

Artificial Intelligence Through the Lens of Christianity

According to [Pascal's Wager](#), any rational human being should live as a Christian and believe in the existence of God. If you are a believer, you might find that at the end of your life, God does not exist after all. But if God exists, you will spend eternity in Heaven. On the contrary, if you are *not* a believer, at the end of your life, you might find that God does not exist after all. But if God exists, you will spend eternity in Hell.

I begin this introduction with Pascal's Wager because although it does not necessarily prove the existence of God, Pascal's Wager demonstrates that it is more beneficial for humans to believe in God than not. In this regard, if it is more eternally beneficial for humans to live as Christians, it is important to explore the implications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) through the lens of Christianity. Especially as AI advances and becomes more human-like, there will be a range of moral issues that Christians will need to address. As AI has yet to reach this point, there is currently a lack of commentary considering the moral dilemmas that AI will present for Christians, in addition to a lack of biblical understanding for how humans should approach AI.

This paper will be presented in three sections, the first being whether AI is alluded to in the Bible, the second being whether the creation of AI is a sin, and the third being whether the use of AI is a sin.

Section I: AI in the Bible

The Book of Revelation is a recounting of the second coming of Christ in the form of a vision revealed to John, an exiled Christian missionary. Since Revelation is a prophetic account of end times, I sought to identify whether AI was ever alluded to in John's vision.

Revelation 13 seems to be a parallel for AI on earth. For some context, this chapter details two beasts, agents that Satan uses to carry out his twisted commands on earth.

Revelation 13:15-17 in particular seems like it could be symbolic of AI.

¹⁵The second beast was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that the image could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. ¹⁶It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, ¹⁷so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.

This second beast is detailed in a subsection called “The Beast out of the Earth,” which is interesting because AI is essentially a “beast” of human creation on earth. For analysis purposes, I will assume that AI is the second beast.

Verse 15 details the power and authority possessed by this second beast. The beast exercises absolute control, forcing people to abandon their faith by worshiping a false image, and killing those who fail to follow. This false image people must worship, imposed by the second beast, is similar to the biased information and censorship that AI perpetuates. People must suppress (in the case of censorship) or abandon (due to biased information) their personal beliefs under the “rule” of AI. In other words, this suppression and abandonment of one’s original beliefs is forced upon those who utilize AI in the same way that the people on earth in Revelation are forced to worship a false image by the second beast. The second beast also seems to exhibit a mechanical nature; it shows no mercy, causing all who refuse to worship to be killed. Similarly, the shortcomings of AI are due to its mechanical nature. Because it operates solely on the data it is fed and the instructions coding for it, AI is incapable of mercy, the same way that it is incapable of detecting the biases or discrimination caused by its applications.

In verses 16 and 17, the second beast forces all inhabitants of earth to receive a mark of the beast’s identity, and this mark is required in order for people to “buy or sell.” From a literal

perspective, this mark could be a reference to a microchip implant that all people would be required to have in the future. This may sound improbable, but [microchipping employees](#) is already in effect and in discussion across the globe. From a figurative perspective, this mark in Revelation 13 could be a representation of all AI applications in general. Either way, the most conspicuous details of these verses are embedded in the fact that everyone is required to have this mark, and how the mark is required for people to exercise basic functions of life. If this were true, Revelation 13 serves as a warning. AI will be inescapable. Humans will become dependent on AI to a point that without AI, it will be impossible to live.

While there are no *explicit* mentions of AI in the Bible, we can search the Bible for allusions, like in Revelation 13, which can serve to increase our biblical understanding of AI.

Section II: Creation of AI

As Christians, we know that as long as we are on earth, we are “in the flesh”. Everything in this world—all the desires of the flesh, are “not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:16-17). To do the will of God may seem daunting, but the Bible lays out ten commandments that guide Christians to act in obedience. When we act in obedience, we are able to do His will. This section is centered upon the question of whether the creation of AI is a sin. I will define “sin” as anything opposing the law or the will of God.

There are a number of instances in the Bible where man attempts to play the role of God. The creation of human-like AI seems reminiscent of this theme. Genesis 11:1-9 details the story of the Tower of Babel. During this time, the entire world speaks the same language. As people settle down, they first say to each other, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” But soon after, they say, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the

heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.” The creation of bricks by the people were not necessarily a sin. These bricks can be compared to the “primitive” forms of AI that exist today. For example, take the case of facial recognition and natural language processing. Each can be considered separate bricks. However, when these two bricks are put together, they come closer to building a tower. The Tower of Babel seems comparable to the human-like AI that we are advancing towards. It is this tower, in Genesis 11, that is considered sinful, because it is man’s idolatry of self in effort to play the role of God.

There are consequences for these tower-builders. Their plans go to ruin, God confuses their language, and they are no longer able to communicate with each other. Even further, their greatest fear becomes a reality; they are scattered all over the face of the earth.

One possible interpretation is that this passage serves as a warning for the consequences humanity will face by creating human-like AI. We will lose our “language” as we become unable to distinguish differences between human and AI communication. We will become divided and scattered as we begin to isolate ourselves from real, human connections, because AI is capable of filling this void.

Another possible interpretation is that any strive to glorify ourselves by attempting to be God, (like through the creation of human-like AI) will come to ruin before even coming close to fruition, due to the sovereignty of God. The Tower of Babel was never finished; God intervened in time to prevent this. Perhaps this means that as Christians, we can have confidence that God will stop our self-destructive plans in time. By faith, we have reason to believe that should it be against His plans, human-like AI may never be achieved simply because God will prevent it.

Responding to the question posed at the beginning of this section, the creation of AI may not necessarily be a sin. However, from a biblical perspective, anything that aims to bring glory to man and serves as an idol conflicts with the law and will of God. In this regard, the creation of human-like AI would be a sin. But as the Tower of Babel demonstrates, it is important to be vigilant that the bricks we create do not turn into towers. The attempt to build the tower is something that turns out to be destructive for the people; it is a great foreshadowing that the creation of human-like AI may lead to similar consequences.

Section III: Use of AI

The overarching question of this final section is whether the use of AI is a sin. Should AI advance to a human-like state, it is inevitable that AI will integrate into normal society. This will bring on a whole set of unprecedented issues within the church. I will provide an in-depth analysis of one specific case study.

Imagine it's Sunday morning. You walk into the church sanctuary and sit in your usual section. You look up to the stage, and notice something peculiar. It's your pastor and an AI standing together, looking as though they are *both* preparing for service to start. Service begins, and your pastor announces that today, there will be a guest speaker, a "Pastor Williams." This "Pastor Williams" turns out to be the AI. Pastor Williams delivers an outstanding message, one that is even better than the sermons your human pastor gives; it seems, the church agrees. Before long, they have "hired" Pastor Williams, who now preaches every Sunday. The question is, would the use of AI as a pastor be considered a sin?

By the definition I established for sin in the previous section, this use of AI as a pastor *would* be a sin, because it conflicts with God's instructions and descriptions for leadership laid out in the Bible. 1 Timothy 4:12 says, "...but set an example for the believers in speech, in

conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.” An AI is not fit to lead in a pastoral position because it is impossible for AI to even have faith. AI is man’s creation, not God’s creation. The Holy Spirit could never dwell within an AI the way the Holy Spirit dwells in man. Jeremiah 23:1 says, “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” AI as a pastor would mean that the AI would be serving as a false shepherd as it is never led by the Holy Spirit. False shepherds are a threat to God’s people because they can cause believers to stumble. This is why these shepherds are condemned by God in the Bible.

You might wonder if my analysis would change if it were true that many people grew stronger in their faith and many more new people came to Christ after Pastor Williams began preaching at the church. Wouldn’t this negate the sin of hiring Pastor Williams, the AI, to lead the congregation as a pastor? The answer is no. God can use any shortcoming, imperfection, or sin that we set into motion to bring glory to Himself and reveal His goodness, because God is a God of love, compassion, mercy, and grace. This does not change the fact that the original action or decision was sinful.

Ultimately, there will be a wide range of moral dilemmas that advancing AI will bring about for Christians. The answers to these questions may seem nuanced, but biblical truths are not. Through the lens of Christianity, AI is merely a creation of earth. Christians are called to understand its workings, but not be consumed by it because of a greater purpose that exists beyond this temporary earth and temporary life. This is not saying that Christians should not be concerned about AI at all. Christians should understand the implications of AI, but in doing so, also understand and trust in the great sovereignty and power of God to carry out His ultimate will on earth.

References

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