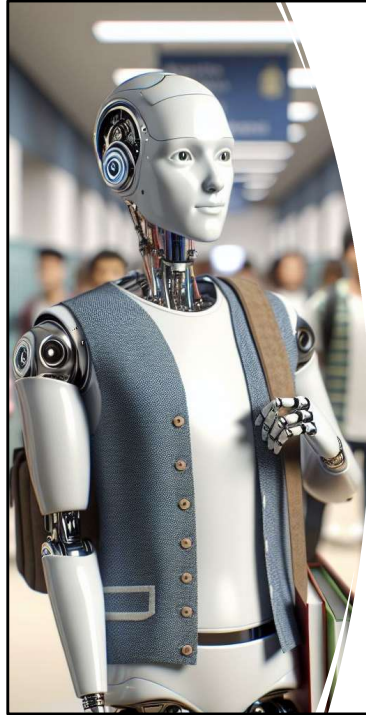




"When Words Abound, Transgression is Inevitable...."

Navigating the Minefield of Large Language
Models in Christian Higher Education

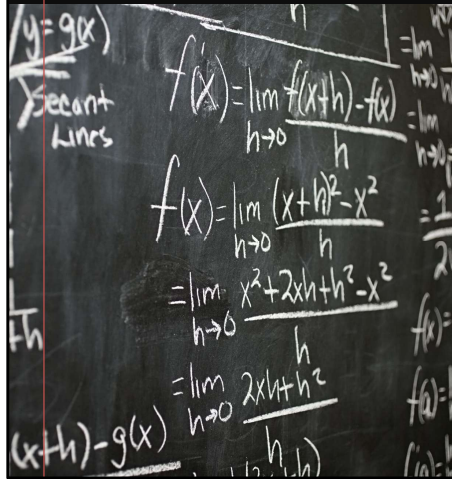
Dr. Andrew Yates

ayates@dts.edu

Dallas Theological Seminary

Dr. James Thames Educational Leadership Summit
March 2025

Philosophic & Practical Application of LLMs in the Classroom.



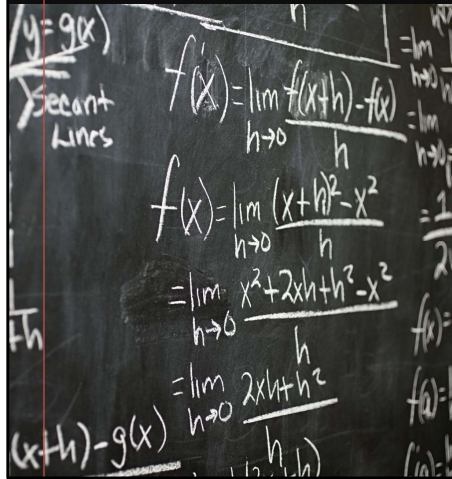
The image shows a chalkboard with handwritten mathematical derivations. On the left, it says "Secant Lines" and "y = g(x)". The main derivation is for the derivative of f(x) = x^2 using the limit definition. It shows the steps: f'(x) = lim_{h \to 0} (f(x+h) - f(x)) / h, then f(x) = lim_{h \to 0} ((x+h)^2 - x^2) / h, then = lim_{h \to 0} (x^2 + 2xh + h^2 - x^2) / h, and finally = lim_{h \to 0} (2xh + h^2) / h. The final result is f'(x) = 2x.

$$\begin{aligned} f'(x) &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x+h) - f(x)}{h} \\ f(x) &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{(x+h)^2 - x^2}{h} \\ &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{x^2 + 2xh + h^2 - x^2}{h} \\ &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{2xh + h^2}{h} \end{aligned}$$

1. What are LLMs?
2. What are LLMs designed to do?
3. How can I best use this tool?



Philosophic & Practical Application of LLMs in the Classroom.



The image shows a chalkboard with handwritten mathematical work. On the left, it says "Secant Lines" and "y = g(x)". The main work is the derivation of the derivative of $f(x) = x^2$ using the limit definition. It starts with $f'(x) = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x+h) - f(x)}{h}$. Then it substitutes $f(x) = x^2$ to get $f'(x) = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{(x+h)^2 - x^2}{h}$. This is expanded to $\lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{x^2 + 2xh + h^2 - x^2}{h}$, which simplifies to $\lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{2xh + h^2}{h}$. The final step shows $\lim_{h \rightarrow 0} (2x + h) = 2x$.

$$\begin{aligned} f'(x) &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x+h) - f(x)}{h} \\ f(x) &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{(x+h)^2 - x^2}{h} \\ &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{x^2 + 2xh + h^2 - x^2}{h} \\ &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{2xh + h^2}{h} \\ &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} (2x + h) = 2x \end{aligned}$$

- Helpful Introduction for Educators & Students 🧩 / 📦
- Drs. Avery, Davis, Gandy, and Willis Exploring AI: Perspectives and Practices at DTS (CAC 208)

What are Large Language Models? (AI with Words)

Used by 90% of Students:

- ChatGPT (Open AI) - Most widely used
- Claude (Anthropic) - Competitor to Open AI
- Gemini (Google):
- Llama (Meta):
- Grok (xAI): Integrated w/ Twitter
- R1 (DeepSeek): low processing power needed



A tool that has the capacity to create a text version of anything you can imagine

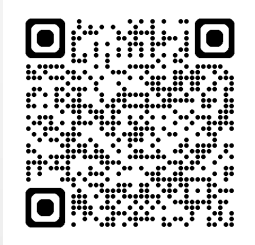
What are Large
Language Models?
(AI with Words)

*AI is not going to take
your job; people who
know how to use AI are
going to take your job.*

 **NVIDIA**

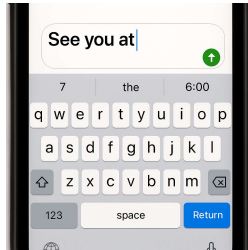






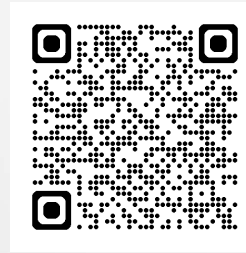
- Nvidia has a greater market cap (Q1 2025) than these country's GDP: Israel, Italy, Canada, Russia, Brazil, South Korea, Australia, Mexico, turkey, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Ireland, UAE (all but 7 countries on earth)
- When R1 was released, Nvidia processors company lost the value of the entire auto industry in one day

What are Large Language Models? (AI with Words)



Output Based on:

1. Dataset
2. Training
3. Prompts



- LLMs have read everything ("Large") and automatically "guesses" one word at a time, generating whatever you've invited it to generate.
- Exposed to approximately 3 billions pages of text:
 - If these pages were one book laid on it's side, it would stretch from DTS Dallas to DTS Houston.
 - Number of drops of water within a water tower
 - Number of blades of grass in 3 Dallas suburbs
- Generates an "original" product
- Basically all chili recipes, work out plans, hallmark cards, Greek 101 syllabuses are the same.



How can we use Large Language Models?

Personal:

1. Generate Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipes
2. Generate meal plan, recipes, & shopping list for family with young children, high protein, under 100\$ a week, maximizing local grocery store ads.
3. Make a Bible reading plan in any language or any theme.
4. Generate personalized prayers
5. Digital "Shepherd"
6. Digital sermons



How can we use Large Language Models?

Administration:

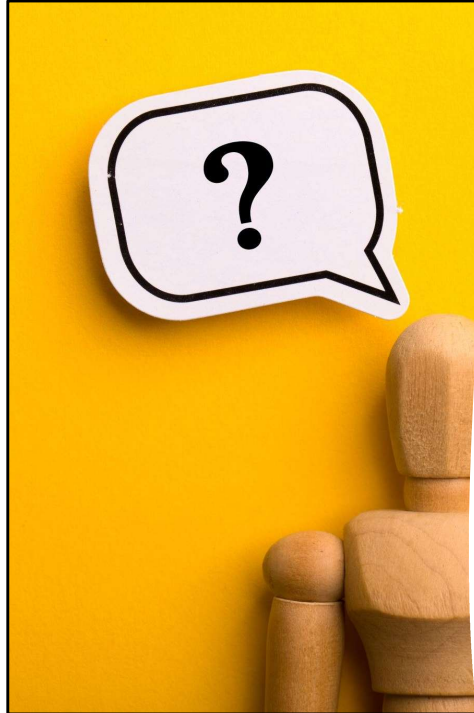
1. Draft an email to send out to students. give feedback on an email drafted to sent out to students.
2. Optimize personal calendar
3. Write a Grant proposal or scholarship application
4. Optimize a CV or Resume
5. Generate notes from a meeting, providing summary and action items



How can we use Large Language Models?

Writing

1. Provide free editing/writing feedback (i.e., Grammarly)
2. Provide structural or stylistic feedback.
3. Give feedback from a certain perspective (such as that of a DTS faculty or student from a certain age/ethnic background)
4. Write 100 romantic (and tastefully puny) Haikus to hide around the house for your wife to find
5. 将内容生成不同的语言



How can we use Large Language Models?

Testing:

1. Generate questions for a quiz/test
2. Suggest step-by-step solutions to explain the answer for algebra questions
3. Provide a grading rubric for essay questions
4. Generate case studies
5. Grade essay questions based on a provided rubric.
6. Prepare for an interview by generating questions



How can we use Large Language Models?

Teaching:

1. ELI5
2. Tutoring (even other languages) for any subject at any level
3. Summarize books/articles
4. Generate class Syllabus
5. Generate (endless bank) of study questions based on lectures, previous quizzes, and assignments



The lawsuit began like so many others: A man named Roberto Mata sued the airline Avianca, saying he was injured when a metal serving cart struck his knee during a flight to Kennedy International Airport in New York.

When Avianca asked a Manhattan federal judge to toss out the case, Mr. Mata's lawyers vehemently objected, submitting a 10-page brief that cited more than half a dozen relevant court decisions. There was *Martinez v. Delta Air Lines*, *Zicherman v. Korean Air Lines* and, of course, *Varghese v. China Southern Airlines*, with its learned discussion of federal law and "the tolling effect of the automatic stay on a statute of limitations."

There was just one hitch: No one — not the airline’s lawyers, not even the judge himself — could find the decisions or the quotations cited and summarized in the brief.

That was because ChatGPT had invented everything.

The lawyer who created the brief, Steven A. Schwartz of the firm Levidow, Levidow & Oberman, threw himself on the mercy of the court on Thursday, saying in an affidavit that he had used the artificial intelligence program to do his legal research — “a source that has revealed itself to be unreliable.”

Mr. Schwartz, who has practiced law in New York for three decades, told Judge P. Kevin Castel that he had no intent to deceive the court or the airline. Mr. Schwartz said that he had never used ChatGPT, and “therefore was unaware of the possibility that its content could be false.”

He had, he told Judge Castel, even asked the program to verify that the cases were real.

It had said yes.

Mr. Schwartz said he “greatly regrets” relying on ChatGPT “and will never do so in the future without absolute verification of its authenticity.”



#1 Concern for LLMs

- Often you can't know if something, even excellent-sounding things, are correct (especially if you don't know the subject)
- "Hallucinations"
 - "Bad" Dataset
 - "Bad" Training
 - "Poor" Prompts
- It's not even clear to the engineers why one thing is generated rather than another. (LARGE language model)

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Golden Rule of AI: *Don't have LLMs do anything You couldn't do*

LLMs make a great personal assistant but a terrible expert

Example of a friend hiring someone for his lab, who needed to know about folding proteins. (I have no idea how that works) He had a ton of applicants who just read the Wikipedia page but didn't really understand the subject. They sounded great (to me) but couldn't do the job.



How to use LLMs

Treat LLMs as a personal assistant (or Teaching Assistant) rather than a subject master or expert

- Don't Expect a first draft to be the final submission - multiple iterations are typically needed
- Don't expect it's final submission to be your final product. Take it as a working draft that still needs 10-20% work done to it.
- You can determine what sort of personal assistant they are. (Get the best assistant possible & it will sound like that person!)



How to use LLMs

Prompts:

- A. Assume a role (“You are a the most awesome [x]”)
- B. Background & limitations
- C. Customized Creation
(Generate a Chart, list, 200-word essay, haiku, blog, email, etc.)
- D. Demeanor & Tone



How to use LLMs

Prompts:

- Ask additional questions if helpful: “Before you complete this task, ask me any other questions that might help you do an excellent job.”
- LLMs are more “fluent” in human than they are in English.

Example of offering Taylor Swift tickets & being tortured to try to “hack” the LLM.

Dangers &

Ethical

7.10 Guard against Inappropriate Assistance

Experienced writers regularly show their drafts to others for criticism and suggestions, and you should too (see [chapter 12](#)). But check how much assistance is appropriate and how you should acknowledge the assistance you receive.

1. Pla

- C
 - P
 - C
 - C
1. How much help is appropriate?
 - For a class paper, most instructors encourage students to get general criticism and minor editing, but not detailed rewriting or substantive suggestions.
 - For work submitted for publication, writers are free to get all the help they can from colleagues, reviewers, and others so long as these people don't become virtual ghostwriters.

become virtual
ghostwriters" (per
Turabian 7.10)

Example: Last week, (March 22, 2025) Dr. Shelly Melia of DBU was leading a breakout at the D6 Conference titled: "Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Threats" and she asked asking "how do you guys use Chat GPT?" One 10 year old (proudly) said: "I use it to write all of my papers!"

Dangers & Ethical Concerns

time of divine Providence, which has in

¹ This was once revealed to me in a dream.

² See R. Otto, *Das Heilige*. He has some i

- Every time you tell GPT to "read a document," it remembers it forever; regardless of the copyright.

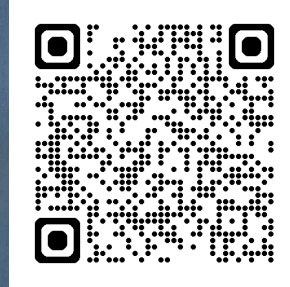
Recently, Dr. Terry Stovall of SWBTS found a student had unknowingly submitted an AI generated text as her own work that quoted several sentences of Dr. Stovall's published text verbatim

"this was revealed to me in a dream" Nikolai Berdyaev, *Divine and the Human* (London: G. Bles, 1949).

Dangers & Ethical Concerns

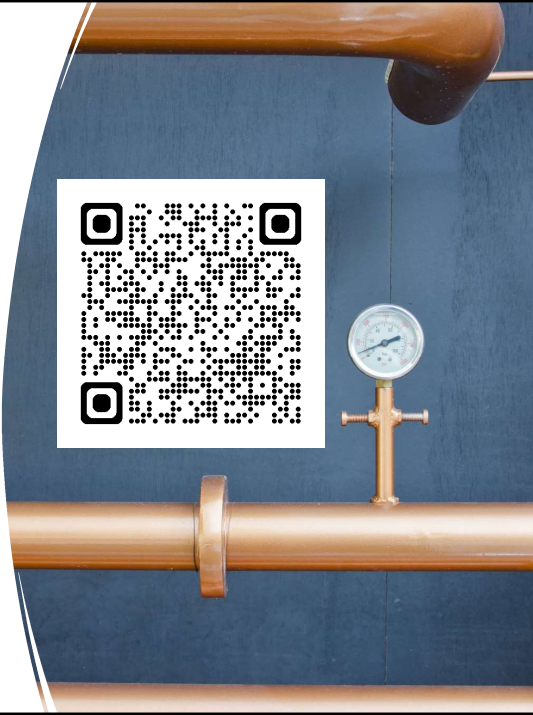
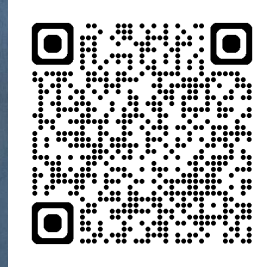
3. Further erosion of skill development

- John Dyer - I rely on GPS so much I don't know how to get to my sister's house
- "you'll never carry a calculator around, will you?"



Dangers & Ethical Concerns

4. Lack of true originality
5. Emotional Bonding Issues:
Higher use of LLM corresponds with
 - Emotional dependence
 - Lower socialization
 - Increased loneliness
 - Decreased well being



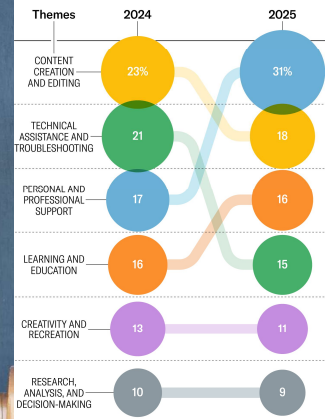
Dangers & Ethical Concerns



6. "Theology bots inevitably become therapy bots" – John Dyer

Major Gen AI Use Case Themes That Emerged

Use cases have shifted from technical to emotive over the past year.



Source: Filtered.com



Suggestions

1. Use LLMs as an assistant for things you would otherwise be able to do yourself.
2. Don't use LLMs when you need to "Cite your sources"
3. Be willing to change your classroom to better represent the historic goal of education rather than your personal history of education: Informative & Transformative

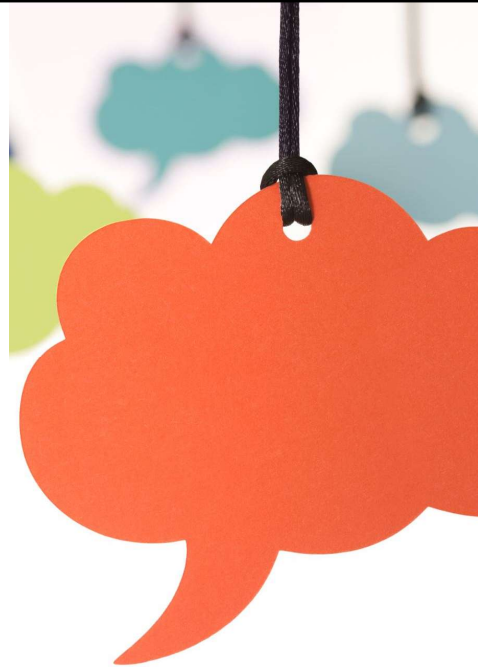


Suggestions

4. Don't use LLMs in situations where your leadership doesn't want you to.
 - *But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof! Instead, just say the word and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man under authority..."* (Matthew 8:8-9)
 - "If you are in doubt, ask someone with authority -- your teacher or advisor -- where the line is drawn. Then get all the help you can on the right side of it. ... your instructor sets the rules, so ask." (Turabian 7.10)
 - Most leadership does not understand LLMs nor are policies current. (Similar to Social Media Policies from the early 2000's)

Concluding Thoughts

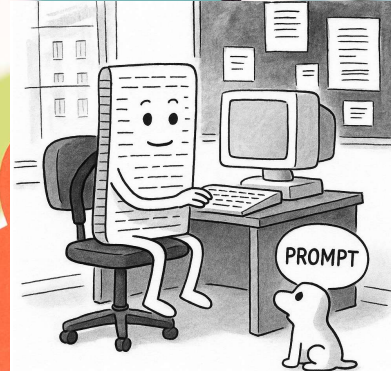
1. Cheating (still) can't be prevented. Some educators say we should do 100% oral defenses or utilize Plagiarism checkers to defeat LLM use in the classroom, but that is unrealistic.
 - Google "using Chat GPT on an interview" to see how it might be used in an oral defense
 - I can tell Chat GPT to "sound like me" and it will.



Concluding Thoughts



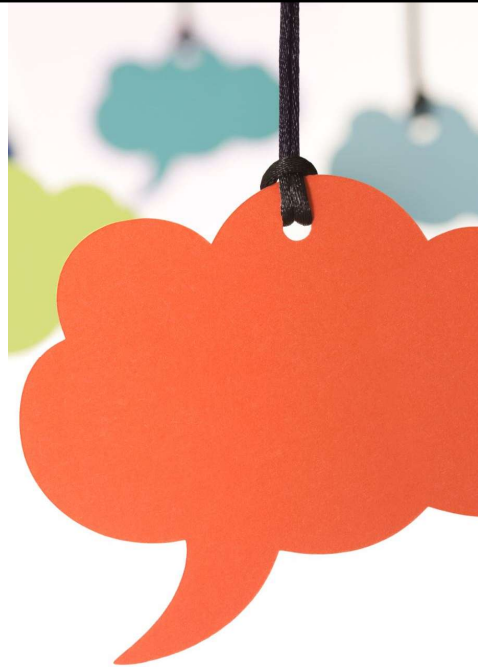
2. No one will trust anything online.
3. The future is for the experts because they will be able to identify what is true from what merely sounds good.
 - "1 Corinthians 19 says..."
 - "Presbyterianism of course means "from the pew"



"On the internet, nobody knows you're a LLM"

Concluding Thoughts

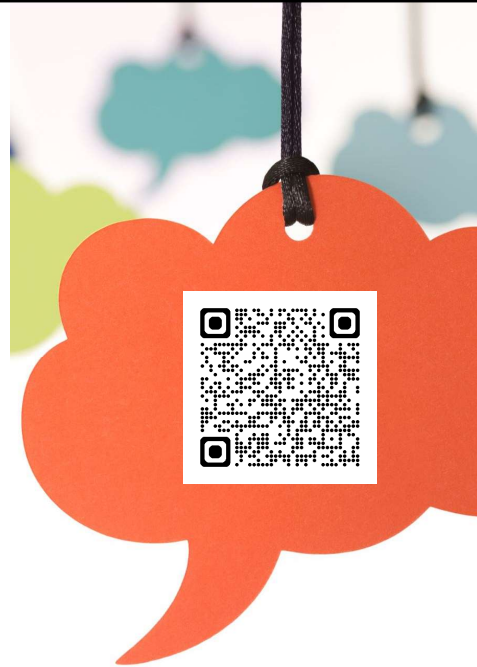
4. Personal programs will be increasingly valued over virtual (and progressively more artificial) programs
5. Advantages in education will likely shift away from internal processors (who are able to do papers/tests more easily) and towards external processors (who are able to more easily engage in real-time)

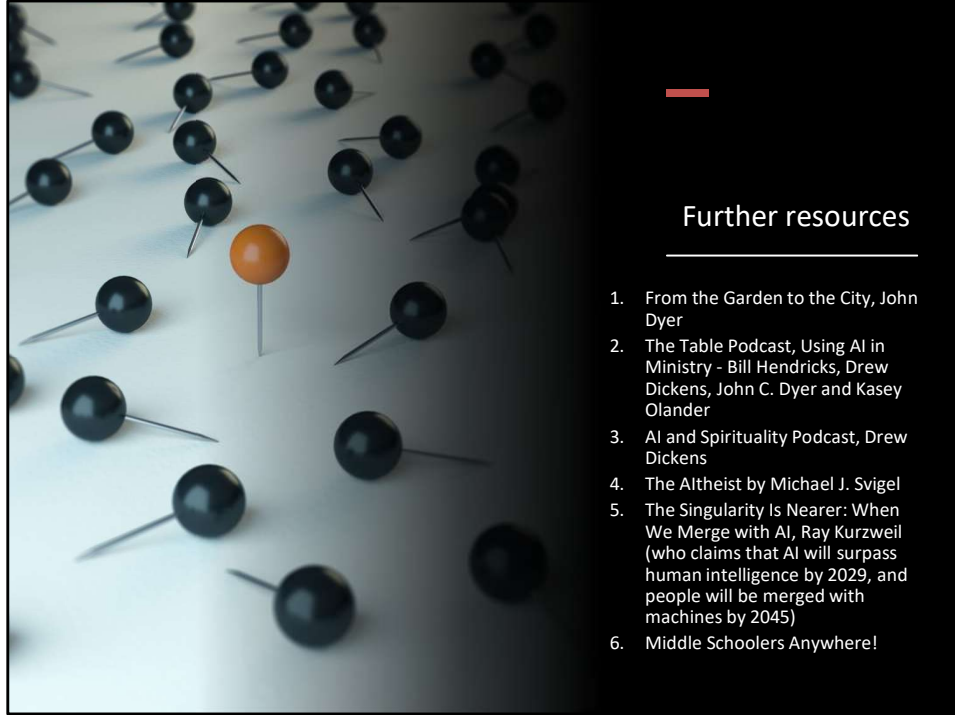


Concluding Thoughts

6. None of these things are new, just more dramatic!

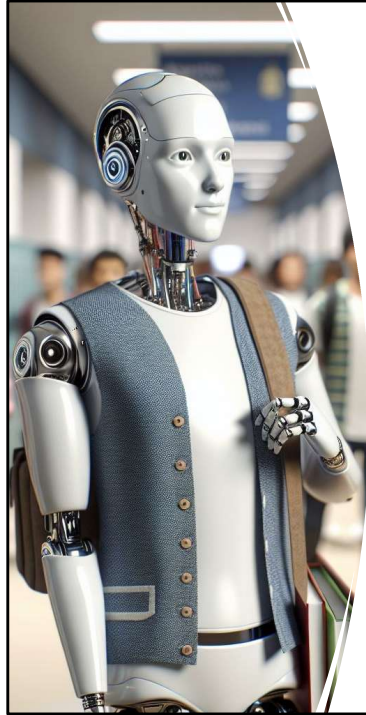
- *"...a technological change always brings cultural change. Technology does not make people do anything, but it does alter the choices people have in front of them."* From the Garden to the City, John Dyer
- "When words abound, transgression is inevitable, but the one who restrains his words is wise." Proverbs 10:19 (NET)
- "Just as dreams come when there are many cares so the rash vow of a fool occurs when there are many words." Ecclesiastes 5:3 (NET)





Further resources

1. From the Garden to the City, John Dyer
2. The Table Podcast, Using AI in Ministry - Bill Hendricks, Drew Dickens, John C. Dyer and Kasey Olander
3. AI and Spirituality Podcast, Drew Dickens
4. The Atheist by Michael J. Svigel
5. The Singularity Is Nearer: When We Merge with AI, Ray Kurzweil (who claims that AI will surpass human intelligence by 2029, and people will be merged with machines by 2045)
6. Middle Schoolers Anywhere!



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