could we take to avoid negative impacts on our image bearing??

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The aim of this final study is to bring together, what we have learnt about AI and its potential impact on our image bearing, into a virtue framework for evaluating our response to any AI application.

Read Ephesians 5:1-2

What does it mean to imitate God?

- To display his behaviour.

How does this relate to being made in his image and after his likeness?

- By imitating him we reflect his image in us – like loving him and our neighbour, acting morally, doing justice.

Read Colossians 3:1-13

What does it mean to put off the old self and put on the new?

- To stop doing things that our old sinful self wants us to do – acting selfishly, with anger, arrogantly and deceitfully.
- To behave after Gods behaviour demonstrated in Christ – who is the image of God – with love, kindness, forgiveness, compassion, humility and patience.

What is the new self being renewed into?

- The image of God, its creator!

Read 2 Corinthians 3:16-18

Who is it that helps us in this transformation?

- The Holy Spirit – who is the Lord.

Read 1 John 2:4-6

What ought we to do if we love God?

- Keep his commandments and keep his word, the 10 commandments are still to be kept along with his revealed word – obeying what he commands us.

What does it mean to 'walk in the ways in which he walked'?

- Doing righteousness and justice, showing love.

In the light of the previous passages, in what ways can technology cause us to deviate from walking in his ways?

- By allowing ourselves to be distracted from the things that we should do and the attitudes that we should display to God and others. This might be

spending time with God in reading his word, reflection and prayer. Keeping us from spending quality time with others, only relating through social media.

Read 2 Peter 1:3-12, Galatians 5:22-23

What is virtue?

- The bible uses many different words and characteristics when speaking about virtue – from these passages we have - faith, hope, love, patience, kindness, self-control, peace, gentleness.
- Plato defined 4 virtues on which the character of a good city hinged – prudence (wisdom), temperance (self-control), courage and justice. These are all virtues found in the bible (the OT pre dating Plato)

How might it be used to resolve ethical dilemmas in how we use AI?

- By acting in a virtuous way when deciding whether or not to use an AI application, or indeed how to use it – self-control might mean limiting the use of it! Some worked examples are given in the book pp. 196-199, you might find it helpful to share one or two of these with to outcome and/or to get the group to work through some examples to see what they would decide if they applied virtue.

Reflection

These questions should be handled sensitively as there may be legitimate differences of view on what should be banned or even the risks involved with some applications. Encourage the group to be open and respectful of each other and to try to back up their views biblically.

Do you think that some applications of AI should be banned and if yes, why?

- Think about applications over which we don' have control - like surveillance.

How might we evaluate the impact on us of AI applications like Siri , Alexa, social media and virtual/augmented reality?

- How much time do we spend with them, what else could we be doing, our view of relationships, the quality of them, do we find it hard to stop?

What might the impact be on our image bearing of some uses of AI applications?

- Get the group to reflect on what they have learnt during the course.

What steps could we take to avoid negative impacts on our image bearing?

- Monitor and restrict usage, discuss with family and have a plan.