

2026 REVISED & EXPANDED EDITION

ChatGPT & the Church

Using Artificial Intelligence Without
Losing the Human Touch, Biblical Truth,
or the Mission of the Church

DISCERN
|
EQUIP
|
EMPOWER
|
SERVE
|
A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW



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FREE CHAPTER ONE SAMPLE

Christopher Alan Darby

A FREE READER PREVIEW

CHATGPT & THE CHURCH

Faithful Ministry in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

A practical and theologically grounded guide to using artificial intelligence with integrity while keeping prayer, Scripture, wisdom, and human presence at the center.

Inside this complimentary sample, you will receive the complete first chapter exactly as presented in the book.



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CHAPTER 1

The Church Has Entered the AI Age

Understanding the tool before judging the tool

What Artificial Intelligence Is-and Is Not

Artificial intelligence is a broad term for computer systems designed to perform tasks that normally require forms of human intelligence: recognizing patterns, interpreting language, making predictions, generating content, or assisting with decisions. Generative AI is a category that can produce new text, images, audio, code, and other material from instructions and examples.

ChatGPT is a conversational AI assistant. You communicate with it in ordinary language. You can ask a question, provide a document, request a draft, correct the draft, and continue refining the work. That conversational pattern is what makes the technology especially accessible to churches. A pastor does not need to learn programming in order to ask for a meeting agenda, a clearer paragraph, a set of discussion questions, or ideas for organizing a ministry project.

But ChatGPT does not possess a soul, a calling, spiritual discernment, pastoral authority, or divine revelation. It generates responses from learned patterns and the information available to it. It can be impressively useful and confidently wrong in the same conversation. Understanding both sides is essential.

Why the Church Cannot Ignore It

Members are already using AI. Students use it for schoolwork. Employees use it for writing and analysis. Businesses use it for

customer service and planning. Church volunteers use it for announcements, flyers, lesson ideas, and social media. A church that refuses to discuss AI does not create an AI-free congregation; it creates a congregation using AI without pastoral guidance.

The church therefore has a teaching opportunity. We can help believers think about truth, authorship, privacy, integrity, work, creativity, and responsibility. Those are not merely technology questions. They are discipleship questions.

Church leaders should learn enough to distinguish wise use from careless use. We do not need every pastor to become an AI specialist. We do need pastors who can say, 'Here is what this tool can help us do, here is what it must never replace, and here is how we will protect people while using it.'

A History of Adaptation

Christian ministry has repeatedly adopted communication tools. Printed Bibles increased access to Scripture. Radio carried preaching beyond sanctuary walls. Television changed evangelism. Desktop publishing allowed churches to produce their own bulletins. Websites became front doors. Social media became a public square. Livestreaming became essential for many congregations during periods when people could not gather normally.

Every adoption brought mistakes. Churches sometimes chased novelty. Some confused reach with discipleship. Some allowed presentation to become more important than substance. Those lessons should make us wiser now. The goal is not to become the most technologically impressive church in town. The goal is to remove unnecessary barriers to faithful ministry.

A Stewardship Test for New Technology

Before adopting an AI use, ask five questions. Is it truthful? Is it lawful and ethical? Does it protect people? Does it strengthen rather than weaken human responsibility? Does it serve the mission of the church?

If the answer to one of those questions is no, efficiency is not enough to justify the practice. The church must be willing to say no to a convenient shortcut when that shortcut compromises truth, confidentiality, dignity, or spiritual responsibility.

Ministry Reflection

How should our congregation explain AI in plain language without either exaggerating it or fearing it?

Which ministry task could benefit from AI assistance right now, and what human oversight would it require?

Where have we confused technological reach with actual discipleship?

What five-question stewardship test should our leaders use before adopting a new AI practice?

Pastor Darby's Practice Point

Learn enough about AI to govern its use. A pastor does not need to become a computer scientist, but church leadership should understand the tool well enough to recognize both opportunity and risk.

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