Rethinking Ministry and Technology
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In our world of continuing technological advances and applications, the church must rethink the relationship between technology and ministry. I am one who is attempting to use the tools of technology in ministry—Internet postings, blogging, PowerPoint sermon presentations, digital resources…. These new tools and forms of communication are not going away, so I want to understand how to use them faithfully in God's kingdom. But as I consider the relationship between effective ministry and the continuing advances in technology, I also wonder at times whether, in our love for new gadgets, we might be building a "techno-tower of Babel", to borrow a descriptive phrase.

Think about the changing face of **ministry in the context of our expanded access to information**. Consider the theological historical continuum that extends from that time when sacred knowledge was limited to the clergy to the present where such knowledge is ubiquitous. In the past, clerical exclusivism and religious tyranny allowed a few with oppressive human power to serve as gatekeepers of sacred knowledge. In today's world, knowledge is widely available, and technology increases that availability as theological topics are treated online and are the topic of several dozen blogs. What does this mean to theology? Is theology now the task of the people? Is doctrine determined via a democratized and crowd-sourced populism?

Or in another arena of ministry, **what does it mean to be a minister or a church leader given all of our connectivity**? Are Christian leaders supposed to be "plugged in" at all times? How much contact should a minister maintain with the members? How does a leader help the church filter and understand information?   If everything is accessible, and religious leaders are nothing besides another data source, how do church members know what or whom to trust? What makes local church leaders more dependable or trustworthy than Internet or media sources?

We must rethink ministry in the context of **evangelistic missional churches reaching out and touching people who have never been interested in Christianity before**. In a new technologically savvy world, contacts and studies occur in contexts never before possible. If (or when) a church reaches the goal of genuinely touching lives and developing new leaders, the new members and new leaders may not resemble the members and leaders of the past. Is the church ready for that? We may expect to see new passions, skills, and quirks—new hopes and new methods.

Finally, we must rethink **ministry as an activity of the church.** People of faith, all of whom are called to ministry, are part of a constant struggle to live faithfully in this world. The accelerating increase in temptations and time wasters is perhaps unequaled in the history of the world. God has always called faithful people to consider the fresh ways in which he will do new things in a world that is aging and running down. The most important thing we can contemplate is how our genuine service enables the transformation of hearts and minds so that God's people find a measure of peace and understand their commission to Christ-likeness—commitment, compassion, and caring that makes clear the message of Jesus.