GUEST SPEAKER

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RETHINKING SUCCESS FOR DIGITAL MINISTRY

3 TAKEAWAYS

1. How we measure digital ministry success matters.

2. Relationships and local church connections should be our goals for digital ministry.

3. Artificial Intelligence denies us our ambassadorship of Christ and minimizes fellowship.

A SUCCESSFUL FAILURE

- iBelieveBible

- 2016, 150k+ subscribers

- Views between 25,000 and 1 million

- Around 200 videos posted

- About $1200 total per video

- A few dozen relationships

- A few dozen church visits

- 3 baptisms

HOW THE WORLD MEASURES DIGITAL SUCCESS

- Views

- Shares

- Likes

- Downloads

- Hours watched

- Click rates

- Purchases

- Comments

= **iBelieveBible Success**

HOW THE ADVENTIST CHURCH SHOULD MEASURE DIGITAL SUCCESS

- Relationships built and maintained

- Reputation management

- Bible studies given

- Visits to local churches

- Baptisms

- Ultimately...discipleship

2 KINDS OF DIGITAL MINISTRY

1. Proclamation Evangelism
   - Measured in traditional secular ways: views, comments, shares, likes, etc...

2. Relational Evangelism
   - Measured in quantity and quality of relationships built for the Seventh-day Adventist Church

IN-PERSON CONNECTION SHOULD BE OUR GOAL

Relational Digital Evangelism requires several steps:

1. First contact
2. Initial engagement
3. Ongoing dialogue
4. Call to action: Bible study, visit to church, volunteer opportunity
5. Local church fellowship
6. Baptism
7. Discipleship

DIGITAL CHALLENGE: BROKEN LINKS

Relational Digital Evangelism requires several steps:

1. First contact: who is producing the proclamation content?

2. Initial engagement: who is providing in the moment connection?

3. Ongoing dialogue: how are you providing online pastoral care?

4. Call to action: Bible study, visit to church, volunteer opportunity: how are you connecting with the local church to do this?

5. Local church fellowship: how have you planned the transfer to local church?

6. Baptism

7. Discipleship

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ADMINISTRATION EXISTS TO EMPOWER LOCAL CHURCH

- Adventist Church administration should only be doing projects that the local church can't do easily on its own.

- Digital ministry should empower the local church

- We should avoid the tendency and temptation to work independently of the local church in digital ministry

ADMINISTRATION AND CHURCH SHOULD WORK TOGETHER

- GC, Division, Union, Conference, and Local Church need to work in concert for digital ministry to work

- A broken link at one of these levels prevents local church from participating and benefiting as much as it could

- Mindset shift: work together vs. "stay out of my territory"

- There are no boundaries in digital ministry

SYSTEMS FOR DIGITAL MINISTRY

- Independent digital projects are just that
  - Proclamation Evangelism

- We need funnel strategies that utilize the church's existing infrastructure to use digital ministry like a net that points people to the local church

- It's harder, but the payoffs are much more significant.

SYSTEMS FOR DIGITAL MINISTRY

1. Discovery: GC (a video)

2. Connection: Division (online chaplain)

3. Nurturing: Division (online chaplain)

4. Personal interaction: Division, local church (online chaplain, local volunteer)

5. Spiritual growth: Conference (Conference event)

6. Baptism: local church

7. Discipleship: local church and Division (ideas for service)

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS NOT A FRONTLINE SOLUTION

- AI is awesome

- I use it everyday, all day

- AI is amazing for Bible study

- I am an early adopter

- We should be careful how we use AI for ministry

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS NOT A FRONTLINE SOLUTION

- God asks us to be "ambassadors for Christ," He makes "His appeal through us"
  - 2nd Corinthians 5:20

- "Carry each other's burdens"
  - Galatians 6:2

- "Encouraging one another"
  - Hebrews 10:24

- "Be devoted to one another in love"
  - Romans 12:10

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS NOT A FRONTLINE SOLUTION

- If we put AI on the frontlines of ministry we deny our calling from Christ

- Emphasis on clergy over lay people doing Christian service has led to lukewarm Christianity, a partial Christianity
  - Imagine what AI would do to us if no one had to answer anymore questions, or interact with others spiritually

OUR COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

- Recently, the church has been behind in its adoption of tech

- Technology costs have skyrocketed and the church has difficult keeping up, competing with Amazon, Google, Apple, etc...

- Motivated by cost and efficiency companies will utilize AI for interactions with customers, clients, and development

OUR COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

- One-on-one ministry
- Face-to-face
- Real people and real connections
- Fellowship
- Community
- Connection
- Sabbath rest

- AI can't do these things like people, it's "artificial"
- Authenticity matters now, imagine in 5-years

ADVENTIST ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- Biased by programmers
- Subjective to inputs
- De facto source for answers = stagnates progression of truth
- We are supposed to be a movement, "present truth"
- We should wrestle with the Spirit not an AI programmed by a human
- Why do we need it? ChatGPT already exists
- Denies "Christ's Method"
- Prevents us from being Christ's "ambassadors"

ADVENTIST ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Use AI for:

- Analysis
- Content ideas
- Artwork
- Translation
- Captioning
- Scheduling

Don't Use AI :

- To replace the role of a person in frontline ministry

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