

TEACHER EDITION / SIX-SESSION DISCUSSION GUIDE

Image-Bearers in a Digital Age

A theological framework
for artificial intelligence

Joel Davenport



READ / DISCUSS / PUT INTO PRACTICE

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A note from Joel

I'm excited for you as you begin this journey with your group! I recognize that this subject may bring challenging conversations, and leading them may not always feel easy. My prayer is that God will guide your discussions toward fruitful conversation and practical application that helps you and your group grow in Christ.

This guide is designed as a launchpad for your small group, Sunday school class, or other group discussion. Please review, modify, and adapt it as needed to lead your group effectively. I have tried to make it useful across a wide range of settings, but you know your group and their needs better than I ever will.

If questions arise or your group encounters something you do not feel equipped to answer, please begin the conversation with a pastor or elder in your local church. They know your church and can help you work through those questions with care. I welcome your questions, too, and would be glad to continue the conversation after you have explored it together within your local church.

Grace and peace,

Joel Davenport

Preparing to lead

Before the meeting

Provide each participant with the two pages for the session from the separate student handouts PDF. Bring the book, a Bible, and pens. Review the activity in advance and choose one follow-up prompt you expect your group to need. No live demonstration or AI account is required. For the longer first and second reading assignments, consider allowing an extra week or dividing each session across two meetings.

An hour together

Use the same hour-long rhythm as the handout: reconnect for 5 minutes; read Scripture and frame the session for 10; discuss for 25; work through the activity for 15; close with a commitment and prayer for 5. These are suggested timings. Give people a minute to write before inviting answers, and protect the closing application time. If discussion runs long, carry a question into the next meeting.

Leading the conversation

Ask for the reasons behind an answer and return to the passage or chapter when claims need support. Welcome people who are enthusiastic about AI and people who are uneasy about it. Let participants pass, write privately, or discuss in pairs. Keep fictional scenarios fictional. Where pastoral concerns arise, offer a personal follow-up rather than asking the group to solve someone's situation publicly.

Finding your way

Each session has three pages of teaching guidance, Scripture context, and discussion support. Question numbers match the separate student handouts PDF. Distribute that PDF to participants and keep a copy alongside this guide while teaching.

Using the Scripture guidance

Read the passage together, explain its connection to the discussion, and use the suggested prompt to invite a response. Then help participants apply the idea to the activity. The practical frameworks are defined here so you can use them directly with the group.

TEACHER NOTES / SESSION 01

Who are we?

Prepare: Prologue and chapters 1–2

Scripture: Genesis 1:26–28; James 3:9; Colossians 1:15

Aim

Help participants ground human dignity in God’s image rather than comparative intelligence or usefulness.

Open the conversation

Ask: ‘When you hear AI, what comes to mind first?’ Take a few brief responses, then move to what the assigned passages say about people. Keep the opening from becoming a debate about predictions.

Discussion cues

Q1: Invite participants to explain the prologue’s argument in their own words. Follow up: ‘How does that question connect with the image-of-God foundation in this session?’

Q2: Connect creation in God’s image, the respect owed to image-bearers in James, and Christ as the image of God in Colossians. Ask participants to notice those connections before discussing AI.

Q3: Introduce substantive, relational, and functional understandings of the image of God as who we are, our relationships, and our calling to steward.

Q4: Distinguish the real loss of a role or skill from the loss of a person’s value. Ask: ‘Would your explanation also honor a child or someone unable to work?’

Lead and debrief the activity

Allow pairs five minutes to write their response to the worried friend. Invite two responses. Ask which claims are grounded in Scripture and which depend on predicting what machines will never do. Acknowledge the friend’s concern before moving to reassurance.

Handle with care

Avoid making intelligence, independence, or productivity a test for bearing God’s image. Do not dismiss anxiety about work merely because worth is secure.

Close

Invite each person to name one way to honor someone apart from that person’s output. Pray for eyes to see neighbors as image-bearers.

TEACHER NOTES / SCRIPTURE / SESSION 01

Scripture and discussion

Begin with what it means to bear God's image, then carry that understanding into the discussion of human worth.

Genesis 1:26–28

Questions 2–4

Genesis places the image of God alongside humanity's commission to exercise dominion. Both male and female bear that image; the calling belongs to humanity, rather than to a particularly gifted group. Explain dominion as responsible management of creation. Human abilities therefore carry a responsibility to represent God in how we use them. This gives the discussion a starting point before anyone compares human and machine performance: ask who people are and what they are called to do, then consider how a tool might serve that calling.

Ask: How does bearing God's image connect with responsibility for what we do?

James 3:9; context: James 3:6–12

Questions 2 and 4; this week's practice

Read verse 9 within James's discussion of the tongue in verses 6–12. The same tongue can bless God and curse people made in his likeness. James appeals to an image that still matters in a fallen world, so respect cannot be reserved for people we admire or agree with. Move from the contradiction James exposes to ordinary speech, including online speech. The question is whether our treatment of another person reflects the worth we say that person has. This is especially helpful when technological change makes people feel disposable.

Ask: What practical change would taking this teaching seriously make in our conversations?

Colossians 1:15; supporting reading: Colossians 3:9–10

Questions 2–3

Colossians 1:15 identifies Christ as the image of the invisible God. Begin with him as the original image whom humanity reflects. For preparation, also read Colossians 3:9–10: putting off the old self is paired with putting on a new self being renewed in the Creator's image. Hold human identity and renewal together. Salvation restores relationship with God and begins the restoration of the image in us. This moves the conversation beyond a list of abilities toward the kind of people we are becoming in relation to Christ.

Ask: How does beginning with Christ shape our understanding of human identity?

Leading the discussion

Explain the three views of the image

The substantive view emphasizes the whole person as bearing God's image. The relational view emphasizes relationship with God and creation. The functional view emphasizes humanity's representative role. Present these as ways of attending to human identity, relationship, and calling. Ask what each brings into focus before the group uses the image-of-God audit to compare capabilities.

Move from abilities to worth

Begin with the abilities participants name, such as reasoning or creativity. Then ask what conclusion they are drawing from the comparison with AI. An impressive output raises questions about capability; Genesis and James establish the discussion of identity and respect. Help a worried participant articulate their worth without making it depend on outperforming a machine.

Hold the fall and renewal together

If someone asks whether sin removes the image, return to James's appeal to it when addressing sinful speech. If someone asks whether image-bearing means nothing needs to change, return to Colossians 3 and renewal. These two passages let the teacher affirm enduring human worth while also speaking about restoration and growth through Christ.

Listen for a concrete expression of respect

For the final question, invite an example from work, home, or online conversation. Ask participants to name one change in how they will address or describe another person. If an answer remains abstract, ask what a colleague or family member would hear them say differently this week.

Question goals

Q1: Connect the prologue's question about powerful tools with the image-of-God foundation.

Q2: Ground human dignity in the biblical passages and connect that dignity with how we treat people.

Q3: Connect who we are, our relationships, and our calling as complementary aspects of bearing God's image.

Q4: Distinguish a change in someone's work from a change in that person's God-given worth.

Bring it into the activity

In the worried-friend activity, listen for both empathy and a reason for human worth. A response might acknowledge the fear of being outperformed, then explain that bearing God's image is the foundation for respect. Ask which passage supports the response and what practical support the friend could offer. Close by inviting a specific change in speech or treatment of another person.

TEACHER NOTES / SESSION 02

Power and responsibility

Prepare: Chapters 3–5; Appendix A

Scripture: Genesis 1:28; Deuteronomy 20:19–20; Romans 3:23

Aim

Move from broad judgments about AI to evaluating a specific use, its effects on people, and the responsibility of those involved.

Open the conversation

Invite one question about the book's explanation of AI. Address what is needed for today's discussion and set aside technical questions that would consume the meeting.

Discussion cues

Q1: Participants need enough understanding to evaluate a use, not technical mastery. When an answer is uncertain, name the uncertainty instead of improvising a claim about how every AI system works.

Q2: Read the fruit-tree instruction in its original setting before discussing the book's application. Ask: 'What valuable human capacity or relationship could this use preserve or damage?'

Q3: Compare two uses of the same tool with different purposes or safeguards. Listen for attention to both motives and consequences; a good intention alone does not settle the question.

Q4: Ask who sets the goal, checks the output, authorizes its use, and responds when something goes wrong. Responsibility can be shared without disappearing.

Lead and debrief the activity

Use Appendix A to examine the church-inbox proposal. Require the group to define whether AI drafts replies for review or sends spiritual advice directly. Have them name one accountable person, what requires human care, and the reason for their traffic-light decision. Debrief how changing the proposal changes the assessment.

Handle with care

The creation mandate calls us to cultivate, and the fruit-tree principle asks us to preserve long-term good. Have participants name the benefit and the capacity at risk in a specific use.

Close

Ask everyone to choose one narrow use to evaluate this week. 'Using AI' is too broad; 'drafting a reply that I check before sending' is specific enough.

TEACHER NOTES / SCRIPTURE / SESSION 02

Scripture and discussion

Guide the conversation through cultivation, preservation of long-term good, and human responsibility for sin.

Genesis 1:28

Questions 2–3; the activity

The creation mandate gives the group a positive question to ask about technology: what good might responsible cultivation accomplish? Consider work that helps people care for land, solve problems, or serve others. In a proposed use of AI, name that good precisely before debating the tool. “It saves time” describes a benefit, but leaves the purpose unfinished. Ask what the saved time or increased capacity will serve. This connects the assessment to human vocation and makes room to consider real benefits alongside the possibility of misuse.

Ask: What is the potential here to fulfill the creation mandate?

Deuteronomy 20:19–20

Question 2; the activity

This command concerns a siege: Israel is told to preserve trees that provide food, while other trees may be used for siege works. Explain that setting before applying the fruit-tree principle. The distinction raises a question about preserving a source of continuing good while pursuing an immediate objective. In evaluating AI, use it as a wisdom analogy: empathy, judgment, and other human capacities may need protection even when delegation offers an immediate advantage. Ask what will nourish people over time, and whether the proposed workflow will help that capacity grow or gradually weaken it.

Ask: What human capacity might be the fruit tree at risk in this example?

Romans 3:23; supporting reading: Romans 7:19

Questions 3–4

Romans 3:23 establishes that sin is a universal human problem. Romans 7:19 brings the discussion to the painful conflict between the good a person desires and the evil a person does. Distinguish sinful condition, sinful action, and responsibility for choices. Ezekiel 18:4 and Jeremiah 31:30 are additional preparation readings for personal responsibility. This keeps the discussion from treating AI as the whole moral problem. Examine the desires a tool may amplify, the decisions people make, and the responsibility of those who design, approve, or use a system.

Ask: How does distinguishing our sinful condition from our actions help us discuss a specific use of a tool?

Leading the discussion

Keep the command and the analogy clear

First describe the food trees protected in Deuteronomy; then explain the application to human capacities. Empathy is a “fruit tree” by analogy, not the original subject of the command. Ask which capacity is at risk in this particular case and how its loss would affect people later. This prevents the image from becoming a vague objection to all delegation.

Trace motives through decisions

Invite participants to name a desire that may influence the use: pride, greed, sloth, or another form of sin. Then ask how it could shape a concrete decision. A desire for convenience might become a decision to stop reviewing replies; a desire for profit might conceal harm. Examine people’s choices without pretending to know another person’s hidden motives.

Discuss responsibility without oversimplifying it

In a harmful outcome, distinguish the developer’s choices, the organization’s goals, and the user’s actions. Ask what each person knew, decided, or could correct. The point is to identify human responsibility, not to announce an identical share of blame for everyone involved. Return to the difference between a system’s output and the decisions people make about it.

Turn a concern into a safeguard

After naming a capacity at risk, ask how it can still be practiced. A person using draft assistance might retain direct responsibility for sensitive replies and regularly compose responses unaided. Ask what evidence would show that judgment and care are developing. A useful safeguard explains what someone will do, rather than merely promising to remain careful.

Question goals

Q1: Surface remaining questions about AI so the group can evaluate a specific use with greater understanding.

Q2: Move carefully from the passage’s original setting to the book’s application about preserving valuable human capacities.

Q3: Examine how purpose, motives, and consequences shape the use of the same tool.

Q4: Locate the responsibilities of the people who choose, approve, check, and act on AI output.

Bring it into the activity

For the inbox scenario, have groups name the good sought, the human “fruit tree” at risk, and the decisions for which someone remains responsible. Then ask for a traffic-light judgment with a reason and a safeguard. Different judgments can be productive if groups explain what conditions would change them. Finish by asking how the revised workflow preserves the capacity to respond with care.

Connection and fellowship

Prepare: Chapter 6; Appendix C

Scripture: James 3:9 (revisit the image-of-God foundation)

Aim

Help participants distinguish comforting interaction from mutual fellowship and choose practical ways to care for people who are isolated.

Open the conversation

Ask for an example of technology helping people stay connected. Begin with a real benefit before examining what a mediated interaction may leave out.

Discussion cues

Q1: Describe fellowship through shared mission, vulnerability, joint participation, and embodied presence. Use those features to make the comparison concrete.

Q2: Ask: 'Did this tool help you show up for a person, or help you avoid them?' Allow private reflection rather than requiring personal disclosures.

Q3: Explore how repeated exposure to familiar preferences might shape patience with others. Keep discussion on habits and neighbor-love rather than evaluating another participant's politics or feed.

Q4: Listen for care that asks what makes participation difficult. An invitation becomes more useful when it addresses transport, timing, accessibility, or the need for a visit.

Lead and debrief the activity

In the chatbot scenario, ask the group to write their first two sentences to the person before proposing a solution. Then name a realistic invitation and who will follow through. Debrief whether the plan offers a relationship or merely tells the person to stop a habit.

Handle with care

Do not shame loneliness or equate limited mobility with unwillingness to participate. Distinguish helping people share life from insisting that everyone can attend in the same way.

Close

Let participants choose one accessible practice from Appendix C. Ask when and with whom it will happen, while allowing private commitments.

TEACHER NOTES / SCRIPTURE / SESSION 03

Scripture and discussion

Begin with the respect owed to an image-bearer, then consider what fellowship and shared practice require of the group.

James 3:9 — revisiting the course foundation

Questions 1 and 4

James challenges people who bless God yet curse those made in his likeness. Bring that foundation into a discussion that can otherwise become an argument about someone's habits. A person who turns to an AI companion still deserves respect, especially when loneliness or rejection makes connection difficult. Ask participants to notice how they speak about that person before proposing a solution. Respect does not settle every question about the technology; it establishes the posture in which the group should listen, respond, and offer something more substantial than criticism.

Ask: How can our response show the respect due to an image-bearer?

Supporting reading: Acts 2:42–47

Questions 1–3

Acts describes a community devoted to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer, sharing resources and meeting needs in daily life. Explain koinonia as fellowship involving shared participation, mission, and vulnerability. Ask the group to identify what these people do together and for one another. Receiving a useful response or consuming religious content may provide a form of connection, but fellowship involves participation in a shared life. The passage gives concrete substance to that distinction: people gather, give, eat, worship, and respond to needs.

Ask: Which features of fellowship are present or absent in this example?

Supporting reading: Philippians 2:6–8

Question 4; the activity and weekly practice

Philippians 2:6–8 presents Christ's humility in taking human form and becoming obedient to death. Connect this with the significance of embodied presence in Christian life. For further preparation, 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 describes the shared practice of the Lord's Supper; Acts 13:3 joins fasting and prayer with laying on hands; James 2:15–16 confronts words that leave bodily needs unmet. These examples help teachers explain why fellowship includes bodies, shared practices, and practical care. Ask what the group can actually do together, beyond recommending that someone spend less time online.

Ask: Which practice could this group make part of its shared life this month?

Leading the discussion

Explain connection and fellowship in ordinary language

A connection may deliver information, comfort, or a service. Fellowship asks people to participate in one another's lives. Use Acts 2 to supply examples, then ask what mutual responsibility looks like in the group. Avoid treating every digital contact as worthless; evaluate whether it leads toward shared life or becomes a substitute for participation.

Ask what agreeable conversation leaves untested

An echo chamber can protect someone from disagreement while limiting opportunities to practice empathy and love for an enemy. Ask when a difficult conversation with a real person has required patience, humility, or changed behavior. Let participants consider what would be lost if every interaction were shaped mainly to affirm them.

Offer presence before prescribing a habit

When discussing the person who relies on a chatbot, first ask what need is being met and what makes human connection difficult. Then ask what this group is prepared to offer. A recommendation to seek fellowship becomes credible when someone offers a meal, a visit, or a place in a shared practice.

Choose a practice people can join

Name an embodied practice such as shared meals, prayer, singing, or hospitality. Ask who will initiate it, when it will happen, and what practical help might make participation possible. James's example of unmet bodily needs helps make this concrete: good words should lead the group to consider actual care.

Question goals

Q1: Compare comforting interaction with fellowship involving shared mission, vulnerability, and joint participation.

Q2: Recognize when technology supports personal care and when it becomes a way to avoid relationship.

Q3: Consider how habits shaped around our preferences may affect patience and love toward people unlike us.

Q4: Turn concern about loneliness into a compassionate, practical response that makes participation more accessible.

Bring it into the activity

In the chatbot scenario, ask for a response that includes listening and an invitation into shared life. Debrief it with three questions: How does this show respect? What will people actually do together? Who will make the invitation possible? Let the group choose one practice it can begin this month and connect that commitment to the pattern of participation and care it has discussed.

Creating and working wisely

Prepare: Chapters 7–8; Appendix B

Scripture: Genesis 1:26–28; 1 Samuel 16:12

Aim

Connect human creative purpose and workplace responsibility with the three D's: Dignity, Development, and Due.

Open the conversation

Ask: 'What makes a piece of work meaningful to its maker?' Gather examples beyond professional art, such as a meal, a lesson, or a repaired object.

Discussion cues

Q1: Listen for intention, lived experience, and purpose as well as the finished product. Ask where the human directs and takes responsibility for tool-assisted work.

Q2: Use 1 Samuel 16:12 to discuss the information and human direction needed for an illustration of David. Ask what information the text supplies and what choices the person directing the work must make.

Q3: Define Development through actual practice: which skills are exercised, lost, or learned? Ask what training would be needed rather than assuming saved time automatically produces growth.

Q4: Apply Due through questions of righteousness and justice: is the system fair, is it biased, and how are productivity gains distributed? Ask whose experience is missing from the decision.

Lead and debrief the activity

Divide the customer-reply proposal among three pairs or groups, one per D. Give each five minutes to identify a benefit, a concern, and a required change. Compare their proposals. Possible changes include meaningful human review, time for training, or a clear route for customers to reach a person; require reasons for each.

Handle with care

Do not promise that automation will always produce better jobs. Distinguish the value of people from the market value of a task, and make room for those facing real disruption.

Close

Ask participants to name one skill they will keep practicing and one result they remain responsible for checking.

TEACHER NOTES / SCRIPTURE / SESSION 04

Scripture and discussion

Connect stewardship with human direction, responsibility, and the purpose behind a creative act.

Genesis 1:28

Questions 1, 3, and 4; the workplace activity

Human work belongs within the creation mandate and its responsibility for stewardship. As AI takes on more tasks, people may move from doing every step to directing, supervising, and evaluating the work. That change does not remove moral responsibility. Explain abdication as giving up the judgment and ethical attention that the person should exercise. The danger is more than accepting a poor result: it includes avoiding the character-forming work of making difficult decisions. Ask who sets the goals, reviews the consequences, and remains answerable for the work.

Ask: Where does the person remain responsible for the goals and decisions in this workflow?

1 Samuel 16:12

Questions 1-2

The verse introduces David's appearance and God's instruction that he be anointed. In a creative exercise, distinguish information supplied by the passage from details chosen to make an illustration. A human director brings intention, selects what to communicate, and judges whether the result serves that purpose. The illustration exercise helps the group locate those decisions. It does not turn a generated picture into additional information about David. Keep returning to the relationship between the text, the meaning the person wants to express, and the choices used to express it.

Ask: What information came from the passage, and what direction did the person provide?

Dignity, Development, and Due

Questions 3-4; the activity

Use the three D's as practical questions for applying stewardship to work. Dignity concerns human agency and creativity: do people retain meaningful direction? Development concerns the growth or erosion of gifts such as wisdom, skill, and judgment. Due concerns fairness, bias, and who receives the gains from increased productivity. Explain each before asking for a verdict on a workflow. A proposal can raise different concerns under each heading, so a favorable answer to one question does not complete the evaluation. Ask participants to identify both a benefit and a needed change.

Ask: What change would you propose under each of the three D's, and why?

Leading the discussion

Separate making from directing

Ask participants to identify which parts of a task they perform and which they delegate. Then locate intention, judgment, and review. The shift toward direction can be a real form of work, but it also demands attention to goals and consequences. Discuss whether the proposed arrangement strengthens that responsibility or makes it easier to avoid.

Discuss meaning behind creative output

The David illustration can look convincing while still missing the creator's intended meaning. Ask who supplied the story, selected the details, and judged the result. The same distinction applies to a song or other creative work: the human intention and lived experience behind the work matter to the discussion, alongside the quality of the finished product.

Make each of the three D's answerable

For Dignity, ask what meaningful choice remains with a worker. For Development, ask how a newer worker will learn the judgment the task requires. For Due, ask who benefits from saved time and who carries the cost of mistakes. Request a specific proposed change under each heading so the framework yields decisions.

Return responsibility to a named person

If a group proposes review, ask who reviews, what they check, and what happens when they disagree with an output. If it proposes training, ask which skill people will practice. The aim is to turn stewardship into a workable arrangement for the people affected by the change.

Question goals

Q1: Look beyond the finished product to the human intention, lived experience, and purpose behind creative work.

Q2: Keep responsibility for biblical accuracy and communication with the person using the tool.

Q3: Identify which human skills an AI-assisted workflow develops and which it may leave unpracticed.

Q4: Apply fair treatment to a workplace decision and consider the voices of people affected by it.

Bring it into the activity

For the customer-reply proposal, compare the three D's before settling on a recommendation. A group might retain human approval for sensitive responses, keep opportunities for workers to develop their own judgment, and examine who receives the productivity gains. Treat these as proposals to evaluate, not a fixed answer key. Ask how the final arrangement expresses stewardship and where responsibility remains.

Serving the church

Prepare: Chapters 9–10

Scripture: Genesis 1:26–28; James 3:9 (revisit the course’s foundation)

Aim

Apply Purpose, Presence, and Principles to an ordinary ministry task while keeping teaching and pastoral responsibility with people.

Open the conversation

Ask participants to name a recurring ministry task that consumes time. Choose one concrete example and ask what human ministry that task is meant to support.

Discussion cues

Q1: Purpose asks how the proposal serves the Great Commandment or Great Commission. ‘It is faster’ describes a benefit, but does not yet identify the ministry being served.

Q2: Presence asks whether time saved becomes room for personal care. Ask: ‘Who will actually spend that time with whom?’

Q3: Principles asks how a proposal fits the church’s biblical convictions. Invite participants to identify a relevant passage or existing commitment, rather than inventing a policy for the church in the room.

Q4: Distinguish helpful assistance from tasks that require human spiritual discernment and presence. Ask participants to apply that distinction to a particular teaching or care task.

Lead and debrief the activity

Draw two columns for the meal plan: logistical help and personal care. Possible logistical tasks include a schedule or checklist; personal tasks include listening to the family, checking what they want, and following up. Ask what information is truly needed and who will coordinate the actual care. Debrief whether efficiency is serving presence.

Handle with care

Keep discussion tied to a defined task. A useful scheduling tool does not settle whether the same tool should handle spiritual counsel. Respect the authority of the church’s leaders over policy decisions.

Close

Invite one green light and one red line, each with a reason. Frame them as proposals to discuss with a leader rather than rules the class has enacted.

TEACHER NOTES / SCRIPTURE / SESSION 05

Scripture and discussion

Use Purpose, Presence, and Principles to evaluate the concrete ministry task under discussion.

Genesis 1:26–28 and James 3:9 — revisiting the foundation

Questions 1–4

Begin with the foundations already established: people bear God’s image, exercise responsible stewardship, and owe respect to others who bear his likeness. Ministry decisions must therefore consider the people receiving care as well as the task being completed. Ask whose needs, dignity, and participation are affected by a proposal. These passages supply the starting commitments for the discussion; the practical ministry framework then helps the group examine a particular use. Keep the human purpose visible when the conversation becomes absorbed in what a tool can produce.

Ask: How should stewardship and respect shape this proposal?

Purpose, Presence, and Principles

Questions 1–3

Purpose asks whether a use serves the Great Commission or the Great Commandment: the church’s work of making disciples and loving God and neighbor. Presence asks whether it enables human presence or replaces it. Principles asks whether it fits the church’s theological commitments. These are three different questions. A proposal may pursue an appropriate goal yet undermine personal care in the way it is carried out. Have participants name the ministry purpose, describe what people themselves will do, and identify the belief or commitment that should govern the decision.

Ask: Which of the three questions most needs attention in this proposal?

Human discernment and personal care

Question 4; the meal-plan activity

Helpful assistance and human spiritual discernment are different responsibilities. A tool may organize information or draft practical material, while people must evaluate what is true, decide what care requires, and remain personally involved. The meal-plan exercise makes this distinction tangible: organizing meals can free a church member to spend time with a family, listen, and offer support. The gain in efficiency serves ministry when someone uses the resulting capacity for care. Ask the group to name that person and action instead of assuming that saved time will automatically become deeper relationship.

Ask: What can be organized with assistance, and what care will the people themselves offer?

Leading the discussion

Use the three P's in order

Begin with the ministry need. Then ask how people will remain present to one another. Finally, test the proposed practice against the church's theological commitments. If the discussion starts with a favorite tool, bring it back to the person or need it is meant to serve. A useful proposal should make all three answers clear.

Distinguish a draft from trustworthy teaching

AI can produce plausible material that is false. Ground a proposed teaching resource in Scripture and the church's actual commitments, then have a responsible person review its claims and use. Supplying good source material helps direct the tool; it does not replace human discernment. Ask who will check the result before others rely on it.

Make room for pastoral judgment

A task that looks administrative may contain a need for personal care. Ask what information would change an ordinary request into a conversation a person should handle directly. Consider the difference between arranging contact and responding to someone's spiritual concern. Keep the teacher's focus on discernment and presence rather than a universal list of approved tools.

Explain the reason for a boundary

When groups name green lights and red lines, ask which purpose, relationship, or theological commitment each protects. They may disagree about a proposed use while sharing the same concern. Invite a revision that addresses the concern, then ask whether the group's judgment changes. This makes the exercise a practice in discernment.

Question goals

Q1: Identify the ministry purpose a proposed use serves, beyond the benefit of saving time.

Q2: Ask whether efficiency creates actual opportunities for personal care and who will offer that care.

Q3: Connect a ministry decision with Scripture and the church's established convictions.

Q4: Translate the book's boundaries around teaching and pastoral care into ordinary ministry decisions.

Bring it into the activity

In the meal-plan activity, distinguish what assistance can organize from what church members will personally offer. Ask groups to explain the purpose served, the presence enabled, and the principles guiding the plan. Then name who checks the details and who follows through with the family. Use that concrete example to sharpen the final green-light and red-line statements.

Hope and faithful engagement

Prepare: Chapter 11 and the conclusion

Scripture: Revelation 13:11–15, read in context alongside chapter 11

Aim

Help participants distinguish Christian hope from technological prediction and turn the course's ideas into a faithful next step.

Open the conversation

Invite participants to revisit one hope or fear from the first meeting. Ask what has changed and what remains unresolved; the course need not remove every uncertainty.

Discussion cues

Q1: Welcome both greater confidence and greater caution when participants can explain their reasons. Avoid treating enthusiasm or rejection of AI as the measure of learning.

Q2: Ask whether AI changes how participants read Revelation 13:11–15. Allow the tension to surface without requiring a definitive answer. Let participants articulate their reasons and remaining questions.

Q3: Participants may hold different Christian views of the future. Do not require this short session to settle those differences. Ask what duties of love, stewardship, and faithfulness remain shared.

Q4: Return to earlier practices and frameworks. Ask which specific choice the participant can make now, even if the future develops differently from their expectations.

Lead and debrief the activity

Give people a few quiet minutes to complete the closing reflection. Invite volunteers to share. Follow up on the reason for 'I trust that' and the concreteness of 'Therefore I will.' A useful commitment names an action within the person's responsibility, rather than a prediction they cannot control.

Handle with care

Keep the opening question open. Do not turn the session into a demand for agreement about a prophetic identification or a prediction about AI.

Close

Ask participants to choose a date to revisit their commitment and someone who can check in. Close in prayer for wisdom, love of neighbor, and faithful stewardship.

TEACHER NOTES / SCRIPTURE / SESSION 06

Scripture and discussion

Begin with the question raised by Revelation, invite discussion of differing perspectives, and close with a personal reflection about trust and action.

Revelation 13:11–15

Questions 1–2

Read the whole assigned passage before focusing on the image that speaks. Its setting includes deception, signs, and coercion directed toward worship of the beast. The striking image invites the question of how contemporary AI affects a reader's imagination, but a resemblance should not end the discussion. Ask participants to distinguish what they observe in the passage from the connection they propose to current technology. Give fear and uncertainty room to be expressed, then ask what assumptions about the future are shaping each interpretation.

Ask: Does the existence of AI change how we read this text?

Different perspectives on the future

Question 3

Eschatology concerns the goal of history as well as its end. Christians approach the relationship between Christ's return and his reign in different ways, and these expectations can shape their response to technological power. Introduce the four views on the following page before asking participants to apply them. The purpose is to understand the reasoning behind different postures toward AI. Invite people to explain a perspective fairly, including one they do not hold, and then discuss the possibilities and dangers that it brings into focus.

Ask: How does your understanding of the future inform the response you would make now?

Bringing the discussions together

Question 4; the closing reflection

Return to the course's recurring commitments: human beings bear God's image, people remain responsible stewards, and fellowship involves shared life. These give participants questions to carry into an uncertain future. Will they direct tools responsibly or allow them to direct their habits? Will increased connection deepen participation in community? What will they cultivate or preserve? The closing reflection joins concern, trust, and action. Encourage a commitment the participant can carry out now, grounded in the themes studied together.

Ask: Which idea about image-bearing, stewardship, or fellowship informs the next step you have named?

Leading the discussion

Postmillennial: cultivation and flourishing

This view expects the gospel's advance among the nations to bring a period of widespread flourishing before Christ returns. One possible application sees AI as a plowshare: a tool for cultivation, translation, and service. Ask what human good that hopeful posture encourages people to pursue and how they will pursue it responsibly.

Amillennial: good and evil grow together

This view understands the millennium in terms of Christ's present spiritual reign, with good and evil continuing together. One possible application sees AI as an amplifier of both. Ask how a person can welcome a useful tool while refusing to treat it as a savior, and how that posture changes a present decision.

Historic premillennial: vigilance about human pride

This view expects tribulation and Christ's return before a future millennial reign. One possible application emphasizes the danger of technological pride and promises of human self-salvation, pictured as another Tower of Babel. Ask what claim about AI would prompt that concern and what responsible action the concern should produce.

Dispensational premillennial: concern about control

The form considered here distinguishes eras in God's dealings with humanity and expects a pretribulation rapture and seven-year tribulation involving the Antichrist. One possible application considers whether AI could enable global coercion and control. Treat that connection as an application to discuss, rather than proof that a particular technology fulfills Revelation.

Question goals

Q1: Reflect on how the book has shaped participants' thinking while allowing questions and uncertainties to remain.

Q2: Explore the question about AI and Revelation without requiring a definitive answer.

Q3: Identify shared responsibilities of Christian faithfulness amid disagreement about future events.

Q4: Choose a concrete practice within the participant's responsibility that does not depend on predicting the future.

Bring it into the activity

These brief descriptions introduce different views; they do not imply that every Christian holding a view reaches the same conclusion about AI. After comparing them, return to the closing reflection: "Even though AI ... I trust that ... Therefore I will ..." Ask participants to connect their action to image-bearing, stewardship, or fellowship. Invite voluntary sharing and prayer, leaving room for uncertainty about predictions alongside a clear present commitment.