

thefeed

TBN | UK

TV that feeds the soul.



Autumn 2023

Dear readers,

It can feel like our world is changing at an incredible pace, with the explosion of Artificial Intelligence and our increasingly digital world. There are huge opportunities for us to do more and reach further with the gospel than ever before. But it can feel exhausting trying to keep up!

In this issue, we're asking what place emerging technologies have in our faith and ministries.

Can God speak through AI? Can His spirit move in a digital world? And has so much really changed? As Philippa Hanna said in her recent interview at Big Church Festival: "God is not changing. He's still God, He's still good."

With that foundation, I pray that these pages will provoke new questions, insights, and hope as we see God's hand at work in all things.

Blessings,



Graham Ormiston
CEO, TBN UK

TBN | UK

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Working to share the love of God with every home, every device, and every person in the UK.



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**“We are not
machines,
God has
made us for
more than
that...”**

– Artificial Spirituality (page 8)



Worship Studio

How can we avoid the worship funk?

We're not talking about worship tracks with a great beat and a strong bassline, we're talking about worship without the heart. We can all fall into the trap of repeating uninspired, mundane, and obligatory 'worship' habits that leave us feeling far from God.

So, after dedicating time out to record uninterrupted and authentic worship sessions throughout the year at TBN UK, as part of our Worship Studio series, we thought we'd get some helpful tips from the musicians and worship leaders who came along.

Let's see what they had to say...

How can we keep our worship refreshed?



Sam Jackson Reed

Firstly, engage in awe, wonder, and beauty. Weave these three things into your life. Listen to beautiful music. Get out into creation. Invite loved ones for a meal and laugh extravagantly. Ask God to open up your eyes to see that even the most ordinary thing has been soaked in beauty and mystery. Seeing with these eyes means we can go ever deeper into the presence of God in the everyday and the extra-ordinary. Our worship becomes a dynamic, intimate,

and energised movement by the Holy Spirit between us and God with space for both the beauty and absurdity of life.

Secondly, develop a practice of silence and stillness. Learn what it means to be with God, asking nothing and being asked to do nothing but be in each other's company. By learning to be opposed to constantly doing, our worship takes on deeper roots that can reach down into unseen places, informing and sustaining our external expressions of praise. A good place to start is to read Ruth Haley Barton's book, *An Invitation to Silence and Solitude*.



Ashtyn Michael

Keeping our worship refreshed is all about our personal relationship with God. Matthew 6:6 says, 'But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.' I believe that when we rely on God completely it will be reflected in our worship.



Lyanna Austin

Be intentional: Make a conscious effort to connect with God every day.

Embrace variety: There are many ways to worship beyond singing – prayer, meditation, fasting, art, dance, and even nature walks. Find what resonates with you.

Find a community: Shared worship can enhance your connection with God.

Be grateful: Regularly expressing gratitude to God can renew your spiritual connection.

Live your worship: See your daily tasks and interactions as opportunities for worship.

Remember, a sincere heart and open mind are the keys to fresh, fulfilling worship.



What's the difference between worship and performance?



Sam Jackson Reed

I think this comes down to intention. There is an inevitable degree to which the techniques of performance are and indeed should be employed in worship. Learning how to play or sing well and then doing so in an inviting or engaging way is inherently a 'performance' technique. I don't think we should be afraid of those things as they can be an embodiment of our desire to invite people into the time of worship. The same goes for music in general. Ultimately, music engages the emotions and influences them. What a gift from God! The anchoring question therefore, in that space, is to ask 'Who am I serving? How am I serving them? How am I using these techniques to be invitational towards the congregation? How am I using them to love this group of people and lead them to a place of openness?'



Ashtyn Michael

The difference between worship and a performance is all about the priority. Who is it you are serving by being on that platform? When it's inspired by God, for God, and with the intention for others to see God then that's when we see powerful worship.



Lyanna Austin

In the grand tapestry of our lives, it can be easy to lose sight of our original purpose: to worship. It's a deeply personal act where every action, word, and thought is aimed at honouring and loving God. Worship is about devotion to God. The focus is solely on God, not on ourselves or our audience. Performance, in contrast, is about our own artistic expression and audience engagement. So, while a heartfelt song of praise can be both a performance and an act of worship, the concepts remain distinct.



Watch Worship Studio on YouTube

Uninterrupted, authentic worship from some of the best emerging artists in the UK

 [TBNUKMusic](#)

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Artificial Spirituality?



Our team wrestle with the question: What is the role of AI in our spiritual lives?

Opinions have been flying since the first AI church service was held in Fürth, Germany, this summer. This social (or spiritual?) experiment featured a sermon written by ChatGPT that was delivered by generated avatars to hundreds of congregation members. The event, which The Independent called a 'soulless service', received mixed reviews from the Christian attendees.

And of course, it's not just the Church who are having to assess the pros and cons of this fast-moving tech train. Even the creators and leaders of AI software are calling for regulations to be put in place. Meanwhile, Hollywood has pulled the plug on production as thousands of workers and unions strike to appeal for AI legislation before all the big-screen jobs are taken by technology.

The spotlight is firmly fixed on what could be the most influential tech revolution of our lifetime.

So, what does this mean for a Christian and media production company like TBN UK? As we seek to share the love of God through our content and community, our team are wrestling with the question: what part should AI play in our professional and spiritual lives?

The debate is well underway...

Artificial Intelligence (AI) definition:

The theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages.

Should AI support our spiritual life?



No! (Not completely...)

Look, I'm no Luddite. I make use of digital tech every day, from journaling to writing music to project management. I even use the self-checkout in the supermarket. But that doesn't mean I approve of AI in a spiritual context.

When it comes to Bible study, AI 'research' often involves dredging all the information we've ever put online (including Wikipedia) and presenting it. Schools won't let us cite Wiki links in GCSE papers. But we trust our souls to the same sources?

Christians are called to be wholehearted, authentic apprentices of Jesus. Part of that journey is walking in His footsteps daily, without seeking a shortcut in our discipleship. Is it wise to skip steps in our pursuit of God?

AI tempts us to believe the lie that we can do it all. But we don't need to achieve more in less time. Just the opposite: we need to slow down. To remember our finite place before a holy God. We are not machines; God has made us for more than that.

God's ways are higher, and I believe He can use AI. But for me, I want to unplug when meeting with God and say: "hasta la vista, baby", to AI.

Graham Ormiston
CEO, TBN UK



Absolutely! (Within reason...)

If AI can organise my shopping list, budget, and schedule, freeing up time for me to spend with God, I'm all for it! Guess whose spiritual gift is not administration.

Let's be honest, when seeking God's wisdom, we often use tech. From YouTube sermons, to automated Audio Bibles. Those who would otherwise find it hard to connect are benefitting from AI generated captions, translation, and more. If we love to study or teach the Bible, I'm sure we all use Google to compare commentaries, check facts, or study Church history. If the right AI platforms can gather and present useful research in a digestible format, is it bad to use this tool? I'm not convinced it is.

Society is obsessed with saving time. This makes AI's capabilities incredibly attractive. But we should be cautious – not everything that is 'attractive' is good. The Bible even tells us that when Eve saw the forbidden fruit, it was attractive! We need God's wisdom on what is truly good for us. But ultimately, God sees our heart and promises to meet us when we sincerely seek Him. So, I'm excited to find out what it means to use AI to the glory of God.

Taylor Bentliff
Brand Editor, TBN UK



Gospel Heritage

Join us in September for a month-long celebration of Gospel music!

Freeview 66 Sky 582 ▶ watch.tbn.uk

Tune in to TBN UK for a series of exciting programmes. Experience the joy of the genre through dynamic performances of reimagined classics, and interviews with industry greats.

Step through the doors of gospel music's most influential music studios and stages, through the memories of Donald Lawrence and Nicky Brown on the Gospel Heritage Special. They share stories of working with gospel royalty, like The Clark Sisters, Bebe Winans, Stephanie Mills, Faith Evans, and more. Explore the intricate process of creating albums and iconic style as Donald and Nicky express their love for the history, the genre, and the influence it still has today – best expressed by Donald's sentiment: "Gospel music is the fabric of my culture, it started with our stories, with our ancestors, it is the core of American music because gospel music started in the Church and the Church birthed jazz and blues and it birthed rock and roll... It is people from multiple genres singing one message."

We also share thought-provoking discussions around the dinner table on A UK Gospel Music Celebration with Blessing Annatoria, Noel Robinson, Bazil Meade, and many more guests, as they discuss the origins, culture, and future of gospel music in the UK and beyond. Guests share facts and thought-provoking questions that explore the depth of this genre's legacy. Plus, enjoy music from Ryan Hylton, Sharyn, Folabi Nuel and more.

Don't miss this opportunity to celebrate the heritage of Gospel music with us!

A UK Gospel Music Celebration

🕒 19:00

📅 8 September

Repeats Sunday 10pm, Monday 6:30pm, Saturday 2pm, and Sunday 3am.

Gospel Heritage Special

🕒 19:00

📅 29 September



MEGA MIX!

Are you ready for some mega fun? Dance, sing, learn and play with Mega Mix! Tune in for a mix of worship, Bible stories, arts and crafts, and memory verses to inspire children to grow with God.



Watch on YouTube

Mega Mix Kids



Does online evangelism work?

Is the gospel reaching more people through the tech habits of Gen Z? We explore the stats and what leaders in the field are saying.

Western culture often feels a million miles away from the community-based culture we see in the Bible. Add in a domino of fallen generations and we can feel like we're further from it than ever before. We're less likely to know our neighbours, more likely to work

alone, and the list of needs met by technology rather than humans is ever-increasing.

But what about sharing the gospel? Could online evangelism be the future?

Lorem ipsum

It's certainly a reality for Generation Z (those born between 2010 and 2024) who are spending less and less time in person. According to YouGov, 77% of UK teens spend most of their time at home, half of them specifically in their bedrooms. And what would they be doing in there? Living life through their screens of course! According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, teens are racking up 35 hours a week online – the equivalent of a full-time job! And although many studies link excessive screen use to depression, anxiety, poor emotion regulation, lack of concentration, and trouble socialising in-person, it's not all bad news. For better or worse, something about the distance seems to bring people closer together...

Pioneer of Alpha, Nicky Gumbel, explained in a recent interview that much to his own surprise, online evangelism works really well because "everyone's in their own home. They're relaxed. They've got their own cup of tea."

Alpha is a community-based 11-week evangelism course taken by over 24 million people, which has recently been adapted to reach the online generation through zoom sessions, online courses, and video resources. Nicky explained in a recent foreword that 'the Holy Spirit is not confused by Zoom – He still works powerfully remotely and at a distance! People have been healed, found faith, and been filled with the Spirit at their kitchen tables.' People seem to want to connect with God and others behind closed doors and are "more open online than they are in person," according to Nicky.

And this online presence is ever-growing. YouGov's recent studies found that 95% of 15-year-olds have social media accounts, while

16-24-year-olds are using an average of 8.7 social media platforms each. Teens have an unprecedented ease of access to online evangelists and influencers who are dominating the Christian scene on social media.

We chatted to Dan Blythe, Global Youth Director for Alpha, who added to the discussion: "I think we need to do everything we can face to face and do everything we can online. If the people we need to love are online then we need to be online, to be present, to listen, to learn and to love."

Perhaps this is what it means to 'go to where the people are' as we set out on the Great Commission in the UK today. The opportunity to capture the attention of Gen Z with God's truth seems to be found in the digital realm. Dan continued: "The digital revolution has connected young people across the globe. They are hearing stories of their culture and sharing their experience of Jesus. I have never seen the gospel being shared so widely as it is today."



Watch **Got Questions** on TBN UK

Explore the world through the lens of Generation Z on the new series of Got Questions?!

🕒 19:30

📅 Thursdays

God wants followers too

The very good social network

Social media can be a powerful tool for connection, community, and signposting people to God. But it can also become an idol, an addiction, or a distraction. Through our new course,

on the Grow with TBN UK app, we explore the opportunities and challenges social media brings to Kingdom living.

God was there, right at the beginning. The Holy Trinity were together - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - enjoying perfect community. Into this everlasting bliss, God decided, for His own pleasure, to create the Earth, the moon and stars, clouds, olive trees, jellyfish, worms, lava, and zebras. And, of course, humans.

If you like, God created humans to join his own social network.

This social network started off well - it really was very good. Peaceful, vibrant, happy, loving, creative, hard-working. This was a pure community, with each of the members in relationship with the creator. However, after some time, two of the users broke the terms and conditions and ended up being kicked out, entering into a shadow of the former community...

Maybe I'm stretching the metaphor, but the point is that God created a system by which He could be in union with this creation. The Bible is clear on what God values most in His true followers. Jesus, when answering the question 'what is the greatest commandment?', said:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself."

📖 Matthew 22:37-40

Christian community built on this foundation can be amazing. As Bonhoeffer put it, 'the physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer'. Online communities can be a little more challenging.

The community values of the Kingdom of Heaven can be seen in the character traits Jesus exhibits and teaches like:

Love

Unconcerned with the self and concerned with the greatest good of another.

John 15:12: **"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."**

Humility

The quality of having a modest opinion or estimate of one's own importance.

Philippians 2:3 **"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."**

Holiness

To be specially recognised as or declared sacred by religious authority.

1 Peter 1:15 **"but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct"**

Boldness (sharing the Gospel)

Not hesitating or fearful in the face of actual or possible danger; to be courageous and daring.

Joshua 1:9 **"Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."**

Authenticity

The quality of being genuine.

Proverbs 12:17 **"Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness utters deceit."**

Imagine if all the computers were turned off indefinitely. I would encourage you to take a step back and ask yourself: **What characteristics of your digital life would remain intact in the real world? What would you look back on with fondness? And what would you regret wasting time on?**

Full course available on Grow with TBN UK from October.



Download the app, or visit grow.tbn.uk for the full course and more!



Grow



grow.tbn.uk



tbnukgrow





Big Church Festival

Catch up on all the action with sets from Leeland, Matt Maher, Israel & New Breed and lots more!

 watch.tbn.uk





Worship Studio

Uninterrupted, authentic worship from some of the best emerging artists in the UK

 [TBNUKMusic](https://www.youtube.com/TBNUKMusic)





 grow.tbn.uk  [tbnukgrow](https://www.instagram.com/tbnukgrow)



Featured Course

Social Media Course

Launching in October
Exploring the networks and connections that bring us life.

  Download the App
Grow with TBN UK

“ I am having ongoing treatment for ovarian cancer. My ears pricked up when I flicked around the TV and I saw an interview on TBN UK with a lady who spoke of her cancer diagnosis and how God wants to be with us. I have been feeling totally blank, but it was as if I was meant to tune in.

Jenny

“ I have been watching TBN UK from the beginning. It has undoubtedly shaped my spiritual growth, fed and sustained me in difficult and lonely times, lifted my spirits and spurred me on in my race.

Caroline

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