

# GOD AND TECHNOLOGY

Brad King





Drawn from life by an Officer

## THE LEADER OF THE LUDDITES

Pub. May 1812 by Messrs Walker and Knight, Sweeting & Alley, Royal Exchange.

*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

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

Genesis 1:26-27



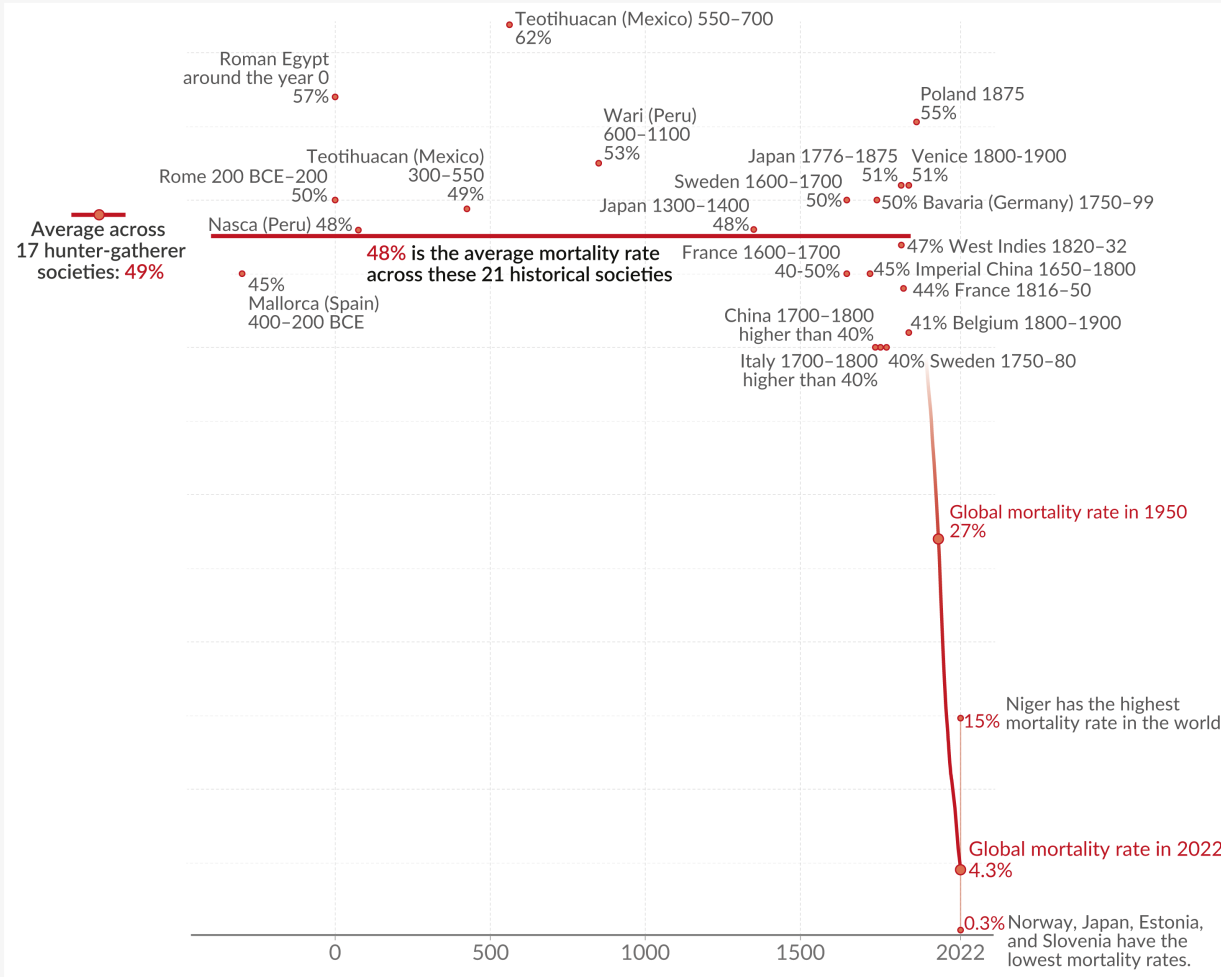
# TECHNOLOGY IS AWESOME

- We speak of technological progress, and progress is by nature *good*
- Technology improves communication, simplifies tasks, enhances learning, and boosts health and safety.
- With technology we can solve any problem...

# The long-run history of child mortality

Shown is the share of children who died before reaching the end of puberty.  
The age cut-off varies slightly between studies, but is generally around 15 years.

Our World  
in Data



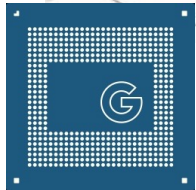
Data sources: Volk and Atkinson (2013), Human Mortality Database, and UN IGME  
OurWorldinData.org — Research and data to make progress against the world's largest problems.

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# PROGRESS HAS BEEN ASTONISHING

## 1986 Cray XMP SDSC



## 2024 Google Tensor SOC

## 40 Years later

\$15M Cray XMP 800M-FLOPS, 8M words (64MB of RAM).  
345KWatts

\$500 Google Pixel 8 1500G-FLOPS 12GB. 4Watts

200x more memory

2000x faster

30,000x less expensive

100,000x less power

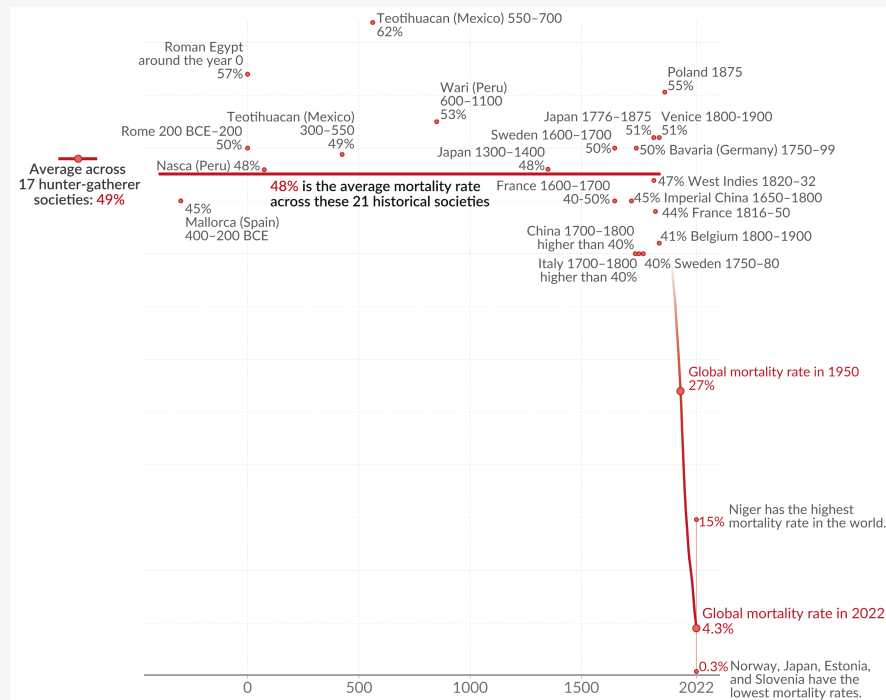


# HUMANITY HAS BENEFITED

## The long-run history of child mortality

Shown is the share of children who died before reaching the end of puberty. The age cut-off varies slightly between studies, but is generally around 15 years.

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- Medicine and understanding of disease: the Black Plague in 1350 killed nearly ½ of Europeans.
- Child mortality is now negligible in many countries.
- Mechanization has helped eliminate backbreaking labor and slavery.
- Poverty and starvation have dropped significantly.
- Many in the world can now enjoy leisure.





**TECHNOLOGY IS  
PROBLEMATIC**

*“Civil Engineering is the art of directing the great Sources of Power in Nature for the use and convenience of man.”*

The Royal Society of London

Increasingly the problems we're using technology to solve are created by... technology



## UNFORTUNATE OUTCOMES

- It consumes and destroys natural resources
- It makes us more fragile – while blinding us to our weaknesses
- It favors inequality – making the strong stronger and more able to oppress the weak
- It makes us less competent and capable
- It tends to make us and nature more homogeneous
- It makes us proud



# CONSUMING AND DESTROYING



## The Madeira Sugar Cane Boom

- Madeira means wood in Portuguese
- Colonized starting in 1420 thanks to advances in maritime navigation.
- Sugar cane grown using slaves and burning timber.
- By 1530 sugar production ended.
- Today about 1/3 of the forests remain.
- The wood for Madeira wine casks is imported from New England.



# CONSUMING AND DESTROYING

## The Grand Banks Cod

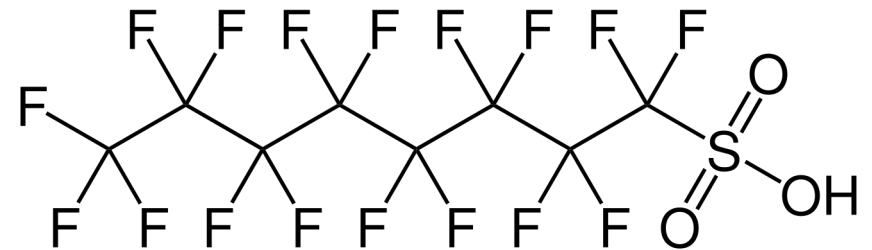
- Cabot, a Venetian born English explorer, discovered the Grand Banks cod in 1497.
- It was the world's largest supply of fish.
- The area was fished sustainably until the 1950s when modern technology was introduced.
- By 1992 only 1% of the cod remained and have not yet recovered.



# CONSUMING AND DESTROYING

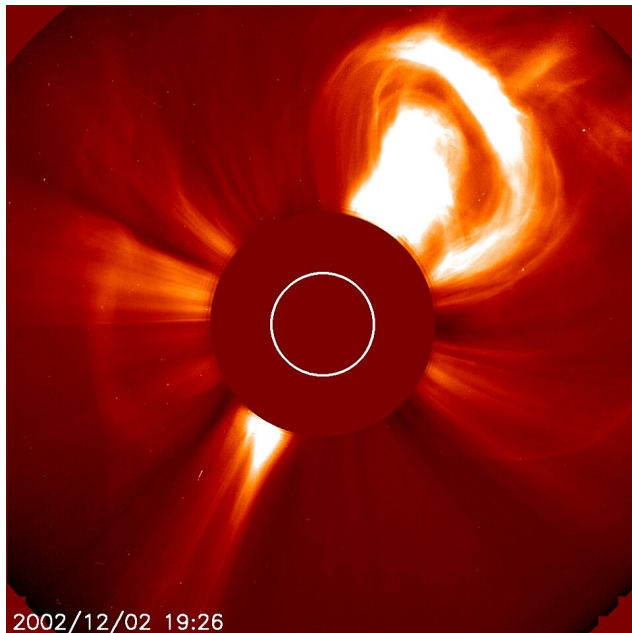
## PFAS polyfluoroalkyl – forever chemicals

- Used to "improve our lives" since the 1950s
- Chemical compounds with profound human health impacts that never disappear
- Present in soil, water, foods, our bodies
- Current cleanup in Belgium expected to cost around 2B€/year for the next 20 years



# MAKING US MORE FRAGILE

## Coronal Mass Ejections – Carrington Events



- September 1859 during Solar Cycle 10
- Caused fires, shocks and interruption of telegraphs
- Lloyd's of London estimates a similar event today will cause over \$3 trillion in damage.
- Without electricity and computer systems, no significant impacts beyond auroras
- We are in mid cycle 25.



# FRAGILE IN ALL OF OUR STRENGTH

**Isaiah 31:1-3** *Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the LORD! And yet he is wise and brings disaster; he does not call back his words but will arise against the house of the evildoers and against the helpers of those who work iniquity. The Egyptians are man, and not God, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD stretches out his hand, the helper will stumble, and he who is helped will fall, and they will all perish together.*

- Our reliance on technology makes us feel buffered and protected – unlike our ancestors who felt totally dependent on alignment with supernatural forces.
- Today we have great difficulty in recognizing our fragile place in the universe thanks to our technology.

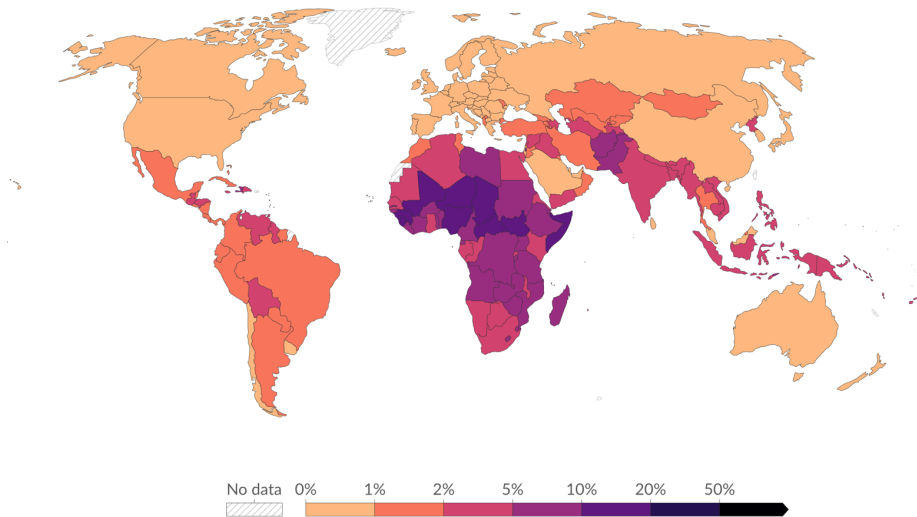


# FAVORING INEQUALITY

## Youth mortality rate, 2023

Estimated share of newborns who die before reaching the age of 15.

Our World  
in Data



Data source: United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (2025)

[OurWorldinData.org/child-mortality](https://OurWorldinData.org/child-mortality) | CC BY

- Technology has very unequally benefitted the world's population.
- While everyone's situation has improved somewhat, inequality continues to increase, and technology empowers the rich more than it empowers the poor.
- AI only accelerates this difference.
- AI told me: *"AI is **not inherently equalizing or unequalizing**. It is an **amplifier**: Right now, globally, the trend leans toward **greater inequality**, but this is a policy choice — not a technological inevitability."*



# FAVORING INEQUALITY

*Unequal weights and unequal measures  
are both alike an abomination to the  
LORD.*

Proverbs 20:10

Technology gives us more power for  
the strong to oppress the weak and  
take advantage of others – an  
abomination to God.

- Income inequality has increased significantly in recent years – technology has not liberated the poor.
- The number of people in extreme poverty (< \$3/day) – around 850M – has increased, not decreased in recent years.
- In almost every region, the top 1% is wealthier than the bottom 90% **combined.**



# LESS COMPETENT AND CAPABLE

**Who among you feel competent to:**

- Butcher an animal to prepare meat for consumption?
- Find North without a compass?
- Estimate your latitude and longitude on the earth with only a watch?
- Start a fire?
- Start a fire without a match?



**Without these skills your ancestors  
would starve to death or be lost at sea.**



# MORE HOMOGENEOUS

## Languages

- Global communication powered with technology creates a “winner takes all” situation.
- Every two weeks a language dies when its last speaker dies; 50 to 90% of languages are predicted to disappear by the next century.
- More than 40 % of the world’s estimated 7,100+ languages are in danger of disappearing by the end of this century.

## Bio-diversity

- 0.01-0.1% of species disappearing every year
- Low: 200-2000; high: 10,000-100,000 disappear every year
- A study of 5,000 vertebrate species shows a decline of 73% of populations between 1970 and 2020.



# PROUD: UZZIAH, KING IN JUDAH ~750BC

**2 Chronicles 26:1-5** *And all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. He built Eloth and restored it to Judah, after the king slept with his fathers. Uzziah was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. And he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God, and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him prosper.*



He beat the Philistines in war – respected all the way to Egypt.



He built towers, armies, cisterns, vineyards.



He loved the soil.



**2 Chronicles 26:15** *And his fame spread far, for he was **marvelously** helped, till he was strong.*



# UZZIAH WENT ALL IN ON TECHNOLOGY

**2 Chronicles 26:15-16** *In Jerusalem he made machines, invented by skillful men, to be on the towers and the corners, to shoot arrows and great stones. And his fame spread far, for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong. But when he was strong, he grew proud, to his destruction. For he was unfaithful to the LORD his God and entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.*

He began in weakness, surrounded by enemies, humbled by Israel.

He chose to humbly ask God to help him until he started to believe he could be successful without God's help by using technology.

He ended his life as a leper humbled by God.





**TECHNOLOGY  
DOES NOT MEET  
OUR MOST  
FUNDAMENTAL  
NEEDS**

*“Now I a fourfold vision see,  
And a fourfold vision is given to me;  
‘Tis fourfold in my supreme delight  
And threefold in soft Beulah’s night  
And twofold Always. May God us keep  
From Single vision & Newton’s sleep!”*

Correspondence of William Blake to Thomas Butts



# OUR NEEDS

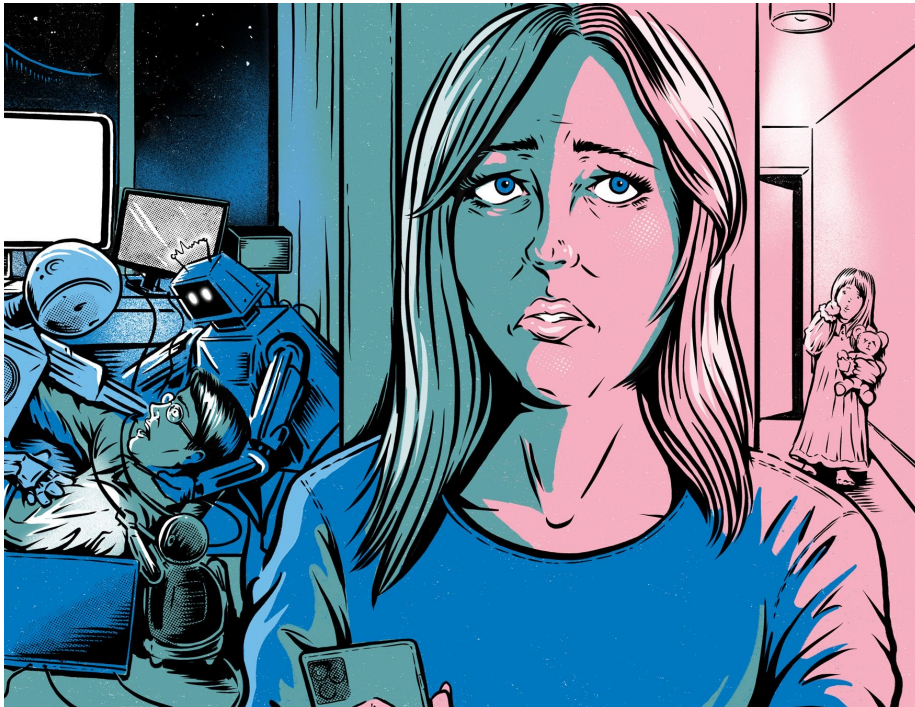
- Food and safety – technology offers some assistance here
- Peace and freedom from stress
- Meaning and love – feeding our soul
- Connection with the Eternal – knowing and being known by God

*For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?*

■ **Mark 8:36-37**



# TECHNOLOGY HURTS RELATIONSHIPS...



**Recent WIRED article:**

**“Meet the Sad Wives of AI”**

“Are you married to a man who’s obsessed with AI? I’m so, so sorry.”

*“He’s off in another world, a world of prompts and benchmarks and epiphanies, while she’s firmly in this one.”*



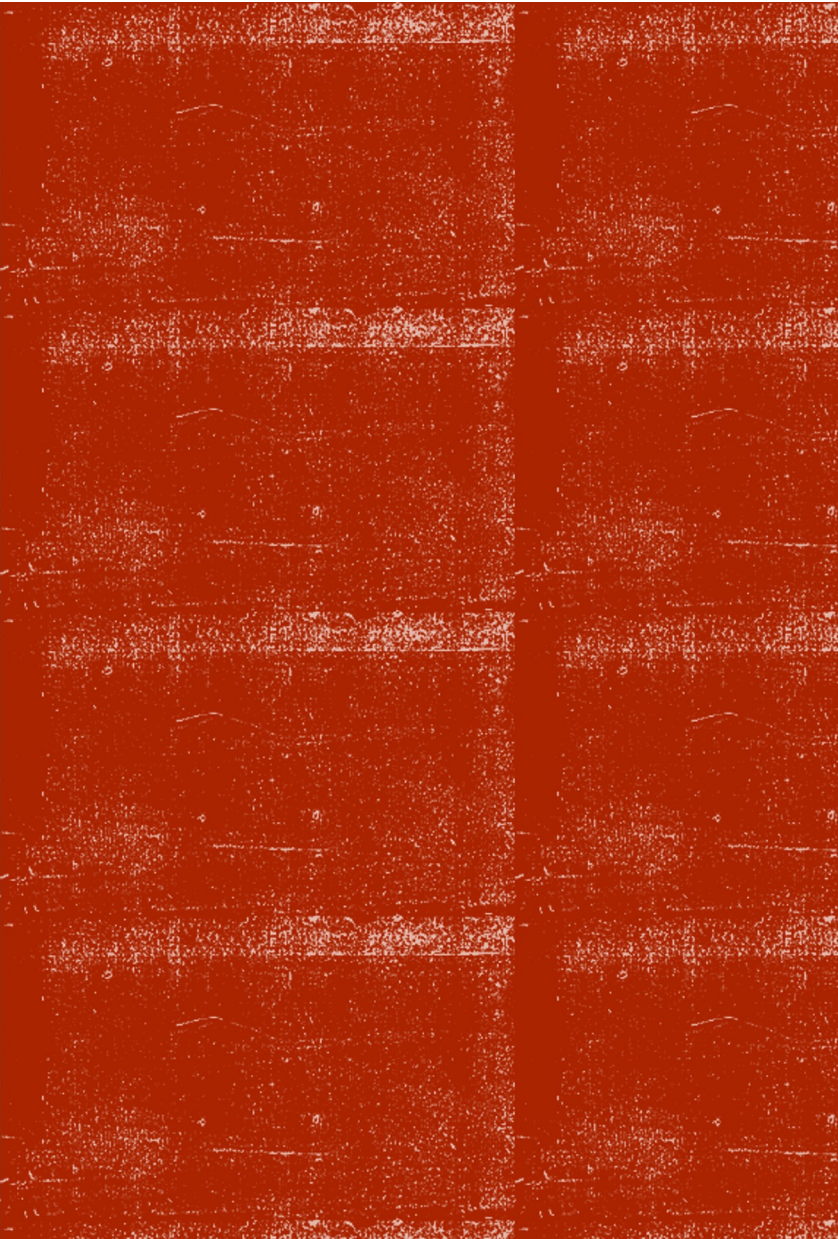
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*For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.*

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Revelation 3:17-18





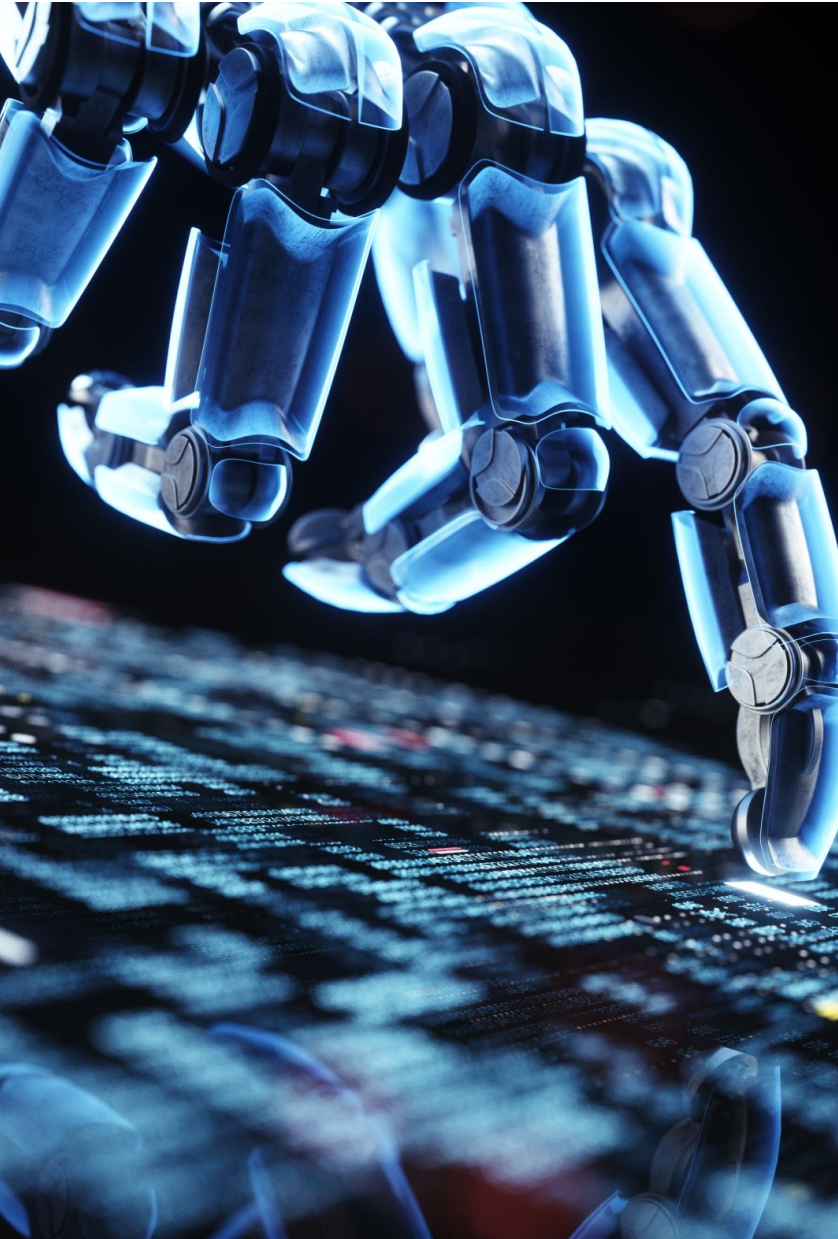
*Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

*The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!*

*No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.*

Matthew 6:19-24





# CONCLUSIONS

- Technology is amazing, but it is not neutral.
- We must recognize what we lose and what we gain.
- Technology can never meet our soul's needs.
- It blinds us to our need for God.
- Collectively, make decisions to master it rather than being mastered by it.

*Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. They collapse and fall, but we rise and stand upright.*

— Psalms 20:7-8

*“Live simply so that others may simply live.”*

— Mahatma Gandhi

