

Technology has always been an intrinsically disruptive agent of change. Sometimes those changes are epochal due to their revolutionary dimensions. Technology is a by-product of knowledge. Ephesians 1:17-18 in the Bible in Basic English version links light and knowledge together indicating that inner light produces the capacity for knowledge.



That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; And that having the eyes of your heart full of light, you may have knowledge of what is the hope of his purpose, what is the wealth of the glory of his heritage in the saints....

Incidentally, just looking at history, we see that as knowledge and technology increased the intensity of artificially generated light that man produced also increased. Just look at the headlamps of the most recently manufactured cars in the night, and the most recent low energy electric bulbs that we use in our homes. Even a casual glance at history shows that places in the lives of men. Indeed, "... in Him (Jesus Christ) was life; and the life was the light of men...." (John 1:3; KJV).

Roy (1978:14) quoted by Gummet and Johnston (1979:9) distinguished three general types of technology: "...technology as a body of organised knowledge; as the products of organised knowledge; and as the activity of applying organised knowledge." Hence, technology goes beyond physical and social hardware, but it is "...a force which permeates our political, economic and social systems." (Gummet and Johnston, 1979:9)

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Considering the breadth, depth and intensity of influence that ICT commands barely six hundred months after the installation of the first business computer in Kentucky; the computer is simply powerful. Computer technology and consequently, Information and communication technology (ICT) has developed steadily until it stands to control and change practically every area of human life. Amazingly, the rate and trend of development suggest that this is a tip of an expanding iceberg. Wikipedia defines ICT as "...all technical means used to handle information and aid communication, including computer and network hardware, communication middleware as well as necessary software. In other words, ICT consists of IT as well as telephony, broadcast media, all types of audio and video processing and transmission and network based control and monitoring functions". The Internet is a network of networks through which data, images, voice, and video are sent and received through both wireless and fixed-wire devices

TECHNOLOGY AS A POWER AND A TOOL

The popular adage that blames power as an agent of ethical chaos (or corruption) is not entirely accurate. Power does not corrupt. Absolute power does not corrupt absolutely. If it does, then God (who has absolute power) must be the most corrupt being in the universe. This is absolutely contrary even to the most bizarre concept of God. Power in general and technological power in particular is only a tool that increases the economy of possibilities available to those who possess it. Every tool and indeed, technology as a tool is ethically and morally neutral. It merely takes on the character and values of its operator. In this regard, ICT as a tool empowers the mission's project.

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE MEANING OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

Technology does not only change our very lives, it also changes the meaning of words. When we give instructions, the actions that we expect from those obeying us have changed over the years due to changes in technology. In fact, children that are born will act on instructions according to the amount of technology available for their use at that time. When our own parents tell us, "send this money to my friend" in a city far from where we were; the expected action was that either we (or some other person) travel to the city physically with currency notes or a paper cheque and deliver same to the recipient. Today, depending on the level of technology available to us, we can actually stand right there in our parent's presence, digitally send the cash from our mobile phone and go to the room to sleep. An onlooker who does not understand the technology we used may consider us rude and disobedient indeed. In light of this, it is important that we take a second look at the great commission and see how technology has influenced its meaning.

And he said to them, Go into all the world, and give the good news to everyone. (Mark 16:15;BBE)

The verb "go" (the shortest complete sentence in English language) traditionally is a word of command that means that the person commanded should move away from the commander. Today, we may say to a friend on phone; "I've gone to the site of British Embassy. I just left..." when indeed we had been in our room all day. Of course, what we meant was that we visited the website of the British Embassy. Hence, the word "go" has been expanded in meaning. This expansion in meaning includes the concept of the word "world." Although the meaning of words have keeps changing in the face of technology and communication methods have made it possible for man to 'send his word' like God did, however, the complete great commission mandate, involves not just giving the good news to people; it includes making disciples of them. Disciple making (like marriage) cannot be effective without physical contact with the people we are to disciple. Hence, this fact retains the inevitability of physically going to the unreached peoples.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND GLOBALISATION

Information technology seems to be completing a circle that was broken in Genesis 11: 6&7;

And the Lord said, See, they are all one people and have all one language; and this is only the start of what they may do: and now it will not be possible to keep them from any purpose of theirs. Come, let us go down and take away the sense of their language, so that they will not be able to make themselves clear to one another.

God destroyed man's desire for the entire world to be physically networked in a physical city, but today, ICT has re-created that network in cyberspace by connecting millions, indeed billions of people through their desktop, laptop or palmtop computers. It has also conquered distance and time thus making it possible to communicate with a lot of people as if you were physically close. In fact, Google can translate many written languages of the world into English and vice versa in a matter of seconds. Of course, this connection is highly empowering and has enriched mankind. In fact, the confusion of languages at the tower of Babel by God actually created the current challenges of the missionary task of cross-cultural communication of the gospel.



However, if God frustrated globalisation in Genesis 11, is man not disobeying God again by returning to it? To answer that question, we need to understand God's motive in Genesis 11. He was not against the building of a city because even the heaven we are going is a city. He was not against globalisation through a common language in itself either because the heaven we are going to would be a 'globalised' city with just one language. (Zeph) Even if God just wanted them to spread across the earth, He could have done it without confusing their language. God was against globalisation at that time because the imagination of man was evil and a globalised mankind with a common language at that time would have seen the rapid spread of evil as we saw happen within a few centuries before the flood which led to the destruction of the entire population of the earth except Noah's family at that time.

And they said, Come, let us make a town, and a tower whose top will go up as high as heaven; and let us make a great name for ourselves, so that we may not be wanderers over the face of the earth. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Genesis 11:4&6 (KJV)

And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. Genesis 8:21 (KJV)

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON MISSIONS

Technology impacts by bringing increase in at least three vital areas;

- Increase in speed,
- Increase in capacity, and
- Increase in impact.

Research

Some of the ICT tools that are available for mission's research include:

- Geographic information Systems
- Google Earth
- Internet Search

Communication, Mobilisation and Networking

- Access to Resources for mobilisation from all over the world.
- Emails
- Discussion and News groups.
- Instant Messaging services- Skype, Yahoo. MSN, Online chat rooms.
- Web sites

Evangelism.

- Web site Evangelism

A web site is your address on the internet containing information on what you do. It is accessible globally making it an effective medium for reaching unbelievers including the 10/40 window. Managing a successful web site involves domain name registration, web hosting, writing out Christian messages and uploading to the web site, and promoting the web sites on the internet through search engine optimization techniques. You may also use the web sites to sell Christian publications and materials and receive donated funds online.

- Instant Messenger Services

Yahoo messenger services have specific chat room for these countries in the 10/40 window-Taiwan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, East Timor, Brunei, Bangladesh. It also has specific chat rooms on the following religions- Islam, Buddhism, Astrology, Catholics, Hinduism, Judaism, Paganism including Satanism, atheism, monotheism, and witchcraft. Chat rooms are also maintained by homosexuals (Gays and Lesbians)

- Blogs

Wikipedia defines blogs as a Web site, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. 77% of active Internet users read blogs

IMPLICATIONS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND GLOBALISATION FOR MISSIONS.

The internet through the power of search engines like Google has made it difficult to do anything in secret or hide our identities as missionaries as we go into communities that are 'closed' or hostile to the gospel. Once we have an email address or join social networks like Facebook, we are no longer hidden. Every time we do anything, the information filters to the information super highway to three relevant audiences; unevangelised people, suspicious on looking secular world and missionary sending churches. In the words of Rick Love (2008), "the interconnectedness of our globalised world means that we are increasingly challenged to do three things simultaneously: to present the gospel (in our primary setting, to the unreached community), to defend the gospel (to the secular world listening in) and to recruit for the gospel (within the church). In the post 9/11 world, it is increasingly proving impossible to communicate with any one of these particular audiences separately.... Three questions will help us deal with the complexity of multiple audiences in our globalised world: how will we frame our message? How will we express our intentions? And how will we present our identities?"

In order to communicate effectively, Rick love (2008) suggests that we must contextualise our message so that we will have positive impact on the three simultaneous audiences that we will always address. He suggests that we do this by communicating the core message and the core mandate of the gospel and integrating and expressing our core identity without using traditional words that have been misunderstood by the unevangelised and the secular world.

By Deji ADEPEJU



Tags: | [YOUNG MAN](#) | [CAREER](#) | [RELIGION](#) | [MISSIONS](#) |

Related

[TEN GUIDEPOSTS TO ATTAINING A HIGHER LIFE](#)

[SEVEN GUIDELINES TO ENHANCING YOUR COMPETENCE AS A FRESH GRADUATE](#)

[YOUR PROFESSION AND MISSIONS](#)

Adepeju A.A August 2017 - The Information Super Highway a tool for missions. Jesse Books