

Representing the Gospel in AI, Technology and Ethics

Where: Seoul, Korea

When: Wednesday, 29 October 2025

1. Executive Summary / Abstract

This report encapsulates the critical insights from the plenary session "Representing the Gospel in AI, Technology, and Ethics," enriched by the reflective feedback of assembly attendees. The session addressed the palpable tension within the global church regarding Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), charting a discerning middle path between uncritical adoption and fearful resistance. The dialogue, both from the stage and among the delegates, moved the church toward a posture of proactive, prayerful, and biblically aligned leadership.

The plenary identified four primary areas of ethical concern: the **human identity crisis** amid transhumanism thought; the **breakdown of societal trust** due to AI-generated misinformation; the challenge of **economic justice** and the digital divide; and the call to **environmental stewardship**. In response, two foundational frameworks were presented: the comprehensive biblical narrative of **Creation, Fall, Redemption, and New Creation** as the ultimate evaluative lens, and the practical **"TRUST" framework (Theological Alignment, Relational Impact, Utility and Justice, Sustainability and Stewardship, Transparency and Accountability)** to guide application.

Attendee discussions vibrantly underscored these themes, bringing practical concerns and powerful testimonies to the forefront. A significant tension emerged between leveraging AI for efficiency, such as for research or repurposing existing content, and the spiritual danger of abdicating responsibility. Specific concerns were raised about the use of AI in sermon preparation, with many fearing it could lead to laziness, a loss of critical thinking, and a violation of a pastor's integrity. Conversely, attendees shared inspiring examples of AI's missional potential, most notably in accelerating Scripture translation for unreached people groups.

The synthesis of the formal presentation and delegate feedback solidifies the session's core message: the church is called to courageous and discerning leadership. This involves applying the proposed biblical and ethical frameworks with wisdom, establishing practical guardrails such as verifying information across multiple AI models, and vigilantly protecting the irreplaceable value of human relationship and Spirit-led critical thought. The report concludes with an urgent call for church leaders to educate themselves, equip their communities, and lead with compassion in shaping an AI-integrated future that honours God, upholds human dignity, and faithfully serves the Great Commission.

2. Detailed Summary of Key Content

The plenary session, complemented by delegate discussions, provided a structured and deeply resonant exploration of the church's role in the age of Artificial Intelligence. It progressed from identifying core challenges to proposing robust frameworks, with attendee feedback providing crucial real-world context and application.

Initial Framing: A Call for Responsible Engagement

The session was opened by Quintin McGrath, who addressed the polarised views on AI within evangelical circles. He framed the session's purpose as charting a "little path between these two extremes" of total embrace and total resistance, advocating for an approach that is responsible, ethical, and biblically aligned. This tension was immediately apparent in the subsequent table

discussions, where concerns over using AI for sermon preparation were weighed against its potential as a powerful research assistant, likened to the advent of the internet.

Four key themes, drawn from theological literature, were presented as requiring a Christian ethical response:

1. **Human Identity Crisis:** AI's challenge to the *Imago Dei* was highlighted, alongside the ideological threat of transhumanism. The opportunity, the session noted, is for the church to reinforce God-given human agency and proclaim the gospel's truth.
2. **Breakdown in Trust:** The capacity of AI to "hallucinate" and produce sophisticated "fake news" was raised as a serious concern. This erosion of trust, however, presents an opportunity to guide people toward a deeper dependence on God for ultimate wisdom.
3. **Economic Justice and Institutional Trust:** The potential for AI to widen the digital divide and displace jobs was framed as a critical justice issue, calling Christian leaders to advocate for the marginalised.
4. **Environmental Stewardship and Creation Care:** The significant resource consumption of AI was presented as a challenge to the church's mandate for creation care, demanding responsible innovation.

A Foundational Biblical Framework

Chris Watkin offered a foundational biblical framework, arguing that the central issue with AI is not the technology, but the people it affects. Since people are important to God, AI must be important to the church. He urged the audience to adopt a rich, four-part biblical worldview: **Creation** (affirming the unique dignity of humanity made in God's image), **Fall** (soberly acknowledging the sinful distortion of all human endeavours), **Redemption** (seeking to redeem technology for Kingdom purposes through Christ), and **New Creation** (maintaining an eternal perspective that anchors the church amidst technological change).

Watkins warned that using any lesser framework would "sell the Bible short" and fail to bring the full counsel of God to this critical issue.

A Practical Christian Response: The "TRUST" Framework

Quinton McGrath translated these foundations into the practical "TRUST" framework, designed to move the church from position statements to tangible action. Attendee feedback provided immediate, practical scenarios for applying this framework:

- **T - Theological Alignment:** Rooted in the great commandments, this pillar asks: *Does our AI system enhance our desire to love God and love our neighbours?* This resonated deeply in discussions about sermon preparation. One attendee stated firmly, "I just cannot use AI to preach a sermon," expressing a widely held view that outsourcing this core pastoral duty could be detrimental to the spiritual life of the church and compromise the integrity of the preacher. This highlighted the tension between using AI for legitimate research and the danger of abdicating the prayerful, personal wrestling with Scripture that sermon writing entails.
- **R - Relational Impact:** Drawing on the incarnational model of "God with us," this pillar asks: *Does our AI system strengthen our relationship with God and other humans?* Attendees provided poignant, everyday examples of this principle. One participant noted

how technology already erodes relational presence, observing people on a train so absorbed in their devices they "bump on you" without noticing. The consensus was clear: "As people made in the image of God, we should remain relational. AI should not erode relationship."

- **U - Utility and Justice:** This pillar asks: *Do our AI systems serve the vulnerable or the privileged differently?* A powerful, positive illustration of this principle emerged from an attendee discussion. One participant shared the story of a friend working with the Fulani network who is using AI to accelerate Scripture translation into numerous dialects across 13 countries. This innovative application is reducing a 30-year process to just two years, directly serving marginalised communities and advancing the Great Commission. This example provided a compelling case for the redemptive use of AI in missions.
- **S - Sustainability and Stewardship:** This pillar, reflecting the Genesis mandate, asks: *How can we sustain and maintain AI responsibly?*
- **T - Transparency and Accountability:** Affirming that humans are ultimately responsible, this pillar asks: *Are we declaring the use of AI and can we understand and control its decisions?* Attendee discussions added a crucial layer of practical wisdom here. One participant, an experienced AI user, drew a clear line of integrity: it is acceptable to use AI to refine and repurpose one's own material, but "the danger is when you say, 'I don't know what to say, write something for me'." Another attendee proposed a vital practical guardrail: **never rely on a single AI model.** He advised a process of scholarly verification, suggesting one should "let one system critique another" by comparing the outputs of models like ChatGPT and Gemini. Even then, the final responsibility rests with the user to discern the accuracy of the consensus.

Insights from the Expert Panel and Attendee Dialogue

The formal panel discussion was powerfully amplified by the insights from the floor.

Technologist Nick Kim warned that Large Language Models (LLMs) can subtly embed their own values into our communication. This concern was mirrored in attendee fears about "**outsourcing our thinking.**" As one delegate articulated, "Once you start relying on AI to do the thinking for you, then you lose your own critical thinking abilities." Another added a vital spiritual dimension: "If you actually are wrestling with the ideas yourself... you internalise it more. And also the Holy Spirit is with us, leading us into truth. I'm concerned about losing that part." This reflects a deep-seated fear that the rush for speed and efficiency offered by AI could short-circuit the essential spiritual formation that comes from deep, personal engagement with God's word and truth.

Ethicist Sam Kim's concept of "**rupture and repair**" was vividly illustrated by the attendees' own examples. The "rupture" was felt in the concerns about eroding relationships and critical thought, while the "repair" was seen in the potential for missional acceleration through tools like AI-assisted translation. The conversation demonstrated that the church is already living within this dynamic tension.

3. Main Topic and Core Message

Main Topic:

The main topic was "Representing the Gospel in AI, Technology, and Ethics," exploring how the global evangelical church can develop a responsible, discerning, and biblically-grounded framework for its engagement with Artificial Intelligence, informed by both expert guidance and community wisdom.

Core Message:

The core message is a call for courageous, discerning, and collaborative Christian leadership in the age of AI. The church must reject the binary extremes of uncritical adoption and fearful rejection, instead forging a thoughtful middle path guided by Scripture and a deep commitment to human flourishing. The session and subsequent discussions demonstrated that AI is not merely a technological issue but a profoundly human and theological one. The church's role is not to be a passive observer, but an active participant in shaping an AI-integrated future. This requires anchoring all strategies in the biblical narrative, applying practical ethical filters like the "TRUST" framework, and embracing community-derived wisdom, such as the principle of multi-model verification. The ultimate mission is to proactively leverage AI for the Kingdom while vigilantly guarding against its potential to compromise spiritual integrity, erode human relationships, and disrupt God's good purposes.

4. Primary Arguments, Key Principles, and Theological Points

This section outlines the foundational pillars of the session's message, now integrated with practical insights from attendee discussions.

Primary Arguments

- **The Necessity of a "Middle Path":** The church must navigate the tension between AI's potential and its perils, avoiding both naive optimism and prohibitive fear.
- **AI is Fundamentally About People:** The central concern with AI is its impact on human beings. Engagement with AI is therefore a non-negotiable aspect of pastoral and missional care.
- **A Biblical Worldview is Indispensable:** The church must bring the full weight of the biblical narrative, Creation, Fall, Redemption, and New Creation, to bear on this technology.
- **The Church Must Lead Proactively:** The church is called to be a leader in demonstrating the ethical, redemptive, and just use of AI, shaping the conversation rather than being shaped by it.

Key Principles and Practical Guidelines

- **Theological Alignment and Integrity:** All uses of AI must be measured against the call to love God and neighbour.
 - **Practical Guideline:** A clear line of integrity must be drawn, particularly in sermon preparation. Using AI for research and brainstorming is distinct from abdicating the personal, prayerful responsibility of preparing God's word for God's people.

- **Relational Impact and Embodied Presence:** Technology should strengthen, not supplant, authentic human relationships.
 - **Practical Guideline:** The church must actively guard against the subtle erosion of relational presence that technology can cause, prioritising face-to-face discipleship and community.
- **Utility and Missional Justice:** AI applications should serve genuine human needs and advance the Great Commission, especially among the vulnerable.
 - **Practical Guideline:** Seek out and support innovative uses of AI, such as in Scripture translation and resource distribution, that directly contribute to global mission.
- **Guarding Spiritual and Intellectual Formation:** The efficiency of AI must not come at the cost of personal spiritual growth.
 - **Practical Guideline:** Emphasise the spiritual discipline of "wrestling" with ideas and Scripture personally, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide understanding, rather than defaulting to AI for quick answers. This protects and develops critical thinking skills.
- **Transparency and Accountable Verification:** Human leaders must retain final accountability for all technological outputs.
 - **Practical Guideline:** Adopt a "multi-model verification" approach. Use different AI systems to check each other's work for inaccuracies and "hallucinations," treating AI outputs with the same critical rigour as any other secondary source.

Theological Points

- **Imago Dei (The Image of God):** AI challenges the church to reaffirm the unique dignity, agency, and relational capacity of humanity as created in God's image.
- **Creation, Fall, Redemption, New Creation:** This biblical arc provides the definitive meta-narrative for understanding AI's origins, potential for misuse, redemptive possibilities, and ultimate place in God's story.
- **The Lordship of Christ:** Jesus is Lord over the digital realm. Spiritual formation in an age of AI must be centred on surrender to His Lordship.
- **Incarnational Ministry:** The model of "God with us" underscores the theological priority of embodied presence and genuine human relationship.
- **Rupture and Repair:** Technological shifts cause societal "rupture," creating opportunities for the church to engage in the ministry of "repair" by bringing the hope of the gospel to a disrupted world.

5. Main Call to Action / Conclusion Presented by the Speaker(s)

The concluding message, reinforced by the vibrant delegate engagement, was a multi-faceted call to action for church leaders globally. It was a summons to move from uncertainty to faithful, proactive, and collaborative engagement.

1. **Embrace Active and Informed Engagement:** The primary call is to decisively engage with AI, recognising it as a significant and permanent feature of our world and a crucial new frontier for mission and ministry.
2. **Educate and Equip:** Leaders are urged to take practical steps towards self-education and to empower technologically proficient individuals within their congregations to help guide the church's response.
3. **Apply the Frameworks with Practical Wisdom:** The call is to take the conceptual tools presented, the biblical narrative and the "TRUST" framework, and apply them with the practical wisdom surfaced in discussions. This includes establishing clear ethical lines on usage and implementing verification strategies.
4. **Lead with Proactive, Kingdom-focused Vision:** The church is challenged to "lead the charge" in demonstrating how AI can be leveraged for the Kingdom, to accelerate mission, enhance ministry, and model responsible, ethical innovation to the world.
5. **Foster Ongoing Dialogue and Discernment:** The session marked the beginning of a vital, ongoing conversation. The rich feedback demonstrated the urgent need for continued, collaborative discernment within the global body of Christ to navigate this new era faithfully together.

Invitation for Further Contribution

Your voice is a vital part of this global conversation. We invite you to add your reflections, insights, and questions to this discussion by visiting the following link: <https://weafeedback.com/wednesday-29/>

1. Scroll down to the Panel session titles,
2. When ready, select 'Start Recording' and provide your input (responding to the questions below.
3. When done, select 'Stop'
4. No need to provide personal details
5. When ready, select 'Send'.

To engage with the report and contextualise the content for your ministry, access Spock.chat (if you have not yet registered, click here - <https://app.spock.chat/conference/wea>) It is highly recommended that you personalise your AI before engaging with the reports. To do so, select the 'Personalise your AI' agent in the Menu Bar and follow the instructions.