



God, Science, Technology, Faith

Today we consider a few areas: Artificial intelligence (AI), neural implants, in vitro fertilization, and frozen embryos – the spiritual and ethical dilemmas associated with these.

Sunday April 14, 2024

Isaiah 28:23-29

23 Give ear and hear my voice, Listen and hear my speech.

24 Does the plowman keep plowing all day to sow? Does he keep turning his soil and breaking the clods?

25 When he has leveled its surface, Does he not sow the black cummin And scatter the cummin, Plant the wheat in rows, The barley in the appointed place, And the spelt in its place?

26 For He instructs him in right judgment, His God teaches him.

27 For the black cummin is not threshed with a threshing sledge, Nor is a cartwheel rolled over the cummin; But the black cummin is beaten out with a stick, And the cummin with a rod.

28 Bread flour must be ground; Therefore he does not thresh it forever, Break it with his cartwheel, Or crush it with his horsemen.

29 This also comes from the LORD of hosts, Who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in guidance.

How did the farmer learn how to do farming? Where did he get the understanding on how to process grain? This passage in Isaiah reveals that God is involved in the learning and discovery process of us engaging with His creation – with the world we live in.

GOD INSPIRES AND INSTRUCTS OUR INVOLVEMENT WITH HIS CREATION

Science and technology has advanced and continues to advance in understanding many different realms of the world we live in – here on earth and also in the vast expanse of space. We have explored, researched and discovered many things. We have learned how to put these to use for our benefit. Of course, we have also learned to do things that are destructive.

THE SECRET THINGS

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.



There are things that are revealed – things that God has kept for us to search and find out. Creation is such a space where the wisdom, design and attributes of God are kept for us to uncover and see.

SEARCHING OUT A MATTER

Proverbs 25:2

It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.

Proverbs 25:2 (GNB)

We honor God for what he conceals; we honor kings for what they explain.

God holds the mystery to things we do not understand. That is what makes God, God. He is omniscient and knows all things, even things that are a mystery to us.

Yet, for us, it is our honor to seek to understand things and explain things. Leaders are honored for leading in this exploration and explanation of knowledge. Or, we can also state that those who lead in the exploration and explanation of knowledge, are honored as leaders.

THE EXPLOSION OF KNOWLEDGE – A FULFILLMENT OF END TIME PROPHECY

Daniel 12:4

But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.

Knowledge and information have exploded in recent decades. It is increasing exponentially. And this is a sign of the end of the times. In the Scripture in Daniel 12:4, the angel informed Daniel that in “the time of the end.... knowledge shall increase”. We are living in such times.

However, with the increase in knowledge, the Church – we as believers are also challenged in new areas. How do we respond, and engage with these areas? Many of these advancements are complex, sometimes quite perplexing.

The Church is the pillar and ground of truth (1 Timothy 3:15). We are called to uphold and provide the foundation for truth in our world. So the Church’s response to these matters is important.



While there are many such matters, today we consider a few areas: Artificial intelligence (AI), neural implants, in vitro fertilization, and frozen embryos – the spiritual and ethical dilemmas associated with these.

SPIRITUAL AND ETHICAL DILEMMAS

Let's first consider each of these areas in brief.

A brief about Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI: A Short History, Big Impact, and Uncertain Future

The Dream of Intelligent Machines:

The concept of artificial intelligence (AI) has captivated humans for decades. The early days (1950s) saw basic machines tackling simple problems. Over time, AI progressed through advancements in machine learning, allowing computers to learn from massive amounts of data, and improve their performance.

AI Today: Shaping Our World

AI is now woven into the fabric of our lives. From facial recognition on your phone to recommendation algorithms on streaming services, AI is quietly influencing our decisions and experiences. We use them in many tasks such as auto-correcting text, speech recognition, and decision making. It is also making waves in many areas including healthcare, with AI-powered tools assisting in diagnoses and drug discovery.

The Future: A Double-Edged Sword

The potential of AI is vast. It could revolutionize industries, personalize education, and even tackle global challenges like climate change. However, concerns linger. Job displacement due to automation and the potential misuse of AI in creating and propagating deepfake images and videos, for surveillance or warfare are pressing issues that need to be addressed.

The Road Ahead

As we move forward, responsible development of AI is crucial. We need to ensure it remains beneficial, ethical, and doesn't exacerbate social inequalities. AI has the potential to be a powerful tool for progress, but its ultimate impact depends on the choices we make today.

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Spiritual and ethical dilemmas



- At a personal level while the tool serves us – are we becoming dependent on it to an extent we are **losing our cognitive independence or in some case our own soul**, becoming emotionally attached to robots?
- While AI can serve us, can we allow AI to **take over tasks that are to be performed by humans, and to what extent?** Thinks of roles such as doctors, counselors, therapists, pastors/preachers, etc.
- Who should be in charge? God gave people responsibility on the earth. We are to 'be fruitful, multiply and have dominion', but **are we giving up on our commission and inadvertently handing this over** to machines we created?
- On a much broader scale **how do we contain the potential misuse** of AI by bad actors?

A brief about Neural Implants

Neural Implants: Bridging Brains and Machines

What are they?

Neural implants are tiny devices placed in the brain to directly interact with its electrical activity. Imagine a bridge connecting your thoughts to a computer!

Goals of Neural Implants

- Medical Marvels: These implants aim to restore or improve functions lost due to injuries, diseases, or even blindness.
- Mind-Machine Interface: Imagine controlling a prosthetic limb or even a computer directly with your thoughts!

Benefits we see Today

- Restoring lost abilities: Example: People with Parkinson's disease could experience relief through brain implants.
- Treating neurological disorders: Early research shows promise in using implants to manage epilepsy and depression.

The Future of Neural Implants

- Enhanced Cognition: The sci-fi idea of boosting memory or focus might become reality.
- Communication Revolution: Direct brain-to-brain communication could be possible, blurring the lines between human and machine.



The future of neural implants is exciting but comes with challenges. Open communication and collaboration are key to ensuring this technology is used safely and ethically for the greater good.

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Spiritual and ethical dilemmas

- **Are we giving up control of our mind to machines?** Who controls our thoughts and memories if they're accessible through an implant?
- Is this a **violation of God's design or within the sphere of human intervention**, when compared to other forms of medical implants that we routinely perform?
- Neural implants are expensive, raising concerns about who gets access to this powerful technology. As with other discoveries, these could become available to people on a large scale. The danger is if it remains available only to a few.

A brief about In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) and Frozen Embryos

In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) and Frozen Embryos

In vitro fertilization (IVF) is a medical procedure that helps couples facing infertility conceive.

Here's a breakdown:

- **Egg Retrieval:** Eggs are extracted from the ovaries.
- **Fertilization:** Eggs are combined with sperm in a lab dish to create embryos.
- **Embryo Transfer:** One or more healthy embryos are implanted in the uterus for pregnancy.

Freezing Embryos:

Often, IVF creates more embryos than used in a cycle. These extra embryos can be frozen for later use:

- **Cryopreservation:** A special freezing process preserves embryos for years.
- **Benefits:** This allows couples to attempt future pregnancies without repeating egg retrieval, or space out childbearing.

Advantages of IVF and Frozen Embryos

- **Increased Fertility Options:** IVF offers hope for couples with various fertility issues.
- **Preserving Fertility:** Freezing embryos allows individuals to delay childbearing or preserve fertility before treatments impacting it (e.g., cancer treatment).

Considerations and Concerns

- **Cost:** IVF and embryo freezing can be expensive.



- Ethical Issues: The storage and use of frozen embryos raise ethical questions regarding personhood and parental rights.
- Success Rates: While success rates are improving, IVF is not guaranteed to result in pregnancy.

The Takeaway

IVF and frozen embryos offer a valuable option for family building. However, it's important to weigh the benefits and drawbacks. And there are serious ethical concerns that must be addressed.

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How are extra embryos handled:

Fertility labs typically don't make the decision themselves on what happens to extra embryos created during IVF. The choice lies with the couple or individual undergoing the procedure.

Here are the common options:

- **Freezing for future use:** This is the most common option. Extra embryos are cryopreserved (frozen) for potential future IVF cycles, allowing the couple to try for another pregnancy without going through the egg retrieval process again.
- **Donation to another couple:** Some couples choose to donate their unused embryos to other individuals or couples struggling with infertility. This can be a selfless act, but there may be screening processes and legal considerations involved.
- **Donation to science:** Embryos can be donated to research aimed at improving infertility treatments or understanding early human development. Strict ethical guidelines govern such research.
- **Thawing and disposal:** If none of the above options are chosen, embryos can be thawed and disposed of as medical waste. Clinics usually have specific protocols for this process.

It's important for couples to discuss their wishes regarding embryo disposition with their fertility specialist before starting IVF. This can be a complex and emotional decision, and the clinic should provide support and guidance throughout the process.

Single Embryo Transfer (SET):

This approach involves fertilizing just the number of eggs needed for the desired number of embryos (e.g. one) for transfer. Both a woman's eggs and a man's sperm can be frozen for In Vitro Fertilization (IVF). This allows doctors to fertilize one embryo at a time during the IVF process.

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Spiritual and ethical dilemmas

- The number of frozen embryos sitting in storage in the United States has risen from roughly 100,000 to over an estimated 1.5 million. British couples are freezing about 100,000 embryos per year. Western Australia alone reported 30,000 frozen embryos in 2022. Many of these embryos—fertilized eggs in their first stages of development—remain from IVF treatments. These seem to be the new orphans.
- Adoption of frozen embryos is being facilitated, but the task is very big. The question is **should we allow this to continue indefinitely** increasing the pool of frozen embryos.
- In many cases humans are making a decision on the selection and viability of embryos to be implanted in the uterus, frozen or moved elsewhere – **are people playing God when making such decisions**, is the question.
- Is the use of IVF even if carried out as Single Embryo Transfer (SET), **contrary to the design of God or within the sphere of human intervention**, when compared to other forms of medical interventions that we routinely perform?
- The embryo is created in a laboratory and transferred to the uterus. The embryo contains all the components of human life to become a fully developed person. This indicates personhood at the earliest stages of development. The **personhood and the right to life of embryos**, fetal personhood laws and its legal implications are areas of serious thought and discussion.

To consider these matters from a Biblical perspective, let us draw a distinction on wisdom from God, and earthly wisdom:

WISDOM FROM GOD AND EARTHLY WISDOM

James 3:13-18

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.

14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.

15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.

16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

WISDOM FROM GOD	EARTHLY WISDOM
<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Characteristics</u>



Good conduct, meekness, pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy. <u>Outcome</u> Results in good fruit, without partiality (fair to all), without hypocrisy (genuine, authentic), fruit of righteousness.	Earthly, sensual, demonic, bitter envy, self-seeking. <u>Outcome</u> Results in confusion, and every evil thing.
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Our goal must be to use the wisdom and knowledge we have aligned to divine wisdom.

We also see the effects and limitations of earthly wisdom:

A, Earthly wisdom eventually displaces God from our lives and replaces it with other man-made things.

Romans 1:22-23

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

23 and **changed the glory of the incorruptible God** into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

B, Earthly wisdom will not enable us to know or encounter God.

1 Corinthians 1:20-21

20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, **the world through wisdom did not know God**, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

C, We must walk humbly before God, taking no pride in earthly wisdom.

1 Corinthians 3:18-20

18 Let no one **deceive himself**. If anyone among you seems to be **wise in this age**, let him become a fool that he may become wise.

19 For **the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God**. For it is written, "HE CATCHES THE WISE IN THEIR OWN CRAFTINESS";



20 and again, "THE LORD KNOWS THE THOUGHTS OF THE WISE, THAT THEY ARE FUTILE."

With all the advancements we see in science and technology, the key is to walk humbly before God, and use these advancements aligned to the truth He has given us in His Word and in accordance to divine wisdom.

Now how do we respond, to these and many other similar areas of advancements in science and technology. We provide a frame work for us to think, and then close with some personal comments.

A FRAMEWORK FOR DECISION MAKING

#1, FOR GOOD

There is nothing wrong in using advancements in technology and science in ways that are benevolent, edifying and blessing to people.

#2, QUESTIONS

There are questions for which we will not have immediate answers, but we must continue our journey of engaging in meaningful discussions and seeking ways to do things in an honorable way and exercising godly (divine) wisdom.

#3, BOUNDARIES

We must place boundaries and safeguards on the use of technology and science aligned to God's original design and intent. We must uphold truth that all human life from conception on is God-given and must be held with absolute dignity and people must be treated fairly and with equity.

IN CONCLUSION

While we recognize that there is much to be discussed and considered in these matters, we use the advancements in AI, neural implants, and IVF to bring good, address specific needs, help people, resolve problems, etc., (a)without violating God's design and intent, and (b)honoring human life and dignity, and (c)working towards being fair and equitable.

SUMMARY

GOSPEL AND SALVATION CALL



SUPERNATURAL MINISTRY TIME

Minister as the Spirit leads

USEFUL READING

AI Will Shape Your Soul - But how is up to us.

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2023/october/artificial-intelligence-robots-soul-formation.html>

Why Do We Want AI to Interpret Scripture?

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2023/december/ai-artificial-intelligence-interpret-scripture-bible.html>

Neural Implants: Should We Become One with AI?

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2024/january-web-only/elon-musk-neuralink-brain-artificial-intelligence-theology.html>

Frozen Embryos Are the New Orphan Crisis

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2023/december/ivf-frozen-embryos-are-new-orphan-crisis.html>



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LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE
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God, Science, Technology, Faith

Today we consider a few areas: Artificial intelligence (AI), neural implants, in vitro fertilization, and frozen embryos – the spiritual and ethical dilemmas associated with these.

Sunday April 14, 2024

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full-length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at our [sermons page](#). Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship, and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture references: *Genesis 1:26-31; Isaiah 28:23-29; James 3:13-18*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

1, Exploring and harnessing God's creation – God have given us the earth and placed us here. What should be acceptable and what should be "off limits" in our exploration and use of the world around us? And why would you say this?



2, Reflect on the spiritual and ethical dilemmas in the matters we considered in this sermon: AI, neural implants, and IVF and frozen embryos. Consider the good that can happen, and the problems/dangers we must be watchful about.

3, We presented a three-point framework to think through these matters, What other points (Biblical principles) would you like to add to this framework?

4, How can believers practically be “salt and light” in these areas of scientific and technological advancements?

If time permits, each one can take a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

1, families to be protected and strengthened

2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.

3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for all details to go well as we purchase land and build our facility to serve the Lord and people.

Close by thanking God together.



USEFUL RESOURCES

Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

WORLD MISSIONS: <https://apcworldmissions.org>

SERMON OUTLINE

The church is called to be the pillar and foundation of truth. With the advancements in science and technology, there are many new areas to which we as believers must respond, while considering the spiritual and ethical dilemmas these present to us. Today we consider a few such areas: Artificial intelligence (AI), neural implants, in vitro fertilization (IVF), and frozen embryos. Based on Scripture we contrast divine wisdom and earthly wisdom, and present a simple framework to engage and meaningfully discuss these matters, and stay aligned to God's design and original intent.

KEYWORDS

God, faith and Artificial Intelligence (AI), neural implants, in vitro fertilization (IVF), frozen embryos, sermons, sermon notes, sermon outline, free sermon notes, free sermon outlines, Bible study resources

REFERENCES/CITATIONS

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God, Science, Technology, Faith
Sermon Notes, Sermon Outline and Small Group Study Guide

Biblical definitions, Hebrew and Greek words and their meanings are drawn from the following resources:

Thayer's Greek Definitions. Published in 1886, 1889; public domain.

Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance by James Strong, S.T.D., LL.D. Published in 1890; public domain.

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, © 1984, 1996, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, TN

Mounce Concise Greek-English Dictionary. Edited by William D. Mounce with Rick D. Bennett, Jr. (1993)

Word Pictures in the New Testament. Archibald Thomas Robertson. Published in 1930-1933; public domain.

Word Studies in the New Testament. Marvin R. Vincent, D.D. (1886)