"*Participating in God's redemptive work with technology is challenging because of the way different technologies can feed our desires. Kate Ott puts it poignantly, '[w]hen our engagement with digital technologies stays on the level of consumption, we are more susceptible to promoting corporate interests rather than Christian ethical commitments.* **Thinking theologically with and about digital technology pushes us** *to find language within the Christian tradition to respond to new challenges and circumstances.'* **Only then are we able to beat swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks (Isaiah 2:3-4), and consciously draw out expressions of hopeful technology.**"

KURLBERG, JONAS ET AL., "CHRISTIAN FAITH & TECHNOLOGY", LAUSANNE OCCASIONAL PAPER 76, LAUSANNE MOVEMENT, HTTPS://LAUSANNE.ORG/OCCASIONAL-PAPER/CHRISTIAN-FAITH-AND-TECHNOLOGY, 14 AUG. 2024 (EMPHASIS MINE).

1

2

Tech-Wise
Living

FLOURISHING IN A DIGITAL AGE

3

Today's Road Map

1. How do we consider technology within a biblical framework?

2. What are our goals for tech-wise living and flourishing?

3. How can we reflect those goals in the rhythms, spaces, and structures of our lives?

Definitions of Technology:
1. **A human activity of using tools to transform God's creation for practical purposes.** (John Dyer, Stephen V. Monsma)
2. **The interconnected digital devices and platforms we use today.**

4

Caveats (Because I'm a lawyer)

1. This is *not* an anti-tech talk!
2. This isn't exhaustive.
3. I'm on the journey with you.

5

How much time do you spend on your smartphone every day?

6

Check your own stats:

iPhone: Settings > Screentime

Android: Settings > Digital Wellbeing & parental controls > Dashboard
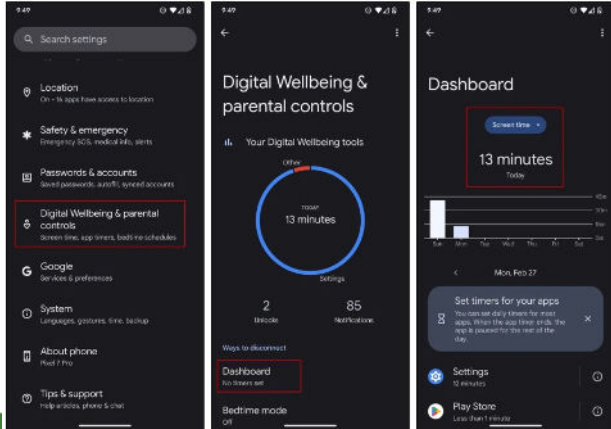
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On average, **Americans spend 4 hours and 37 minutes** staring at their phone screen every day.

Daily Phone Screen Time by Generation
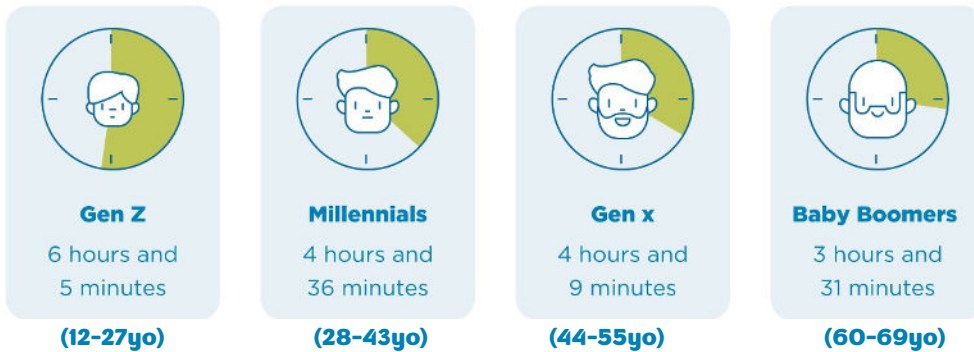
Gen Z	Millennials	Gen x	Baby Boomers
6 hours and 5 minutes	4 hours and 36 minutes	4 hours and 9 minutes	3 hours and 31 minutes
(12-27yo)	**(28-43yo)**	**(44-55yo)**	**(60-69yo)**

8

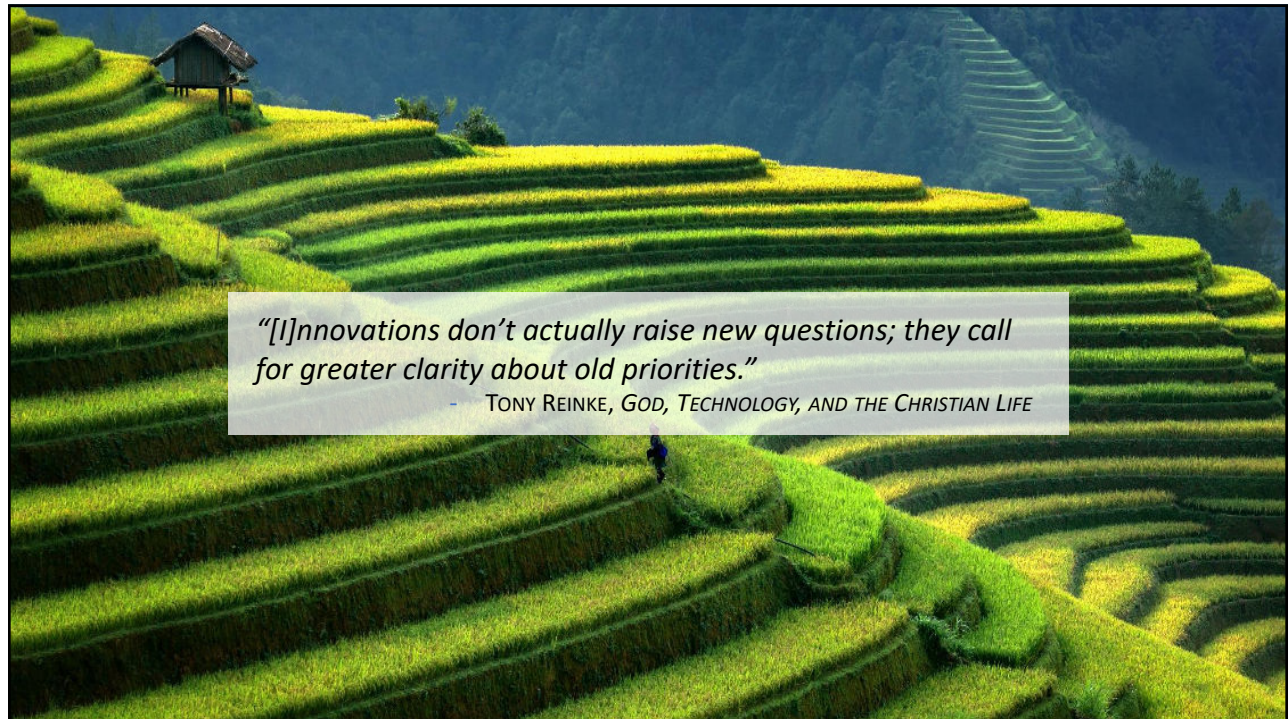## Today's Road Map

1. **How do we consider technology within a biblical framework?**

2. What are our goals for tech-wise living and flourishing?

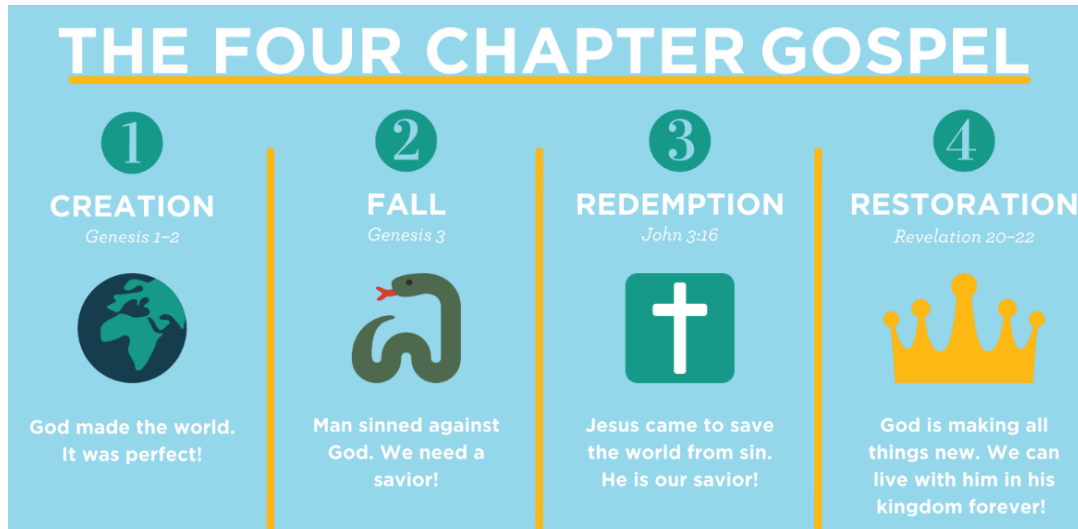3. How can we reflect those goals in the rhythms, spaces, and structures of our lives?

9

"[I]nnovations don't actually raise new questions; they call for greater clarity about old priorities."
— TONY REINKE, *GOD, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE*

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Technology in a Biblical Framework

THE FOUR CHAPTER GOSPEL

1 CREATION — *Genesis 1–2* — God made the world. It was perfect!

2 FALL — *Genesis 3* — Man sinned against God. We need a savior!

3 REDEMPTION — *John 3:16* — Jesus came to save the world from sin. He is our savior!

4 RESTORATION — *Revelation 20–22* — God is making all things new. We can live with him in his kingdom forever!

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Creation

1 CREATION — *Genesis 1–2* — God made the world. It was perfect!

"In the beginning, **God created the heavens and the earth**…[T]he Lord **God formed the man of dust from the ground** and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature."
GENESIS 1:1, 2:7

"So **God created man in his own image**,
   in the image of God he created him;
   male and female he created them."
GENESIS 1:27

1. *God is the Creator, and we are the created beings.*
2. *We are embodied creatures. God created us with physical bodies, not just souls and minds.*
3. *We have intrinsic worth and dignity from God.*

12

Creation

1

CREATION

Genesis 1–2

God made the world.
It was perfect!

"Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge,
nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin,
but dill is beaten out with a stick,
and cumin with a rod.
Does one crush grain for bread?
No, he does not thresh it forever;
when he drives his cart wheel over it
with his horses, he does not crush it.
This also comes from the LORD of hosts;
he is wonderful in counsel
and excellent in wisdom."

ISAIAH 28:27–29

4. *God is the One who gives us the knowledge, creativity, and skills to cultivate the land (Gen. 1:28) through tools and technology.*

13

Fall

2

FALL

Genesis 3

Man sinned against
God. We need a
savior!

"For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. **All these evil things come from within**, and they defile a person."

MARK 7:21-23

→ *In practice, the design and use of technology is never neutral because humans always design and use them for good, evil, or some combination of both.*

"Technology is neither good nor bad; nor is it neutral." – Professor Melvin Kranzberg

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Redemption

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved**—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

EPHESIANS 2:4-7

→ *Christ's death and resurrection enables those who follow Him to seek good and bring good out of our most dangerous inventions ("special grace").*

→ *God gives common grace to nonbelievers to do the same.*

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Restoration

"**Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth**…And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. …He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

REVELATION 21:1,3-4

1. *As citizens of heaven, not earth, be ready to be a nonconformist! (Romans 12:2, Philippians 2:20-21).*

2. *Our tech struggles have an end point: God is doing a good work in us, to present us holy and blameless before Him (Colossians 1:22, Philippians 1:6). He will restore all things, including all that we look to technology to satisfy and fulfill.*

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Technology in a Biblical Framework: Recap
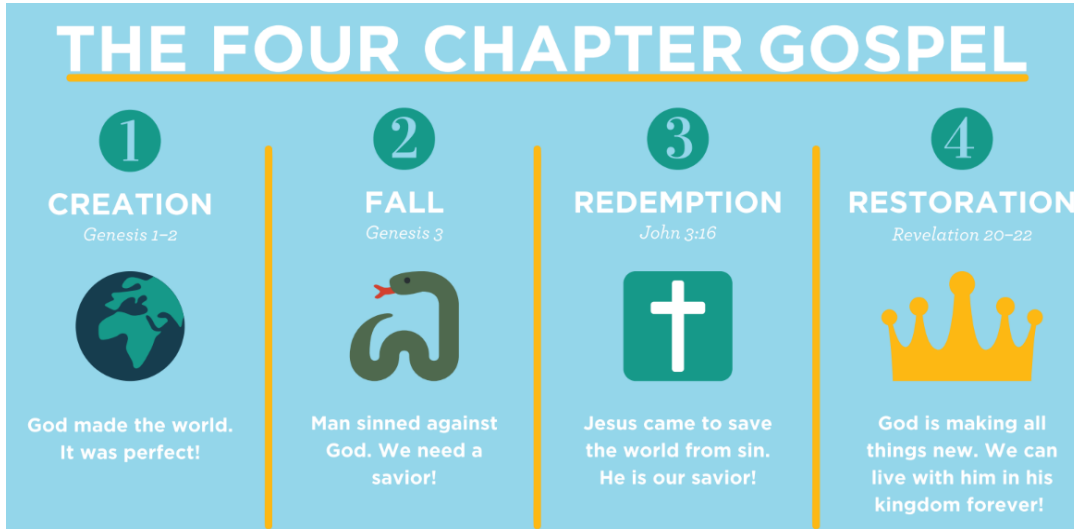
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Technology in a Biblical Framework: Recap

Four-Chapter Gospel	Biblical Values of Technology	Common Values in Technology
Creation	God is in control. We are just the created beings.	We are in control.
	God created us with physical bodies as well as souls and minds. Our bodies are not limitations to be transcended.	Digital selfhood is preeminent.
	Every human being has intrinsic worth and dignity from God, and should be treated as such.	People deserve my outrage and online abuse.
	Technology ultimately glorifies God, the only One who can create something from nothing.	Technology ultimately glorifies man.
Fall	Technology is tainted with sin, in both design and use.	Technology is neutral.
Redemption	Technology is a God-given gift and can be redeemed, in both design and use.	Technology is always bad.
Restoration	As citizens of heaven, not earth, we should not always conform to popular behavior and lifestyles online.	We should do what everyone else is doing online.
	Our tech struggles have an end point: God will complete His good work in us, to present us holy and blameless before Him. He will restore all that we look to technology to satisfy and fulfill.	Our tech struggles are futile.

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Today's Road Map

1. How do we consider technology within a biblical framework?

2. **What are our goals for tech-wise living and flourishing?**

3. How can we reflect those goals in the rhythms, spaces, and structures of our lives?

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"The tech-foolish life is built on having all kinds of devices in our lives but neglecting the tools and instruments that help us become the kind of people we want to be."

- ANDY CROUCH, THE TECH-WISE FAMILY VIDEO SERIES

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Goals for Tech-Wise Living

1. What is the way to true flourishing?

"**Blessed is the man**
    [...whose] **delight is in the law of the Lord,**
    and on his law he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree
    planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
    and its leaf does not wither."
PSALM 1:1,2-3

→ *Living according to God's ways by <u>following God's commands</u> is the way to true human flourishing.*

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Goals for Tech-Wise Living

1. What is the way to true flourishing?

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. **These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full**."
JOHN 15:9-11

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. **I came that they may have life and have it abundantly**."
JOHN 10:10

→ *God's commands are not only right, but **good and joy-giving** for us!*

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Goals for Tech-Wise Living

2. Why do we live according to God's ways?

"To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, **so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him**, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."
2 THESSALONIANS 1:11-12

"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God**."
1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

→ *The ultimate goal of living according to God's ways is to <u>glorify Him</u>.*

"God's glory is the end of creation and the aim of all our innovations."
– Tony Reinke

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Goals for Tech-Wise Living

3. How do we live according to God's ways?

"You shall **love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind**. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall **love your neighbor as yourself**. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."
MATTHEW 22:37-40

"**God is able to make all grace abound to you**, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, **you may abound in every good work**."
2 CORINTHIANS 9:8

1. *God's commands are to <u>love Him wholly and to love our neighbor as ourselves</u>.*
2. *<u>Grace is not just pardon, but power to live</u>: By His grace, God not only commands, but equips His followers with power to obey His commands.*

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Goals for Tech-Wise Living

4. Practical application: So what?

- We don't need to vilify or completely throw out technology.
- At the same time, we should be aware of **how tech is designed to be used** and **how we use technology**
- We should aim to design and use tech **to *love God and neighbor, for the glory of God***

Questions to ask ourselves:
- ***How, why, and when do I use technology? How is technology shaping me?***
- ***Does my use of technology bring GLORY to God? Does it honor Him? Does it LOVE GOD and LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR as ourselves?***

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Goals for Tech-Wise Living

4. Practical application: What heart issues are at play when we engage with technology?

- Example: **Social Comparison**
  1. ***What is actually going on?***
     - I compare others' best-filtered, exterior life online with my worst-version, interior self
  2. ***What can this lead to?***
     - Envy, coveting, discontentment, self-absorption
  3. ***What biblical truths speak to this?***
     - I have SO much to be thankful for in Christ (Colossians 1).
     - God is up to good in my areas of lack, and worthy of my trust (Romans 8:31-39).
     - I take the focus off of myself by loving and serving others (John 13:34).
       → ***leads to loving God*** (*cultivating gratitude to Him*) ***and loving neighbor*** (*rejoicing in another's' joys, rather than being envious of them; serving others rather than self-absorption*)
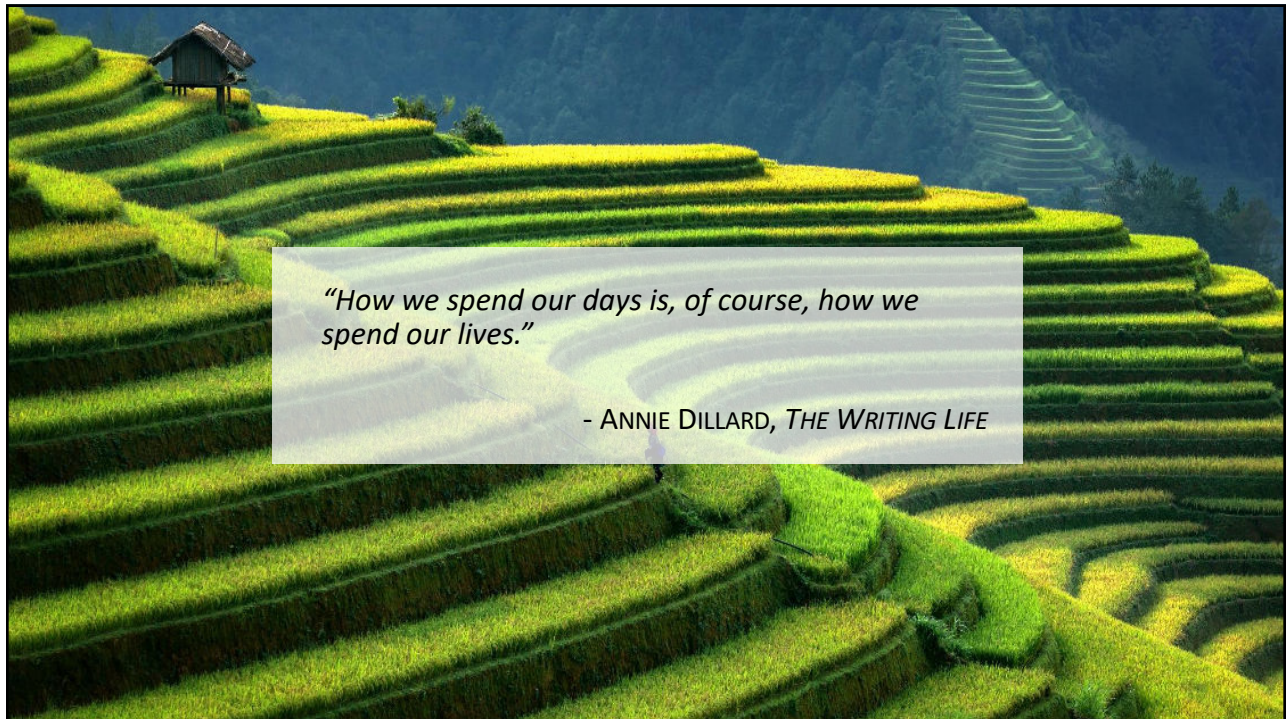
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Today's Road Map

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"How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives."

- ANNIE DILLARD, *THE WRITING LIFE*

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Practical Application: Rhythms, Space, & Structure

1. Rhythms and Routines

- Technology allows us to be distracted by "easy everywhere" and "always on."
- Instead, consider the rhythms of your day:
  - *What do you reach for first thing in the morning?*
  - *What do you go to bed doing?*
  - **"Tech fasts"**: 1 hour per day, 1 day per week, 1 week per year
- *How can I build healthy, regular patterns of work and rest into my life?*
  - What is truly **restorative rest** (cf. Sabbath rest, Exodus 20:8-11)—not just meaningless distraction?
  - Do I give myself times of tech-free **silence, stillness, or contemplation**?

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Practical Application: Rhythms, Space, & Structure

2. Physical Space

- Consider the physical spaces where you live.
  - *Where are your most formative spaces?* (E.g. work, school, home)
  - *What is the role of technology in them?*
- We are embodied creatures meant to live in physical space!
  - *Where can we connect with one another and our outside world without the distraction of digital devices?*
  - Suggested **"tech-free zones":**
    - At the dinner table
    - In the car ("Car time is conversation time")
    - In the bedroom (especially for children)

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Practical Application: Rhythms, Space, & Structure

3. Structure

- **Modeling positive consumption** of media/use of technology
    - *Am I meaningfully engaging with technology?* (creating v. consuming)
    - *Am I discerning in my consumption of online content?* (media literacy)
    - *Am I loving my neighbor through my online conduct?* (digital citizenship)
- **Seeking healthy access and accountability**
    - *Do I need to set up barriers to accessing technology?* (e.g. content controls, screen time limits)
    - *Do I have a safe space to talk about temptations, struggles, and sin with technology?*
    - *Do I have a healthy culture of confession/accountability in my home?*

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Practical Application: Linking Arms

"To resist the digital liturgies, we need regular immersion into the embodied community of God." – Samuel James

- Asking together:
    - *How can we prioritize "heart-soul-mind-strength activities" with each other as a church body?*
    - *How can we build in-person relationships?*
    - *How can we provide accountability and help one another digitally flourish?*

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Final Thoughts

1. A word of comfort
   - **There is no *technology*, no *wielder of technology*, and no *outcome of technology* outside of God's control, or His sovereign will** (Isaiah 54:16-17).
2. A word of hope
   - **Jesus is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption** (1 Cor. 1:25, 30)**!**

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NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

Breakout Discussions in Small Groups

Don't forget the «Resources» list on the back of your discussion questions sheet.

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