Transhumanism: The Search for the Electronic Soul

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Date: 29 October 2017

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[0:00] She's got an MA in Bioethics. Bioethics, and she's currently an independent researcher. She researches issues of transhumanism, ethics, very interesting topical current issues today, and I know that you will join me in welcoming her for a stimuli.

I know many people are very curious. You've got us all talking about all our smartphones going, transhumanism. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you so much. Thank you. There will be a few minutes for questions at the end.

Bioethics is all about getting people to talk and engage, so if there's something you feel like you want to engage, just write it down and we'll get to it. Please join me in a prayer.

Lord, we ask for your wisdom as we talk about a worldview that is becoming the dominant position in our world. Help us to be prepared so that we may fulfill 1 Peter 3 and be ready to give an answer for the hope that is within us.

[1:07] We gather today to bring glory to your name. Amen. Amen. Okay. Transhumanism is a movement that believes the human race, as it is, is seriously flawed.

And it sees emergent technology as a pathway to achieving a utopian society. Based in a materialist worldview, theories like the singularity have moved from the realm of science fiction into research laboratories.

Fields of research such as cybernetics, nanotechnology, genetic engineering, and medical science have produced tangible results in AIDS for the disabled, medical care and monitoring, and increased food production.

This would seem to lend credence to the transhumanist vision. But is this vision truly utopian, or is there a darker side? It must be clarified at the beginning.

Okay. Yes. I just... Okay, this is Dave's clicker. With one button, you're not supposed to push.

[2:21] See, one of the problems with technology is when it's not a good design, you're still stuck with it. Don't push the bottom button. Right, let's try to...

There we go. It must be clarified at the beginning, because of the time we live in, that the term transhumanism has become diluted due to current debates on gender issue.

Transhumanism is a term that has been around since 1925, and it refers specifically to the merging of humanity with technology. Epistemologically, it's a mechanical worldview that holds humanity evolved to its present state through some form of Darwinian evolution.

In other words, a series of random accidents. And that created a flawed system that has no teleological end other than the continuation of the species. Transhumanists believe the human species rose to the top of the food chain by superior reason.

Therefore, if there is no God and no immortal soul, man has to work out his problems through a rational, mechanical means.

[3:41] So that's basically your transhumanists. They see death as the ultimate flaw, something that needs to be corrected. And they divide into two camps at this point.

The H-plus camp, promoted by Aubrey de Grey, sees technology from fields such as genetic engineering and medical science as aiding the natural human body to overcome disease and aging while nanotechnology aids the body in self-repair.

Immortality is achieved while humanity remains intact. So basically, it's just what it says. H-plus. Humanity plus technology. In the second camp are the post-humans by Nick Bostrom and Ray Kurzweil.

Working in fields such as cybernetics and artificial intelligence, they believe based on Moore's law, humanity will merge with machines in an event called the singularity, becoming inseparable from technology.

Since materialists do not believe humans have a duality of nature which supernaturally survives after death, their answer is to infuse humanity with a material component which will outlive the human body.

[4:53] In post-humanity, each personality will be downloaded as a computer program and exists within a worldwide network. The soul, i.e. program, can be downloaded into any avatar of choice or remain within the matrix.

Thus, the distinguishing view is that humans will no longer be humans, but disembodied beings, a non-embodied electronic soul.

The transhumanists present a new vision of bonding humans with the human mind's creativity and flexibility with the endurability of a machine to form a new super-being never before seen on this world.

Amtaurus describes the super-being as a gestalt of humanity where the Internet would become a new nervous system for humanity and humanity would become a new body and executive mind for the Internet.

The ultimate transhumanist utopia is that the machine mind will cure all social ills. Transhumanists freely admit they have no idea of how this will be done, but they say that's the point.

[6:09] You have to embrace the singularity. And the gestalt of the machine mind will cure everything, and here's a quote, in a blink of an eye.

However, the transhuman utopia, while good news for transhumanists, is bad news for everyone else. Those that embrace the singularity transform into homo superior.

Those who reject it remain homo sapiens, and they go the way of the Neanderthal. As Jeffrey Bishop succinctly puts it, in order to transcend the human condition, they must transgress the human.

Unspoken is the idea, as Talam Koch puts it, that the scientifically enlightened know which human characteristics are desirable, and that this agenda will be pursued in an ethical and value-free manner.

Yet the ethics in question are being questioned, and no technology is value-free. A case in point was the hostility of a large number of deaf parents had against the cochlear implant that would have allowed their children to hear and function in a normal world.

[7:30] The deaf parents did not want their children changed. They did not see being deaf as a defect that needed to be corrected. And if their children received this operation, they would no longer be members of the deaf community.

Another case was a couple who were dwarves who wanted to use IVF and PGD to select a child with dwarfism. That would follow their procreative beneficence, which they would be creating children in their own image.

And that's what most people want to do. However, Julian Salvalesco argued that this technology should be denied to them on the grounds that their autonomy is superseded by the principle of procreative beneficence.

In other words, that it is not in the best interest of the child nor in the best interest of society. I think Peter Dinklage would disagree.

If you don't know who this is, he is one of the characters on the Game of Thrones. His cast members voted him the funniest member of the cast.

[8:48] He is known for having a very high intelligence and a very dry wit. 2011, he was nominated as one of GQ's Men of the Year.

I would think Peter Dinklage has a high quality of life and a whole lot to offer. And yet, 74% of respondents on a survey said they would support abortion at 24 weeks for an embryo with dwarfism.

In the most pervasive case of technological bias, 90% of the fetuses PGD diagnoses with Down syndrome are aborted.

Reason given is to avoid pain and suffering. My question is, who's pain? Who's suffering? The fetuses are not being cured and restored to a normal life.

They are being eradicated and not permitted to exist. And society is being told this is a good thing. Yet, when raised in a loving home, Down syndrome individuals go through life with a childlike innocence, radiating unconditional love.

[10:02] In a culture on consumerism, on steroids, they're countercultural. The media spends billions of dollars to make us discontent and unsatisfied with who we are.

they tell us we need a new phone, a new computer, this new soft drink. Don't drink soft drinks, drink a health drink and you'll be happy. Down syndrome tells us we don't need the most stuff.

We don't need to be the most beautiful. We need someone who will love us and accept us who we are and then we'll be happy. And yet, 90% of the most loving individuals you would ever meet are not being permitted to be born.

Comparing and contrasting then the response of the disabled community to that of the medical science community, one can hardly claim that technology is value-free. Those seeking to bioengineer society are using utilitarian ethics to place cost-effectiveness and productivity as the primary qualities of life.

The disabled and their supporters are following the ethics of intrinsic human dignity, valuing community, tolerance, and embracing variation. Love and laughter are not the milestones scientists use to measure quality of life.

[11:25] Ethicists do. Can a utopia really be created on utilitarian ethics? The siren call of the electronic soul is seductive.

Bishop describes a transhuman as a future being, a person, who constructs herself out of various technologies. The idea that you can be anyone you want to be, anything you want to be, can be intoxicating.

But as we have seen, machines excel at clones stamping out exact replicas because it's efficient. far from the intoxicating utopia of radical individualism, transhumanism leads to a dystopia of conformity.

Bostrom sees the rational progression of the singularity resulting in a single universal governing agency he calls the singleton. human. While his concept is nuanced, the first among the superpower's authority would be the ability to prevent any threats, internal or external, to its own existence and supremacy.

Transhumanists envision this agency to be a beneficent, superintelligent machine or the gestalt of global humanity, a transcending upload that guides humanity based on permutations of all possible value systems and their probable outcome in every conceivable future.

[12:58] Yet, Bostrom acknowledges that once formed, a future singleton might be perpetually stable. This could happen if surveillance, mind control, and other security technologies develop in such a way as to enable a singleton to effectively prevent the emergence of internal challenges.

He is, in fact, admitting that the singleton will only choose from a limited number of choices it has already preselected. Koch tells us that bioengineers in genetics and the neurosciences assert an ethical right, if not a moral obligation, to make better people.

Through technologies of genetic selection, whose goal, similarly, is to enhance evolution, currently millions of dollars are being spent into moral enhancement, in addition to physical.

Transhumanists envision a future where PGD screens out genetic tendencies, such as anger issues, alcoholism. Neurologists are researching chemicals within the brain that promote positive behavior, like altruism and empathy.

Neurologists have also made progress on identifying chemicals linked in memory. This helps with post-traumatic stress victims, but you have to wonder when they're messing with your memories, are they also going to insert new ones, change lines you want to keep, in other words, restructure who you are.

[14:33] When technology sufficiently advanced, parents would be able to select behavioral characteristics of their children. We would see a world overwhelmed or underwhelmed with compliant, passive children.

And parents would merely be the consumer. The producer of these children, who decides who gets born, would be the singleton. With everyone connected directly into the net, those governing would know not only your every thought, but your every emotion as well.

Nadeghilgarov states that the distinction between voluntary and involuntary behavior becomes harder to maintain. Scientific determinism.

It would replace free will. For the H-plus individual, the age-old question of nature versus nurture would be resolved once and for all into designer specifications.

If the human mind can be rewitten, what then of those who do not want to be uploaded? Don't want to be disembodied beings.

[15:53] That raises the question of telos. Is whole-scale annihilation so another species succeeds really an improvement for humanity? There is a new branch of law emerging for what is known as climate justice or postericide.

It's seeking to make it a crime to make human populations extinct intentionally or unintentionally through things like climate change, bioengineered food.

So if you wipe somebody out as a corporation, you're going to be held responsible now. But if it's poster-side to wipe out humanity through frankenfoods, why not transhumanism?

They get around this by redefining the term species. In their article on moral transhumanism, Pearson and Savalescu argue that belonging to the human species is superficial.

If a person maintained continuous awareness of his or her own existence, the form of that awareness was housed in would be immaterial to maintaining their personal identity.

[17:03] They claim membership of a species has no moral quality. It's merely a biological distinction of what life forms can breed with others and produce other viable forms.

They claim it is plausible to take interfertility to be not only a sufficient but necessary condition of species. So in other words, they're saying the only reason you are a homo sapien is you can produce other homo sapiens.

Total value. Askelund points out that the point is that transhumanists do not really seek to manage our evolution. They instead seek to sever us from an evolutionary trajectory and create one of their own.

While this is a voluntary scenario for those who become homo superior, it's an involuntary one for those who remain homo sapiens.

So what does transhumanists intend to do with humanity? Utilitarian ethics say the end justifies the means. So there's no moral obligation to take care of homo sapiens anymore.

[18:16] Equality will never be an option. We've seen how people treat those with disabilities. Beginning of the paper, so active euthanasia, probable choice to eliminate the suffering of homo sapiens.

Homo superior might keep humans around as pets or in zoos for entertainment purposes. DNA could be kept on file just in case this whole singularity thing turns out to be a bad idea.

The fundamental problem with transhumanism is that it's using scientific imperatives to make moral choices. Science can be excellent at deriving objective truth about physical reality, but does not have the metaphysical framework to evaluate moral, ethical, or ought questions.

Bioengineering and universal compliance raise serious issues about autonomy, identity, ethnic futures, and community. While H-plus enhancement can result in goods such as human longevity or overcoming disease, post-humanism is proposing something darker.

Post-human existence means the end of the human race, not by some global apocalyptic war or meteor hitting the earth, but by deliberate social engineering. Even with the singularity promising an eschatological salvation and a messianic singleton to guide the way, the eradication of old humanity is still genocide for all its good intentions.

[19:55] So how far away is this transhuman apocalypse? Is it something that we can watch in the movie theater and then go home, go to bed? It makes excellent science fiction.

Makes highly profitable reality. Truth is, transhumanism is not going to happen in a single event. It's gradually being part of our society and it's been gestating here since the Industrial Revolution.

The fact is, you live in the 21st century. Humanity is already in the H-plus stage. Truly amazing inventions, prosthetic devices, internal replacements for body parts, wearable and embedded technology, here's a brief glimpse of some of the things that are out there.

Field of prosthetics and mobility devices have advanced exponentially. The historic ones were bulky and did little more than be a balancing device.

Modern prosthetics are fully functional and respond to commands from the brain in the same manner organic limbs do. Technological advances body parts are now common.

[21:22] Many people have had hip replacements. Here you have a 3D printout of a shoulder joint and a mechanical heart that is still in development but very close.

We now have a bionic eye that just hit the market so the blind can see. A true 21st century science fiction come true is wearable or embedded technologies.

The first cell phone resembled a brick. Mobile phones quickly slimmed down and became one-handed devices. The cell phone became the smartphone which is now the smart watch.

so you don't have to dig in your pocket or purse to find it. We now wear our Star Trek communicators on our wrists and think nothing of it. Nanotechnology is trying to take your mobile connectivity even further.

This is a contact lens. It would be your screen for your mobile device. That's what it would look like on. So, people have pacemakers, drive cars, use computers, and we think nothing of it.

[22:47] We are already part cyborg in our lives. We accept chemical enhancements. We regularly see chemicals being used by people who are athletes, models, actors, even when these models and actors are seven years old.

Ritalin is a drug of choice among children to behave as their parents want, but not just for controlling their outbursts.

Elementary school children and college children are using Ritalin to improve their grades. In a normal individual, while at age short-term memory, it destroys long-term memory.

There's an epidemic of that going on, and a lot of college kids think of it like coffee. Most chemicals that go beyond the health enhancement have severe side effects.

So, Jane and Joe average don't use it. But in situations like the military, if your entire squad is using it, you have to to keep up. Another involuntary enhancement is that when chemically grown food is put on the market, it's a lot cheaper.

[24:02] poor, so the poor don't really have a choice either. This blending of technology and medicine, we now have a new term, techno-medicine.

There are now 39 ways to make a baby, baby. And I need my list. Traditional, AIH, IVF, RSI, rent-a-womb, donor-mother, donor-father, birth-mother, social-parent, or social-pare-rents.

It was far less complicated the old way. Finally, we live in a world of networked consciousness. Internet, social media, smart apps, smart appliances, while these add great conveniences to our lives, mirror-bot attacks work by attacking a thousand light bulbs, smart light bulbs, security cameras, smart power meters in your home.

The smart contact we saw earlier, that would be vulnerable. So what happens if you have a smart body? Far from being free of disease, the mechanical body would simply be vulnerable to an equally mechanical virus.

Charles calls the Internet a new nervous system for humanity, and in some ways this is already coming true. Most people today have smartphones. It's no longer a sign of privilege.

[25:37] It's a human right. Poor demand them from the government. People in Africa, parts of India, don't have indoor plumbing, but they have satellite hookup and Internet. So mobile connectivity is ubiquitous.

Everyone's doing it. And don't get me wrong, I think the Internet is amazing. But with all the progress, there's regress. Technology changes the way we think.

When asked a question, do people check their memories, or do they Google it? their entire span of attention is a hashtag and 280 characters.

Chesterton said, impartiality is a pompous name for indifference, which is an elegant name for ignorance. In regards to modern technology, the Internet is breeding indifference, which is creating ignorance.

This is why everyone's opinion matters. If a person writes a blog, they expect to be taken as seriously as someone with a PhD and 20 years experience.

[26:42] If they write a tweet, they expect to be taken as seriously as somebody who does research as their profession. And because everyone can contribute to the hive mind, the massive misinformation is staggering.

And this is what the transhumanists want us to embrace. But are people happier? Studies have shown we are not. People are losing the ability to relate to one another one on one.

When they go out on what's supposed to be a social occasion, everyone's on their phones. Not because it makes them happier, but because it's actually addictive.

Getting a like on a post sends an endorphin rush, like runners get. But without all the work, people actually get anxiety attacks when they leave their phones home.

Social media also trains people to be emotional rather than rational. You can't get much content into 280 characters, so you go straight for what you want them to feel. Someone disagrees, you block them.

[28:01] If you go out and have a cup of coffee and you disagree, you have to talk back and forth and you work it out. Online, just cut off and block.

No unhappy thoughts allowed. This new nervous system is supporting a hive mind. People are connected all the time, and that in self is a problem. The Bible says to be still and know that I am God.

Psalm 4610. People are no longer still. We are overwhelmed with the media. Recent studies have shown that processing information takes a long period of time where your brain just rests.

So people aren't remembering information because being connected all the time is destroying that part of the brain functions. far from learning to be more tolerant due to a wider exposure.

They are more ignorant and critical. They respond emotionally to situations instead of pausing and giving it some analytical thought. The person who is online all the time is constantly seeing a world where people have more and better things than they do.

[29:11] And this is cultivating a society where the average person is profoundly depressed. as Christians we believe the whole transhumanist narrative is based on a false premise to begin with.

We do not believe humanity is the result of a series of random accidents in which we just happen to win the cosmic lottery and come out at the top of the food chain. We believe that humanity was created with a purpose and by design.

Even if we can't fully comprehend what the purpose was or all the details of the design. we accept on faith that the human soul was created for a specific telos, that of knowing God.

Yet it is exciting to see that science is coming around to the position of purpose and design. One of the more stirring pieces of research I did was to read Denton's new book.

Michael Denton wrote a book 30 years ago, Evolution, A Theory in Crisis. His new book is called Evolution, Still a Theory in Crisis. It's a fascinating book, which I highly recommend, because Denton is not a Christian.

[30:24] He's an agnostic. He does not believe in God. In fact, he very much doubts there is one. But he's a scientist. So just as the non-existence of God can no more be proved than the existence of God, he takes a scientific position of wait and see until the data says otherwise.

Denton claims in his original book that he argued the lack of missing links in the fossil record and the fact of what is known as taxid defining characteristics are non-adaptive, i.e. they make no contribution to the health of the organism.

Those are problems that have not yet been solved. In his new book, 30 Years Later, he goes even further and states, the absence of such functional continuums poses an existential threat to classical Darwinian adaptive gradualism.

From the evidence of evidences in genetics, developmental biology, paleontology, and the development of human languages, Denton has embraced structuralism, a form of types espoused by Richard Owen in the 1800s.

The core of this theory is that all life contains primal patterns, unique to its own subset, that do not change, regardless of the environment. Contrary to Darwinian expectations, evolutionary development biology has found that developmental genes are conserved, not wildly adapted as expected.

[32:05] Like crystals, structuralists believe that life consists of self-organizing matter that obey innate laws of form, and they are built into life.

However, this scientific analysis corresponds perfectly with what we read in Genesis 1. Genesis 1.21, And God created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that moves, with which the water swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird, after its kind.

And God saw this was good. And it continues with the beast of the earth, everything that creeps on the ground, and then man and woman he created in his own image.

Again, separate and distinct. And God saw this was good. The conclusion that traits are teleological, that is, they have an end, there's a purpose to them, is a huge problem for Darwinian evolutionists and transhumanists whose moral justification for the eradication of old humanity is that it is an accident.

Structuralism says there's already a plan, a natural rationale, to the material world. This brings us to Genesis 1.31, and God said all that he had made and behold, it was very good.

[33:35] For Christians, the developmental biologies discovery that genetic conservation is very good indeed. Denton goes on to state, Indeed, I would argue that this failure is one of the most striking failures of the human imagination in recent scientific history.

despite eulogies of Peter Davies, George Barrow, Frank Tipler, Martin Rees, John Gribben, Roger Penrose, on the fitness of nature for life, none of them is prepared to take the next logical step to nomogenesis, evolution by law, and the notion of the law of biological forms.

This failure is all the more striking when it is also widely conceded by many of these same authors that the Darwinian explanations have failed in certain key areas, namely, the origin of life.

And this is a profound blow to the transhumanist position. Here we have an eminent secular scholar proposing that there are just laws of nature which science can apprehend, but there's a purpose to life.

So the logical question would be, what are the laws that form the basis for nomogenesis? Let's take a brief look at Aquinas' natural law found in the Summa Theologica.

[35:03] Aquinas posited that all creation comes from the mind of God. As creator, he governs the universe, and his character is eternal and unchanging. Thus, at the core of all existence is eternal law, God himself.

As a finite created being, we cannot know God. But the mind of God can be found in his creation. Thus, we learn about God's character and values in what's known as natural law.

Natural law can be deduced by human reason. This is the realm of science, that which can be known empirically. We find moral value in nature as well. Aquinas said that from nature, one can deduce the principle of doing good is the highest good, and doing bad is wrong.

But nature is limited. As Christians, we believe it was distorted by the fall of man, so whatever results you get are going to be distorted. Therefore, God, in his grace, gave us direct revelation to correct a few things.

These are the two standards by which everything should be measured. These are the plumb line that you go to. Now, in a perfect world, you take natural law and divine law to come up with human law, and they should balance.

[36:23] We know we don't live in a perfect world. Materialists reject the presence of God, the existence of God, and so they say there's no form of eternal law.

Since the enlightenment, they've rejected divine law as well. Without those plumb lines, natural law starts to erode, and what we're left with is human law created by corrupt individuals.

I found an interesting example of what corrupt human law is. In a gentleman named Bud Zewiski's article, the natural law is what we naturally law.

The moment lying is accepted instead of condemned, it has to be required. Once it comes to be viewed as just another way of doing business, then refusing to lie for the party, your company, is seen as a person not doing their job.

Dishonoring the truth is perversely regarded as a kind of duty. He claims that the elimination of eternal law and divine law and the erosion of natural, we now have a problem no other generation in history has had.

[37:47] He says we are passing through an eerie phase of history in which the things that everyone knows are treated as unheard of doctrine, a time when the elements of common decency are considered indecent.

Nothing quite like this has ever happened before. Although our civilization has passed through quite a few troughs of immorality, never before has vice been held as the high moral ground.

We begin to see why Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden. It's these corrupt human laws and human values that the transhumanists would entrench.

Historic Christianity states that mankind has a dual anthropology. We have a body and we have a soul. Two distinct entities.

in one person. According to Genesis, the bodies that we currently inhabit could have been immortal. In Genesis 3, 22 and 23, if Adam and Eve had eaten from the tree of life, they would not have died.

[39:00] This lends credence to degrace work on longevity. There was a material substance, according to Genesis, here on earth, that if it interacted with the human body, could produce immortality.

So the H-plus crowd has a biblically consistent position, but there's no redemption. the difference is the fall of man, and the expulsion from the garden was not an act of punishment as much as an act of grace.

If humanity had become immortal in our fallen state, the earth would have become an ugly, brutish place. Seen in the times of Noah, where in Genesis 6, 5-6, then the Lord saw the wickedness of man was great, and that every intent and thought of his heart was only evil continually, and the Lord was sorry he had made man on earth, and he was grieved in his heart.

So according to Romans, death entered the world through sin. God's plan, embracing both a limited free will and provision for bad mistakes, began.

Materialists believe we are simply a body, and that the mind is an electrochemical signal within a vat of chemicals. Transhumanists are actually seeking to create an anthropological dualism, transforming that vat of chemicals into hardware and software.

[40:33] They want to convert the human mind into a software program, again, in essence, creating an electronic soul. So they reject the Christian dualism, but want to create one of their own.

At a much deeper level, transhumanism erases personhood altogether. They want to make every aspect planned and deliberate. But whether you think it's in the mind or the heart, your soul is who you are.

Not only the experiences you've gone through, but what choices you've made in how you responded to them. So part of being an embodied individual means I'm an individual.

My body's unique. I have DNA from both my parents. There's some from both, but it makes a subset all my own. I share traits with my siblings, but I'm not a copy of them.

I happen to be the only one in my family with blue eyes. my mother and father both have brown, my sisters have brown, but my grandfather had blue. So from my ancestors comes a trait that's unique within my own family.

[41:52] And there are 7.6 billion people in the world. Each one's an individual. Look around the room. We come in different shapes, different sizes, different colors, and we're each unique.

Therefore, it would be reasonable to say that the telos of being embodied is to create individuality and a plethora of uniqueness.

Now, the problem is, with this uniqueness, not everyone wants to choose good. Transhumanists want to enslave and reprogram.

God wants to free and redeem. So what do we do with this liberty we've been given? We saw earlier that the transhumanists are using utilitarian ethics of functionality and productivity to shape their decisions.

As Christians, we have a radically different standard. Am I fully persuaded it is right? Can I do it as unto the Lord? Can I do it without being a stumbling block?

[42:59] Does it bring peace? Does it edify my brother? Is it profitable? Does it enslave me? Does it bring glory to God? We take on faith and hopefully now you can see by reason that God knows what he's doing even when we do not.

In conclusion, transhumanism wants to create a dichotomy, an electronic soul and an electronic body. They believe that the human mind can be translated into software and that's just as good as having an organic mind.

However, this does not seem to account for the translational differences in medium. So I don't think they're going to be effective. However, what they discover along the way will affect us.

It's highly likely they'll discover networked intelligence or other kind of artificial intelligence to be the intelligence systems for resource management. an example of this is the computers they have in England that based on the tests that you take in a blood lab and other standardized testing, the computer diagnoses what medication you'll be given and the doctor just rubber stamps it.

Other things that will result in the short term, I don't think even H-plus is really going to meet its goals. But along the way, they could discover life-extending medications and procedures.

[44:27] They will probably discover better ways to transplant organs. So it will affect us. Transhumanism may not create the electronic soul.

But they are working on it. This is where they are heading and most of our research laboratories are heading as well. We, however, are called to be salt and light.

And by understanding the world around us, that's how we participate in shaping the future. Thank you. So, any discussions? Thoughts?

Comments? What were the names of the people that started this thing in the 20s? I don't have the names of the people in the 20s. Around the 60s was Ray Kurzweil and Nick Bostrom.

You have obviously a lot of science fiction writers had the idea, but they're the ones who said, let's make this happen. this is sort of nebulous, I don't go anywhere much, but my own view of anthropology from a biblical point of view is body, of course, mind, will, and emotions, or soul, which I personally believe that the difference between us and the animal kingdom collectively is simply one of degree rather than kind, emotions, behaviors, surprising intelligence.

[46:04] I do, however, believe that what makes us unique is a human spirit that which enables us to relate to God, things like conscience, morality, and one noted animal behaviors, for example, said that animals know nothing of the conflict between inclination and obligation that leads us creatures into sin.

I have a pet, I disagree with that, but... Oh, okay. Oh, yeah, you love the pet's great, but yeah. So, anyway, I guess it's hard to imagine a completely mechanical or electronic human.

You know, even if duplicate the functions, I'm not sure if it's the same thing as conscious or humanity or some other way to God. And that's the fundamental issue. Would they be creating a soul?

Or is it just going to be a robot? Robots have been scary sophisticated lately. I had to cut a lot of that out because I can go into that for an hour on its own.

The ones in Japan, you could not tell they're not human. And we have the movie industry to thank for that. You know, they've done so much with mask making and all the 3D things.

[47:30] So, basically, they're hoping to meld the mind with machines, but I don't think it's actually going to be there. I think they're going to create robots.

Actually, the news was that they can actually play. So, for example, if you were a player, like a chess player, they actually figured out now to play and have their own mind.

They don't need anyone to play with and they just need the basic. Machines are excellent. They do it by themselves and to improve.

So, anyways, I'd like to say we shouldn't be afraid because if we read Revelation, we know that it will come and also we are closer to the second coming of Christ and we should really stick with the word of the Lord and be happy on one hand, but on the other hand, we should be prepared like you and we have to know what's going on, but we should focus on God and say, okay, you are coming pretty soon, maybe not in this generation, but in the next or in the next.

Because it's all written in the Revelation. It's this kind of stuff. Yeah. If God sent a couple meteorites, it's unlikely that a robot would withstand it either.

[49:02] In the back. I have a deeper sense.

I have trouble straying with the idea, I love it, of our own immortality. I cannot imagine myself saying to the Lord, oh, I see now, now death is impossible for me. That self, I know it's coming, but I have no feeling in my mind, no texture of that.

does this give you a deeper sense of that mystery that's coming for us? Well, the wonderful hope we have as Christians is that the Bible promises death has no sting.

Now, it's reasonable to be afraid of dying. That's usually a pretty uncomfortable thing to do, and there's a great unknown, but death itself, we're going to continue.

We have that promise. And the nice thing about it, the amazing thing, as Christians, it doesn't rest on what I've done. I don't have to go through life with a checklist.

[50:14] Did I do this well enough? Did I do that well enough? It's on Christ's righteousness. He did well enough. So we go through life with a different perspective than people who aren't Christian.

And they face this utter bleakness, they think they're going to be annihilated. So this is what they came up with, transhumanism. Stick around somehow.

Nick Bostrom takes, I think, 237 different vitamins and supplements. and so but you know what?

He's getting old just like I am. So it's a big industry. Yes. And you have to realize all these wonderful gadgets you saw are a big industry as well.

So like I said, it makes great science fiction, but it makes highly profitable reality. So we are moving towards their goal. I don't think they'll make it, but they're taking all of us along for the ride.

[51:29] what would you say to someone who said that like medical technology, like vaccinations and I don't know, incubators for infants who would have died anyway, like things like that.

What would you say to someone who said, well, back then people would have said, oh, that's not God's will, therefore we shouldn't mess around with things like that. Basically, what the Christian bioethic community standard is, is if it returns something to the state it would have been in Eden, it's permissible.

In that case, it's saving a life. There isn't supposed to be death and disease here. God did not create it. That came from man's sin. So if it's restoring it to natural health and definitely an infant being saved, life is God's will.

Now, the question is this enhancement, steroids, where you have body builders with muscles literally that big on their arm, that's going beyond.

That's helpful, thank you. this has been fascinating and frightening. Yeah. Yeah. And speaking as somebody who has a hip made out of titanium and ceramic and a heart valve that used to belong to a cow, I am aware of the fact that neither of these things is making its own decision about how it will behave.

[53:06] you know, my hip cannot do anything that I don't want it to do. It can't move at all. It can't hold me up, it can't do twirly things, range of motion, whatever.

If I make that decision and I guess the thing I don't understand is will we ever get to the point where these transhuman things you're talking about, we'll be able to think beyond what they are programmed to do.

Can the chess player learn how to play bridge? You know what's doing that? What? Refrigerators. Smart appliances are making decisions for you. And they're getting more and more and more linked.

That's this networked consciousness. So it's a selling point that you place things on certain areas of your refrigerator, your milk goes here, there's a sensor.

So your refrigerator will know when there's milk. When you get down to about that much, it will order it for you. They're trying now, I don't know if you've seen, Amazon wants you to have an electronic key, so the Amazon guy can just come into your house, deliver it.

[54:23] So with all this linked technology, you'd get down to that much milk, come in the next morning, you'd have brand new milk. milk. Your refrigerator made that decision for you.

Now for some of us in here, what happens if that's linked to your scale? You open it up the next day, you have a bunch of broccoli, right? You hate broccoli, but your scale told your refrigerator it's good for you.

So you already have some things starting to make decisions for you. None of those involve the moral judgment, do they? And I think one of the most frightening things you talk about is the way we are changing the morality.

Yeah. We get it every day on the news broadcast, the alternative truth. Wow. Is that not an option? And this is a difference between using technology in a godly manner and merging with it inseparably.

When you merge with it inseparably, we're not going to have a choice. Right now, I can take my cell phone, which I don't even own a cell phone, I can take Dave's cell phone and put it down.

[55:41] We can walk away from cell phones, we can walk away from computers. People are doing that, taking weekends media-free. If it's in your head, you're not going to be able to do that.

And then, as far as if it makes its own decision, just think about, if you really want to get scared, how much the media influences you all the time.

One thing that frustrates me, I will confess, I like cute cats on Facebook. I own a rabbit, I have a bunny. My computer has pegged me as a bunny person.

When I try and do research for something like this, I can't find it. Because I am in this category. It makes choices what I see. Dave will type in the exact same keywords, and he gets what I'm looking for.

Because my husband does not look at cute cat pictures. My husband looks up stuff like Egyptology, which you've heard. He's labeled as a scholar. I can't cross that boundary.

[56:50] my search engine decides what I see. So they are making some decisions for you.

You know, we mentioned about the steroids, not good. I spoke to an internist, he says weight lifting is not even good, but it's not a natural exercise.

Long walks on dirt, not paved and it works like a shock absorber. That's good, but weight lifting is a bit, as well as steroids.

An internist disapproved of the weight lifting as a whole. He just says it's not a natural. Yeah. And that's what we're finding out. The natural way, actually, after 50 to 100 years studying on things, the natural way works better.

Just to, so, hearing your talk, I was reminded very much of C.S. Lewis's Abolition of Man. Yes. I mean, where he seems to have been looking forward for the last 60 years to some of the ambitions of the transhumanists.

[57:58] Anything in specific? No, just, don't you? Yes. I haven't read that in a very long time, so it's kind of mixed up with other people.

I can't pick this to see us lose out. But the fact is that this has been around a long time. This is not 21st century.

This is, you know, 17th and 18th century. One of the really exciting things I found a couple years ago was the little mechanical things were very, very big in the 1700s.

But they've been around as long as ancient Greece. There was a man who created an entire flock of mechanical birds using a water system that flowed through them and they chirped and they sang and their wings flapped in ancient Greece.

The difference is we now have electricity. That's a game changer that created, well, not created, it enabled the creation of the computer.

[59:05] So it is a well-thought-out idea. We're just in the generation that we have to start thinking how close are they going to come because they're going to hit or miss this goal around us.

So probably not the answer you were looking for because that wasn't on my bibliography. When I consider in large scale what you were talking about this morning, say from flying 35 or 40,000 feet above it, it strikes me that this is a fantasy fantasy and that while there are technological elements around that within their limited spheres are quite impressive, I don't see any possibility of that singularity of the crossover, of the program, of something that will make me say that I see any possibility for this.

And they would hate to hear you say that. They believe it. And as I said, I don't think they're going to find a true merging, but I think they're going to develop a lot of new things along the way.

And I do think a lot of that we have to be aware of and be careful of. As we've seen, the cell phone has not made people happy.

Smartphones have not made people happy. So that's what our contribution as Christians are, is coming into the society and saying, this isn't the way society should be going.

[61:02] We're not supposed to be isolated. Alexandra. I think a limited example of where this singularity actually is applied is in situations that are in the factories.

So where the people are actually replaced. And there is a simple computer that does everything to make something happen. So in some ways, you know, maybe not, yeah, I see it as actually a small sector in which the information where singularity works.

And that's one of the reasons they want to merge man with machine is since the industrial revolution, machines have been replacing man.

So for some people, this is an act of desperation. So it's not only machines. I mean, you're seeing that now in the grocery store, right? You don't have a clerk all the time.

You bag it yourself. It's a machine that does it. smart appliances. You're not involved in that at all. So they're very sophisticated in what they can do.

[62:19] I still don't think they're going to cross that line, but I think they're going to come very far. Yes? What I don't worry about is when technology is actually aiming us and making widgets or something so much.

Yeah. It's the, and I don't think it's the high of mind. I think where technology is touching the human mind is the problem.

And there are cassandras out there, there are warning schools about the book, I think it's called The Shallows, about the fact of people who are really, really wired and taking a weekend and going through withdrawal.

Yeah. And they're finding that they're trying to read Milton's period of Jitaka and they can't. Yes. Because they don't have the depth of thinking anymore that they used to when they were in their 20s.

Yeah. They've been doing this sort of little information about a thousand topics every minute. Yeah. when you're surfing the map is actually changing the way we think.

[63:25] It's changing our minds. The ability. Souls and who we are. Yes. And that's the stuff that really slips the hell of me. I mean, you know, if a factory is automated and people don't have to, like, put a widget in a widget every, you know, on a misrepidant or something, eh, okay.

But where the technology is interacting with who you are that intimately, as we are in our phones and computers, that's very, very gross.

And also, the cancers, the tumor formation. Yes, that's another issue. People who have their cell phones like tucked in their bra or in their back pocket or whatever are developing tumors that are phone shaped.

It's the weirdest thing you've ever seen. Oh, you didn't know that. And it's just... Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. You know, I'm just... Things like that, whether they're interacting with their physicality that intimately or our mind that intimately, that's the thing you've touched on quite a bit, actually. Yeah. That's what you're saying today.

[64:31] Like I said, that's the... They'll go so far and this is where it does affect. Let me get over there and then...

I don't remember the exact source but I think it might have been the CEO of IBM who said in the 1970s or 60s maybe that he couldn't imagine a time when there would be any need for personal computers.

So I think that... When that gates... Once people imagine it, the track starts moving. Yeah. And the technology starts to build.

A very scary thing to consider is at the Tower of Babel. Why did God divide them up and give them different languages? Because if they all spoke one language, there is nothing they could not do.

We are living in the age where science is the language that is unifying the world. That and commercialism. But we're seeing the amazing things human mind can do.

[65:38] And they are good. Incubators for babies. Great things. But now each of us today has these decisions to make. Is this a fair use of technology?

Is this going too far? And like I said, the standards we use are different. Is this going to benefit people? Is this going to please God?

They're using the utilitarian is this going to make a profit? So we are called to be salt and light. We are called to have our voices heard.

You talk to people on the street. You write editorial opinions. And you feel confident hopefully today in saying, I think that's a bad idea.

I think that's a good idea, but I think that's a bad idea. And you start being able to say, and here's why. It is shaping us.

[66:39] It is, I think, touching our soul, because our soul is developed, I believe, in what we experience through life. So many of us here, part of our souls, are very electronic already.

But it's still a human soul. We're all still embodied beings. And God did that for a plan and a purpose. And I think we are out of time.