

# Wisdom for a Smartphone Age: Introduction

## I. Introductory Discussion

### A. Why this class, why now?

1. “Here we are, in the ‘digital age,’ an age so thick with innovation that we grow blind to it. And we are adopting and adapting to new technologies faster than any generation in world history” (38).<sup>1</sup>
2. “the danger ... is that the tools set the agenda” (19).
3. “We all need to stop and reflect on our impulsive smartphone habits” (23)

### B. What is technology?

1. Is a rock technology? How about a sling?
2. How might you define technology?
  - a. “the reordering of raw materials for human purposes” (31).
  - b. The way humans use the knowledge God allows them to discover in order to extend their reach, solve problems, and fulfill their callings under God's sovereignty.

## II. A Biblical Theology of Technology

### A. Creation (Gen. 1:26-28, 2:10-15)

1. Mankind is made in the Creator God's image
2. Mankind is given a role of imaging God by exercising dominion over creation (which implies the creation of technology).

### B. Fall (Gen. 3:16-18; 4, 11)

1. Technology must now be used to survive in a cursed Earth. We use technology for good.
2. Mankind now has sinful hearts, and we employ our technologies to sinful ends.

### C. Redemption (Rom. 12:2)

1. We can have renewed minds, not enslaved to sin anymore.
2. Technology is a good gift, but it is not the Savior we need.

### D. New Creation (Rev. 20-22)

1. Our ultimate hope is the return of Christ (not new technology)
2. The New Earth will be a perfect world with perfect people. How might technology fit in?

### E. Where we live in the storyline

1. “We find ourselves east of Eden [in God's fallen creation], west of the Great City [not to the New Heavens and Earth], journeying now in God's sovereignly guided history, holding smartphones.” (30).
2. This is where God has sovereignly placed us (Acts 17:26).

### F. Some Take Aways from this Biblical Theology of Technology

1. We must not fear or worship technology.
2. We must think biblically, with God's wisdom, about our technology. The tools can't set the agenda.

## III. An Ancient Book (the Bible) Gives Us Wisdom for a Smartphone Age

### A. The greatest commandment for technology (Matt. 22:35-39)

### B. Our goal in this class is to give thought to how our devices can undermine our spiritual health and learn what disciplines we can develop to preserve our spiritual health.

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<sup>1</sup> Quotes are from Tony Reinke, *12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You*.

## Summary of *12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You*

How our devices can undermine our spiritual health	Disciplines to preserve our spiritual health
Our phones amplify our addiction to distractions (Ch. 1) and splinter our perception of our place in time (12).	We minimize unnecessary distractions to hear from God (1) and to find our place in God's unfolding history (12).
Our phones push us to evade the limits of embodiment (2) and cause us to treat one another harshly (11).	We embrace our flesh-and-blood embodiment (2) and handle one another with grace and gentleness (11).
Our phones feed our craving for immediate approval (3) and promise to hedge against our fear of missing out (10).	We aim at God's ultimate approval (3) and find that, in Christ, we have no ultimate regrets to fear (10).
Our phones undermine key literary skills (4) and, because of our lack of discipline, make it difficult to identify ultimate meaning (9).	We treasure the gift of literacy (4) and prioritize God's Word (9).
Our phones offer us a buffet of produced media (5) and tempt us to indulge in visual vices (8).	We listen to God's voice in creation (5) and find a fountain of delight in the unseen Christ (8).
Our phones overtake and distort our identity (6) and tempt us toward unhealthy isolation and loneliness (7).	We treasure Christ to be molded into his image (6) and seek to serve the legitimate needs of our neighbors (7).

### Questions for Discussion at Home

1. What are some good ways technology can be used? What are some harmful ways technology can be used?
2. How have you seen technology positively affect your family? Negatively?
3. God could have made a world in which we could not use raw resources to create and build. Why do you think he made it full of materials that could be reorganized by humans?

### Questions for Self-Reflection

1. Do my technology habits move me toward God or away from him?
2. Do they edify me and others or primarily build things of no lasting value?

This chart is based on the lists from pages 189-90 of Tony Reinke's book, *12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You*.