

PK's Perspectives ... Know Jesus, Know Heaven

A boatload of viewpoints about the possible impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on any and every sphere of human life are emerging on internet opinion blogs and news websites.

A simple definition of Artificial Intelligence (AI) from IBM is: “Artificial intelligence leverages computers and machines to mimic the problem-solving and decision-making capabilities of the human mind.” Another definition of AI from [investopedia.com](https://www.investopedia.com) is: “Artificial intelligence is based on the principle that human intelligence can be defined in a way that a machine can easily mimic it and execute tasks, from the most simple to those that are even more complex. The goals of artificial intelligence include mimicking human cognitive activity.”

As AI becomes a part of the cultural mosaic, I wrestle with questions like “How should my faith as a Christ follower influence my response to the unavoidable rise and use of Artificial Intelligence in our world? Do I embrace it...fear it...condemn it...learn to use it in a responsible way?” I’ve yet to answer all these questions but there are a few constructs undergirding my prayerful search for answers. Following are three of those constructs.

The first is the construct of thoughtful change. It is problematic, the rapidity with which AI has become a thing. Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated during his U.N. General Assembly speech two weeks ago: “The AI revolution is progressing at lightning speed. It took centuries for humanity to adapt to the agricultural revolution. It took decades to adapt to the industrial revolution. We may have but a few years to adapt to the AI revolution.” I understand change is a constant in life; in fact, I encourage & enjoy change. But thoughtful change — as opposed to rapid change — seems fraught with less obstacles.

A second construct I’m standing on is that history shows how every invention of humanity can be used for great good or great evil (e.g., the discovery of nuclear fission). Emma Colton has said of AI, “The perils are great, and they are before us: The disruption of democracy, the manipulation of minds, the decimation of jobs, the proliferation of crime and the hacking of all the systems that facilitate modern life. An example of ‘scary AI’ is an advanced autonomous weapon system that can identify and attack targets without human intervention. These systems, often referred to as ‘killer robots’ or ‘lethal autonomous weapons,’ raise ethical concerns and the potential for misuse or unintended consequences.” On the flip side, AI shows great potential for more accurate medical diagnostics, faster advancement in finding long sought cures, softening the physical/mental decline of aging, personalizing education systems to student needs, increasing productivity in the manufacturing realm (but at what cost to the labor force?), more precise weather forecasting, fraud detection, and disaster management, just to name a few AI positives. A central issue will always be “Who controls the development of the AI platform?”

The third construct to which I stay anchored reminds me that anything and everything that happens in culture is prelude to the second coming of Christ. The day of Christ’s second coming is already set and our Father doesn’t adjust the date to fit the latest societal upheaval. So truly, all of life as we know it is prelude to the day of Jesus’s second appearance; to speculate that a particular event or development (such as the mainstream arrival of AI) is the obvious precursor to Christ’s return is to restate the obvious — all things are precursors to Christ’s return. It was only 3 and a half years ago that many Christians were proclaiming Covid-19 to be the manifest precursor to Christ’s return; before that it was the 2012 Mayan Calendar Apocalypse; in 1999 it was being loudly proclaimed that the Y2K BUG would usher in the second coming of Christ. Jesus is coming again. If Jesus is your King, His second coming will be your joy. If you reject His offer of salvation, His second coming will be devastating. Know Jesus, know heaven; no Jesus, no heaven. Grace & peace, love you. PK