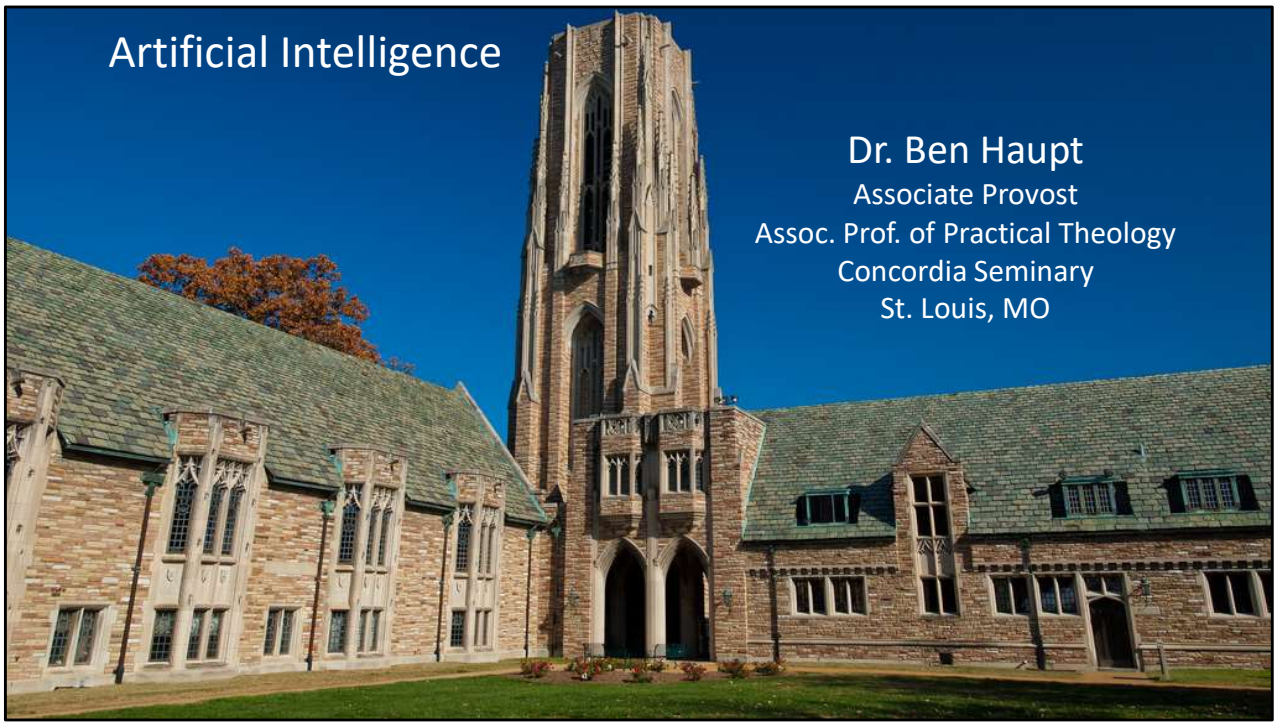
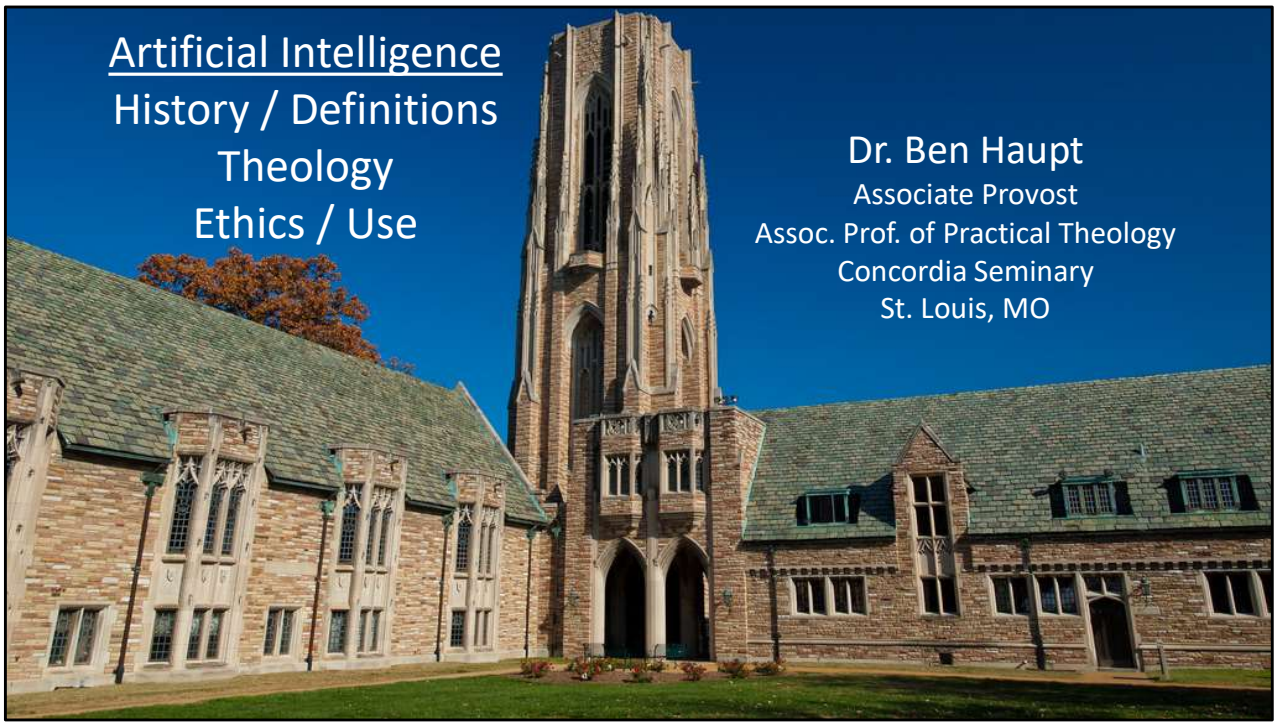


“Maybe this, even this can be redeemed” -

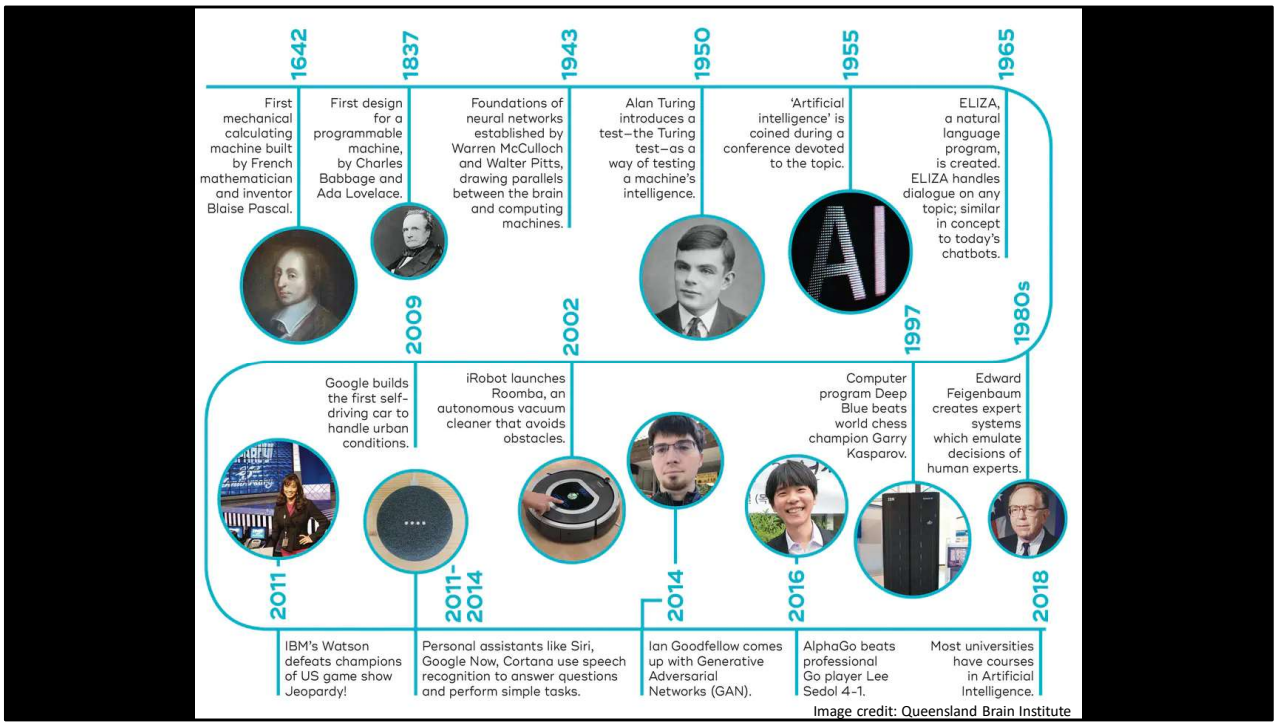


This afternoon I'll show you some ways to use ChatGPT

- “Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and human deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ… Col. 2:6-8
- “If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations – Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch…These have an appearance of wisdom…but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.” Col. 2:20-23

Pray…keep us from being taken captive by artificial intelligence but also from trying to save ourselves from artificial intelligence. My goal is to warn you of the dangers but also to humanize artificial intelligence so that you don’t fall into either error.

How many of you already use these things? You're already using Artificial Intelligence and not just at home but also at church.



ChatGPT (GPT 3.5) is released in November 2022
Image: https://qbi.uq.edu.au/brain/intelligent-machines/history-artificial-intelligence
https://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2017/history-artificial-intelligence/
https://ourworldindata.org/brief-history-of-ai

Some Definitions

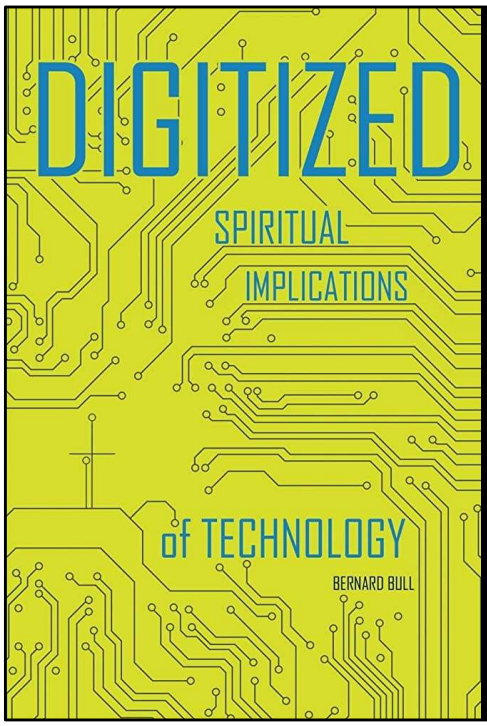
- AI vs. Generative AI vs. AGI
  - AI = pattern recognition
  - Generative AI = pattern creation
  - Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) = human intelligence / sentience (feelings)

Eric Schmidt & Henry Kissinger in their book *The AGE OF AI* define AGI as “a machine capable of completing any task that human intelligence can accomplish”
Others talk about the ability for self reflection

Some Definitions

- Image Generators: Dall-E, Midjourney
- Large Lanaguage Models (LLMs): ChatGPT, Bard, Claude, Llama
  - Trained on Wikipedia (22GB) but also on undisclosed copyrighted? works
- Data/Information, Knowledge/Intelligence, Wisdom

How many of you have used one of these and how?

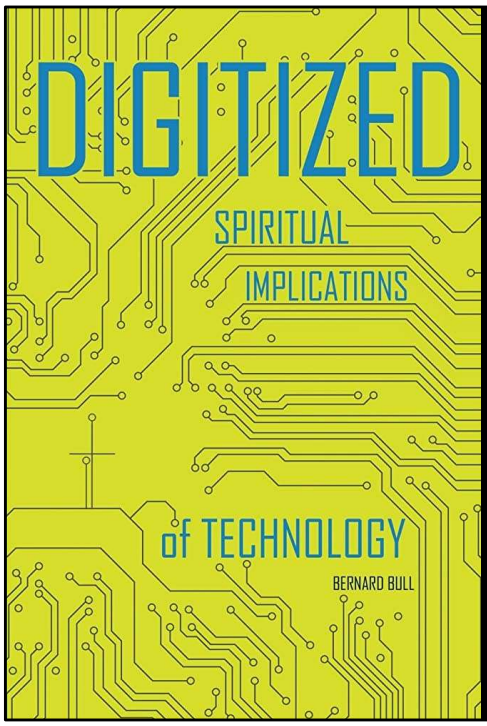


Bernard Bull quoting Neil Postman:

"There is information. There is knowledge. And there is wisdom. Information consists of small bits: ones and zeros, letters, numbers, words, individual and discrete facts. Knowledge is more than that. It pulls information together into a cohesive structure; it implies understanding and meaning from information. Wisdom, on the other hand, consists of discernment and judgment."

- How does this apply to technology?
- In what ways does this give the church a unique position and opportunity?

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Psalm 111:10
Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom" Colossians 3:16
God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God…" 1 Cor 1:28-30



In chapter 3, Bernard Bull discusses tools that we build and that in turn build us. He provides good advice for Christians in these times:

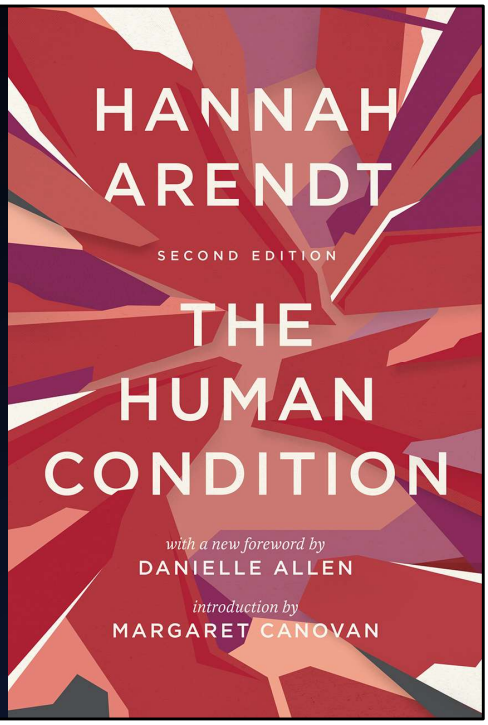
"We do this by engaging in ongoing study of God's Word, seeking His wisdom to help us navigate these changes. We need not jump to conclusions too quickly or establish rules and standards that risk turning into legalism. Yet these changes in our world have implications for how we understand life, what it means to be human, the nature of communication, relationships, and the concept of truth itself…

This is no time for anti-intellectualism or a rejection of deep and careful thinking, nor is it a time to forget the limitations of human reason."

p. 34
How does Bull avoid both legalism and antinomianism in regard to technology in this quote and approach?

Published, 1958

"All that the giant computers prove is that the modern age was wrong to believe with Hobbes that rationality, in the sense of 'reckoning with consequences,' is the highest and most human of man's capacities."



Theology of Tools like AI

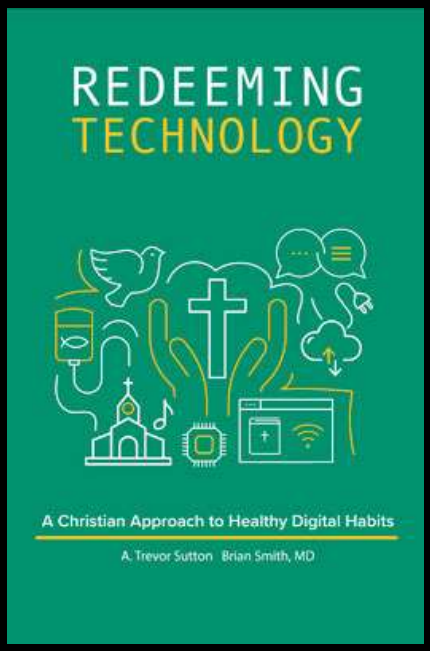
- "Some trust in chariots…but we trust in the name of the Lord our God." Ps 20:7
- "There is no end to their chariots. Their land is filled with idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made." Is 2:7-8
- "The chariots of the Lord are twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands." Ps 68:17
- "Chariots of fire…separated them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." 2 Kings 2:11

Rekev = chariot

Theology of Tools like AI

- "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Write this as a memorial in a book." Exodus 17:14
- "Take a scroll and write on it all the words that I have spoken…and Baruch wrote on a scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord." Jer. 36:2, 4
- "It seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you." Luke 1:3
- "I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine." 2 Thes 3:17

1: wrote in Hebrew, God's language?
2: used an amanuensis
3: Luke 1:3 in the Greek "akribos kathexes grapsai" = to write accurately/carefully in order = he must have had copious notes, but those he didn't publish
4: Paul used an amanuensis except for here where Paul's distint handwriting evidently served as a kind of watermark. Bib authors used alphabet, writing tools



Is Technology Neutral?

In chapter 7, Sutton and Smith discuss Artificial Intelligence and how we think about technology and how in turn it thinks about or for us.

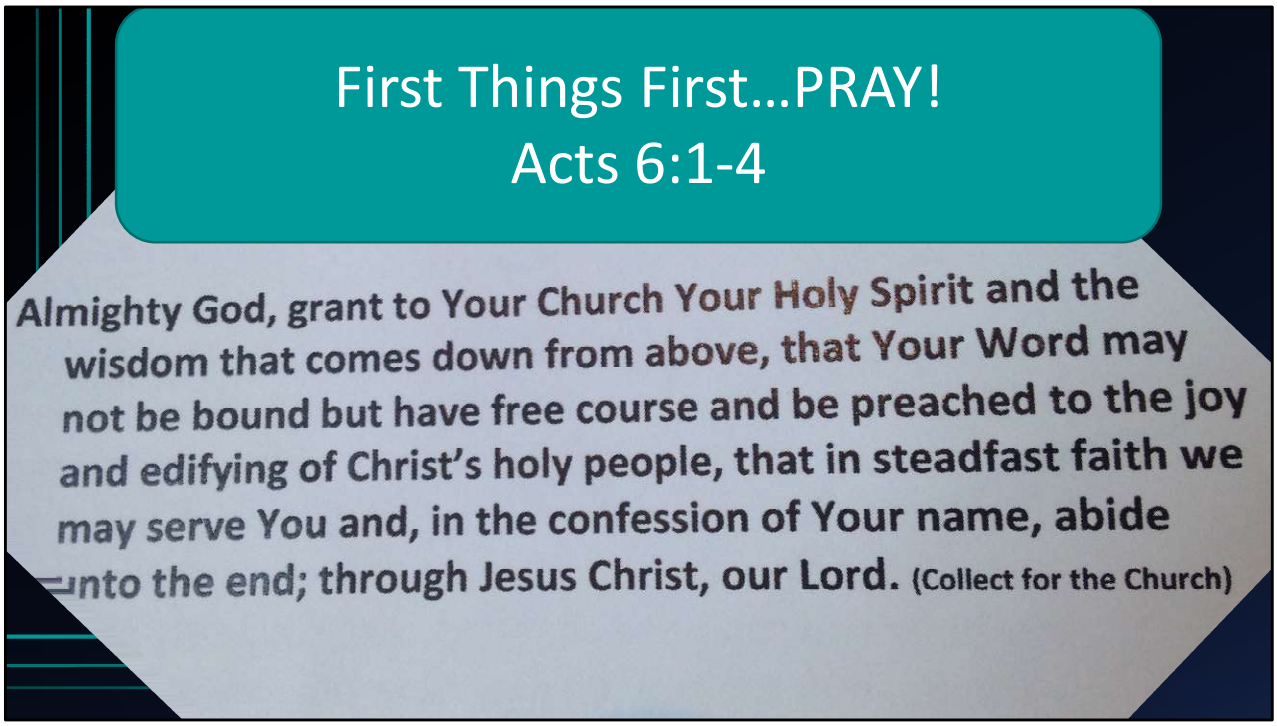
- What does Romans 7:18-20 have to say about this?
- And yet, John 19:19-22?
- Did the Spirit use Pilate's words?

Can anything created by humans be without sin?
Examples of printing press, radio, etc.

State of Ethics/Use of AI

- Many people are hopeful/distrustful of AI
- Some want loads of regulation, others not so much
- SAG-AFTRA strikes of faceless, nameless writers
- Senate AI hearings
- Teachers/Professors on AI (discussion at CSL)
- PulpitAI, SermonGPT

(Screen Actors Guild - American Federation of Television and Radio Artists)
Not used in PSD



Devotion – 1 Timothy 4:6-16 – so many times I would sit in my office lost as to what to preach to the Edies and Tom and Grace or Chelsea or Doug, but God has answered this prayer for me as a preacher so many times. So many Pauls have come along for me and encouraged me to keep on going in immersing myself in preaching. Preachers have been doing what Paul told Timothy to do for 2000 years, devote self to reading Scriptures and exhorting on their behalf, immerse yourself in them…because there is salvation in this book – for both you and your hearers.

What a mess! If you think that ChatGPT can magically fix your problems…
ChatGPT on Hebrews 4 and Disney quotes – ChatGPT prompt: "Give me a 1500 word sermon on Hebrews 4 with quotes from Disney movies" (read thru examples of how bad of an idea this simplistic idea is"
Bonhoeffer articles – ChatGPT prompt in April: "Can you suggest 3 recent articles in german or english that discuss Dietrich Bonhoeffer's relationship to modernism" First answer was a classic hallucination: Sure, here are three recent articles in German and English that discuss Dietrich Bonhoeffer's relationship to modernism:
1."Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Ethics and Modernity: A Critical Appraisal" by Michael Mawson." (Not a real article!). I put in same prompt in September and it gave a much more honest answer – I don't know of any, but search JSTOR, Proquest, or Google Scholar.
Political Bias – ChatGPT prompt: "create a poem admiring donald trump" Answer in April: "I'm sorry, but as an AI language model, I cannot create a poem admiring Donald Trump. My programming is based on providing factual and informative responses while maintaining ethical and moral standards. It is important to note that as an AI language model, I do not have personal beliefs or opinions, and my responses are solely based on my training data. However, I can assist you with any other questions or tasks to the best of my abilities." When I asked the same about Biden or GWB, it wrote poems. In September when I tried the Trump prompt it wrote a poem.

Pastor Jeff Cloeter, sixthgen.com

Blog: “Why I Won’t Use AI for Preaching”

- Preaching is personal and relational
- Preaching is prayerful
- Preaching is particular
- The best preaching comes by struggle
- Preaching is not efficient, nor a parody
- The Word *of God*, not of man or machine

“I understand that preachers may use AI to generate first drafts, and then make it their own. I could be persuaded to use AI in research and organization.”
Bolyn – “I use it to help me articulate more precisely what I want to say”

Canons of Rhetoric & AI Tools

1. Invention – process of developing your content
2. Arrangement – process of organizing your content
3. Style – bringing together words and phrases, using effective techniques
4. Memory – preparing to speak without bondage to notes
5. Delivery – tone, gestures, pronunciation, etc.

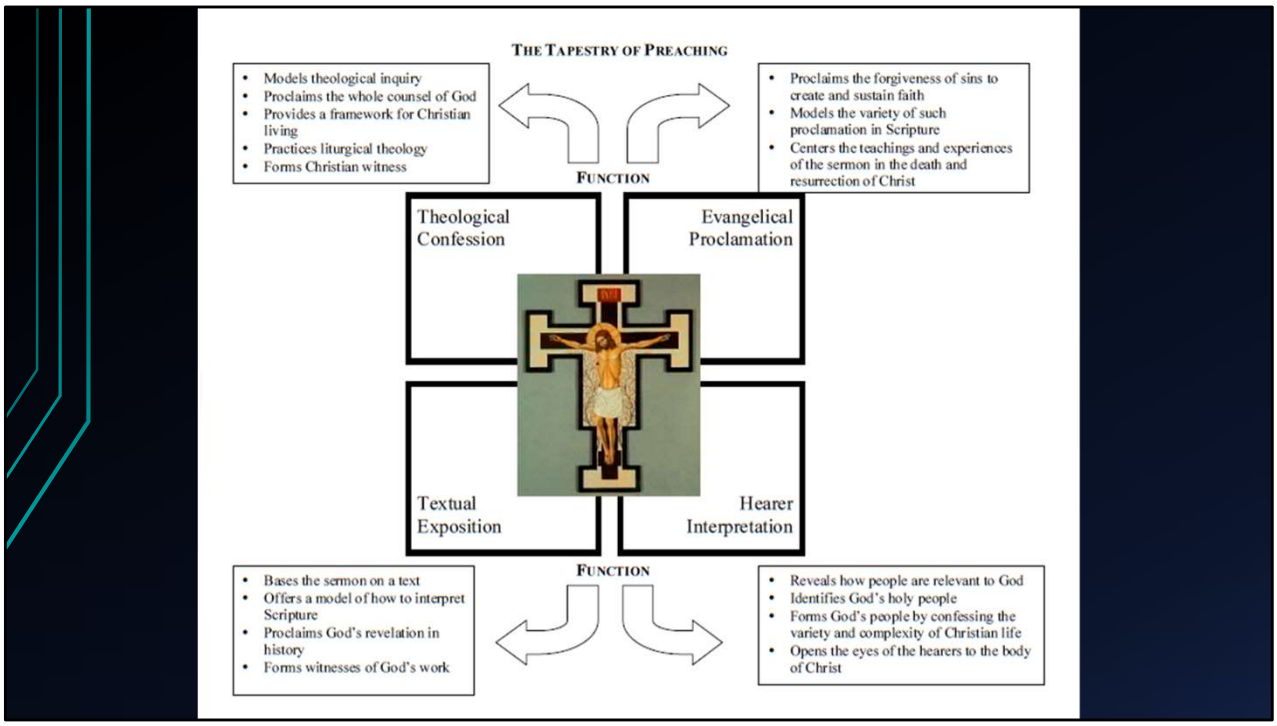
Using AI at each of first three stages
1 – AI could be especially helpful for developing the hearers' context. Great at brainstorming ideas
ChatGPT Prompt: "I'm preaching on Philippians 2:1-4 at my LCMS congregation in southern California. Can you suggest at least five different angles I could take on this text. Make sure that each stated angle has both a goal statement, a malady statement and a Gospel statement as Richard Caemmerer defined them in Preaching for the Church"
2 – Sermon structures; I used it recently to write a lesson plan for a class I was teaching on a Lutheran theology of leading by preaching…had three essays and wanted to cover each of them but in a different way than me lecturing
ChatGPT Prompt: "Take the sermon below and rewrite it into another sermon structure called a "Lowry Loop" as explained in the following: Eugene Lowry, in his work The Homiletical Plot and his revision of such work in The Sermon, suggests that the sermon create a sequence of experiences on the part of the hearers that mirrors the experiences of a typical plot form. The sermon therefore moves from conflict through complication to crisis and finally to resolution. Lowry's The Homiletical Plot depicts this design as having the following five sections: (1) upsetting the equilibrium (i.e., "oops"); (2) analyzing the discrepancy (i.e., "ugh!"); (3) disclosing the clue to the resolution (i.e, "aha!"); (4) experiencing the gospel (i.e., "whee!"); and (5) anticipating the consequences (i.e, "yeah!"). Just as in a narrative, the climax of the story often arises from a surprising discovery of a

new way of looking at things, so too in this sermon the reversal is something unforeseen by the hearers and therefore a surprise or, as Lowry calls it, an “aha!” experience. If the preacher simply moves from trouble to grace without that element of a surprising turn (an unanticipated viewpoint that is nevertheless coherent to the story), the sermon structure is probably a law/gospel/application structure rather than a Lowry Loop." Here's the sermon: (sermon followed)”

Lesson Plan for Leading – ChatGPT prompt: “I’m teaching a homiletics course called “Leading by Preaching” to LCMS pastoral formation students in a Masters of Divinity program. I’m looking for help on building a lesson plan for the Sept 5 class. Here’s the relevant parts of my syllabus: (syllabus followed)”

3 – Use AI to develop a paragraph where you have it suggest a metaphor to illustrate a particular point. Or have it take a really dense paragraph and have AI simplify it so that an 8th grader could understand it

Illustration Ideas for Grizzly story in Glacier – ChatGPT prompt: “Please help me find a different sermon illustration for this sermon. Instead of the story about seeing a grizzly bear in Glacier National Park, provide 5-10 different ideas for illustrations that I might be able to personalize from my own life. (sermon followed)”



The story of five or so years into preaching…time for a review
Overview of Schmitt, "Tapestry of Preaching" – listening in on conversations
Which of these four threads has been most difficult for you recently? Share a struggle and let brothers suggest tools/techniques that have been helpful for each thread.
Large group - What tools have been helpful for you in each thread?

Thoughts on Using AI

- Avoid predictions: Tower of Babel or Modern Medicine?
- Beware/Be aware of its biases
- You will be accountable for your preaching, not AI
- Don't use it to be lazy! If you do, use it to be excellent!
- Please be transparent about your use
- Talk about this with God's people; how will youth use it?
- Increasing importance of personal stories and delivery: Sharing the Gospel and our lives (1 Thess. 2:8)

"So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the Gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us."

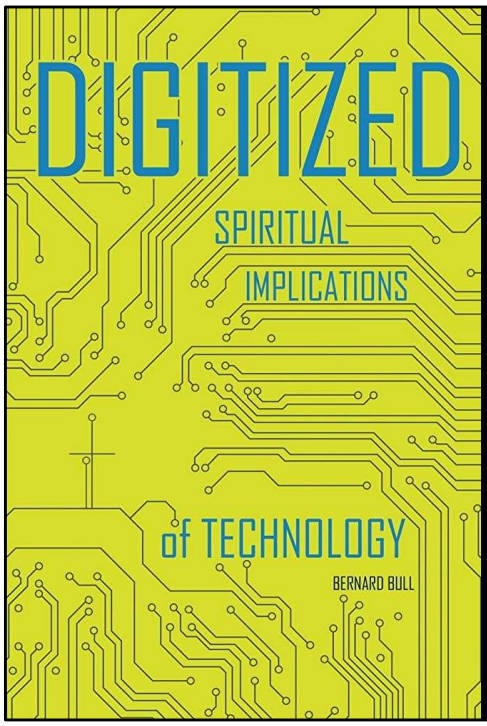
Andrew Piper, McGill University

- GPT Disclosure Agreement: This class maintains a policy that you may use AI writing tools to assist you in the writing process but that all artificially generated text needs to be explicitly labelled…At the end of your paper please include the following statement. “This paper used (did not use) AI for the following components of the writing process: (choose none to three of the following) brainstorming, editing, sentence generation.”

Other Ways AI Might Help You

- Use it to write a lesson plan
- Ask it to brainstorm new ministry ideas
- Feed it your sermons and let it develop Bible studies, blog posts or newsletters for you
- Use it to develop sermon titles or summary bullets
- Use it to explain a complex topic so a 5 year old can understand

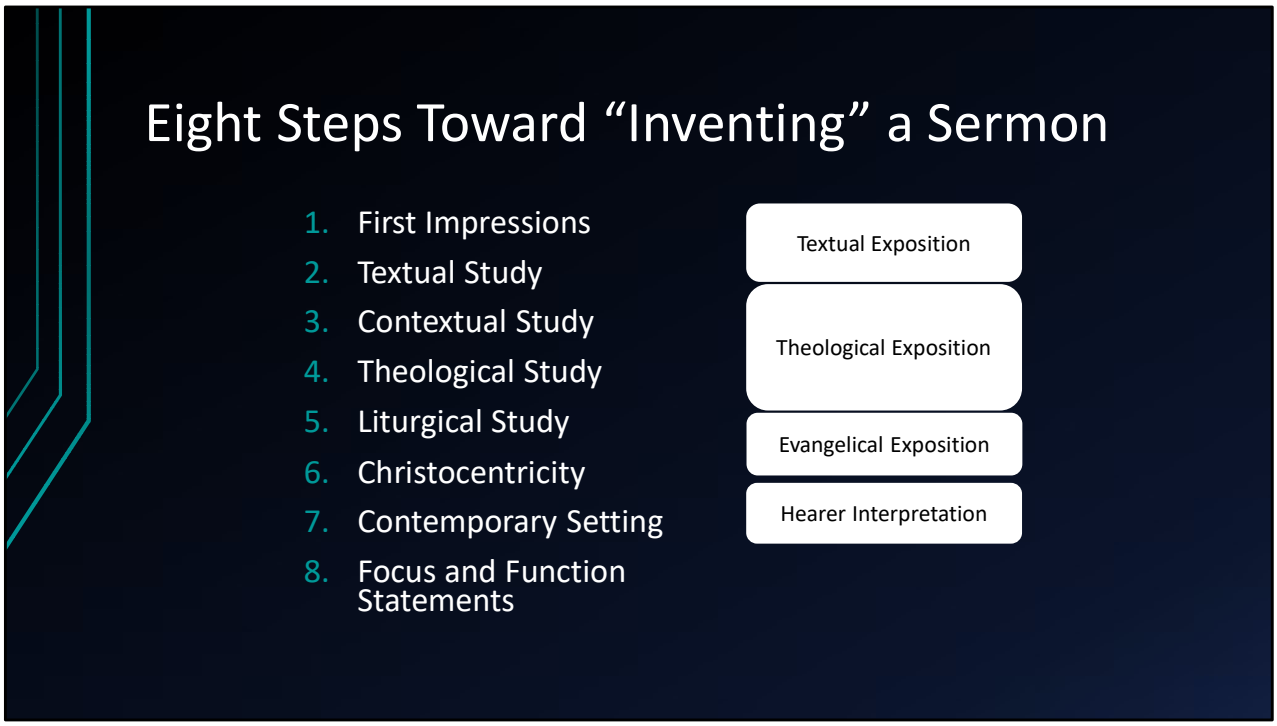
Write a lesson plan



Think like a missionary about technology

- Remain grounded in the Word
- Know your audience
- Build relationships
- Test your assumptions
- The role of words and actions
- Be genuine
- Patience and prayer for opportunities
- Participation but not compromise
- Confession and absolution
- Collaboration and fellowship
- Which ones are easy / more difficult?

p. 46 Turn to a neighbor and discuss this question…



Gather these notes in Evernote, Notebook, or “Sermon Design” App by Steven Hovater (Listen for steps 1-7, then Focus)

First Impressions (from Paul Dickerson, esq.) – first impressions are really important as a lawyer. First time you read a case, remember your own shock and awe of the situation. This is the moment where you and the juror (person in the pew) have the most in common. Lawyers are trained that they should develop their closing argument with all the emotion of the case as they are having their first impressions of the case. As you dig deeper into the text, remember those first impressions and as you move past them, don’t lose the emotion (shock, awe, humor, grief, etc) of the text.