

Worship and technology

One of the characteristics of our age is the advance of technology, which permeates almost every aspect of our lives. Probably your grandparents' house had one electric motor in it: the vacuum cleaner; how many are there in your house? With this revolution has come the idea that anything is and should be possible.

But not everything will be desirable, and may not benefit people in other parts of the world. The worship of technology has meant that bigger, faster, more efficient goals can be pursued, regardless of their consequences. We are often governed by seeking after power and status rather than by a desire to do good. We have the technologies to eradicate disease and make the desert bloom; instead we manufacture more powerful armaments to combat 'the risk of terrorism'.

It is not easy for Christians to challenge or disentangle ourselves from this prevailing culture. But the worship of God means recognising that the earth is the Lord's and all its fullness is his. And we are stewards of it, to enjoy and not to destroy, to share and not to hoard to ourselves.

Christian voices need to be heard in the debates about technology just as much as they are needed in debates about the family, education and political power. In her book 'Choices at the Heart of Technology', Ruth Conway writes that 'Shalom', the well-being of all in community under God, will become a reality only when technologies are aimed at empowering others rather than controlling them, profound respect is shown for nature's life-sustaining processes, addressing needs is given priority over creating demands, and the fruits of incessant technological change are measured against the durable harvest of the spirit. Technology will contribute, but not if it is made an object of worship.

**Elizabeth Goodridge and Ian Yearsley of Southwark Diocese
continue a series on worship.**

New Creation (2 Corinthians 5 v16-6v3)

God thinks you into being,
Plans you,
Draws in all your details,
Every part intended to be
As you are.
The master of creation,
His loving preparation
Takes patient years
Of workmanship and waiting,
Until, at the exact
Time and day of his favour,
He looks at your black and white image.
Love looks at you,
And if you turn your eyes towards him,
Christ colours you in.