THE KURZWEIL PROJECT

Hear Him, Not the Machine

Ray Kurzweil, the Singularity, and the Freedom of the Son

A biblical-theological critique of *The Singularity Is Nearer*, with a word to lawyers, wealth advisors and the families they serve

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> *"This is my beloved Son; listen to him."*
>
> **— Mark 9:7**

> *"...declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord."*
>
> **— Romans 1:4**

> *"This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful."*
>
> **— 1 Corinthians 4:1-2**

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A note on where I write from. I am not a computer scientist. I am a lawyer, a wealth advisor and a Reformed theologian who spends most days at kitchen tables and conference tables with families deciding what to do with what God has entrusted to them. More and more, those conversations turn to artificial intelligence: what it will do to a family business, to a portfolio, to a grandchild's future, and, lately, to death itself. Ray Kurzweil's *The Singularity Is Nearer* is the most influential statement of the hope behind many of those questions. This essay is my attempt to hear it fairly, to answer it biblically, and to help the people I serve decide whom to listen to.

I. Two Voices from Two Clouds

Asked whether God exists, Ray Kurzweil once gave the answer that has followed him ever since: "Not yet." Most people hear a quip. I hear a confession of faith. It names a god who does not stand before the world as its Creator but waits at the end of the world as its product, a deity assembled out of matter and computation as intelligence saturates the cosmos. *The Singularity Is Nearer: When We Merge with AI* (2024) is the updated creed of that coming god. And it's fantastically and farcically portrayed in Gore Verbinski's recent dystopic movie, *Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die*.

Kurzweil's central promise is a merger. Sometime in the 2030s, he predicts, nanobots will connect the human neocortex to cloud-based computation. By 2045 our minds will be freed from what he calls "the enclosure of our skulls," and our intelligence will expand millions-fold. Death, recast as an engineering problem, will yield to "longevity escape velocity." The body he calls "suboptimal" will be surpassed. This is not simply a forecast. It is an account of where the world came from, what is wrong with it, how it will be saved and how it will end. In other words, it is a redemptive history, and it deserves to be read as one.

I want to read it against another. At the center of Mark's Gospel, on a high mountain, Jesus is transfigured before Peter, James and John. A cloud overshadows them, and a voice comes out of the cloud: "This is my beloved Son; listen to him" (Mark 9:7). In my own work I have come to treat that verse as the governing imperative of the Christian life and the hermeneutical key to Mark's hardest teaching on money and possessions. Stand on 9:7 and look both ways. Behind you is the call to deny yourself, take up your cross and lose your life in order to save it (8:34-35). Ahead of you is the rich young ruler, the command to sell, give and follow, and the promise of a hundredfold in this age and eternal life in the age to come (10:17-30). The cost Jesus demands on either side of 9:7 is the cost the Father endorses from the cloud.

> KEY IDEA · TWO CLOUDS, TWO VOICES
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> On the mountain, the Father speaks from a cloud: "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." Kurzweil points to another cloud, a computational one, and promises we can save our lives by technique. This essay asks one question of every page of his book: to whom will we listen?

Kurzweil also points us to a cloud and a voice. His cloud is computational. His voice is the curve of accelerating returns. His promise is that we may save our lives by technique. Mark 8:35 addresses that promise with uncomfortable precision: "Whoever would save his life will lose it." And Mark 8:36 asks the question that a millionfold intelligence cannot answer: "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?"

The method of this essay is Reformed and redemptive-historical. With Geerhardus Vos, Herman Ridderbos and Richard Gaffin, I read Scripture as the unfolding history of God's saving acts, from creation through fall and redemption to consummation, centered on the person and work of Christ. I also take a Van Tilian posture: I want to ask not only whether Kurzweil's claims are true, but what his hope, his moral urgency and his reverence for consciousness quietly presuppose. And because I am a practitioner, I will end where my work hopefully always ends, with faithful stewardship.

II. Kurzweil's Gospel on Its Own Terms

Before I critique a man, I owe him a fair hearing. Ray Kurzweil is not a crank. I have learned much from him and still do. I enjoy reading him. I have been following him since about 2000 when I began my PhD work at Durham. I remember seeing him as a teenager on the Ed Sullivan show.

Kurzweil built the first print-to-speech reading machine for the blind, pioneered optical character recognition and speech synthesis, and received the National Medal of Technology. Blind men and women have read books because of his work. That is a real good, and Christians should say so plainly. I do, and I commend him. His forecasts have also aged better than most. When he predicted in 1999 that a machine would pass for human by 2029, serious people laughed. Few are laughing now. Based on my reading of Scripture, I actually believed him when I read it in 2000.

His framework is simple to state. History unfolds in six epochs of increasing information: physics and chemistry, biology and DNA, brains, technology, the merger of technology with human intelligence, and finally a universe that "wakes up" as intelligence saturates matter. Driving the whole story is what he calls the law of accelerating returns: information technologies improve exponentially, and each improvement speeds the next. On that basis

he holds two dates with remarkable consistency. Human-level AI by 2029. The Singularity, the merger of human and machine intelligence, by 2045. As recently as mid-2026 he was still defending both. As I've read through *The Singularity is Nearer*, I have often thought just how remarkable his (and other's) faith in evolution and humanity truly is, and even wondered whether in some respects it takes greater faith to maintain belief in it than it does to maintain belief in bodily resurrection after bodily death grounded in faith that Jesus of Nazareth is in fact alive and will return to "set the world to rights" as N.T. Wright is fond of saying.

KURZWEIL'S FORECAST AT A GLANCE

Date	Kurzweil predicts
1999	Predicts a machine will pass for human by 2029.
2029	Human-level artificial general intelligence.
~2030	"Longevity escape velocity" for "diligent people."
2030s	Nanobots link the neocortex to the cloud.
2045	The Singularity: a millionfold expansion of intelligence.
Beyond	The universe "wakes up."

Nearer fills in the promises. "Diligent people," he writes, will reach longevity escape velocity around 2030, when medicine adds more than a year of life for every year that passes. Consciousness, in his account, emerges wherever information becomes sufficiently complex, which means silicon can one day feel as carbon does. He asks, apparently sincerely, why anyone would ever choose to die. And he has spoken movingly of reconstructing a conversational likeness of his late father from his father's letters and papers. (Echoes of "surely you won't die" reverberate in my head.)

Step back and the shape of the story is unmistakable. It has a creation (the cosmic evolution of information), a fall (biology is slow, fragile and "suboptimal"), a redemption (technology, especially AI), and a consummation (a universe suffused with mind). It even has a deferred deity: God does not exist *yet*. Reviewers across the spectrum have noticed the religious register. One called Kurzweil "an evangelist at heart." The Girardian essay in *First Things* argued that his eschatology inverts the only true singularity history has known. The engineering-trained reviewer in *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*, David Winyard, concluded that because Kurzweil's transcendence has no roots, his dream remains inhuman.

A RIVAL REDEMPTIVE HISTORY

Act	Kurzweil's version
Creation	The cosmic evolution of information

Act	Kurzweil's version
Fall	Biology is slow, fragile and "suboptimal"
Redemption	Technology, especially AI
Consummation	A universe suffused with mind
God	"Not yet"

That is where I want to begin: not by mocking the dream, but by recognizing it as a rival gospel, and then asking whether the dream can bear the weight its readers and believers are placing on it or if in the end it is just a dream.

III. Creation: Image, Dominion, and the Goodness of the Body

The Christian quarrel with Kurzweil does not begin with technology. It begins with creation.

Scripture is not anti-technological. God made humanity in his image and set us to "fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:26-28). Within a few chapters, Jabal, Jubal and Tubal-cain are developing agriculture, music and metallurgy (Gen. 4:20-22). When God wanted a tabernacle built, he filled Bezalel "with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship" (Ex. 31:3). Tools, instruments and inventions belong to the cultural mandate. A Christian who uses a reading machine, an MRI or a large language model is not compromising the faith. He may well be obeying it. I sincerely think he is and that it would be irresponsible as a believer not to use every technological tool available to us to do “good works prepared beforehand” for us to do for the good of humanity and glory of God (Ephesians 2:10, Matthew 5:16; etc.).

But the same chapters draw two lines that Kurzweil erases.

The first is the Creator-creature distinction. In Genesis, God is before all things, and everything else is made. Kurzweil's "Not yet" reverses the order: the universe comes first, and God, if he comes at all, arrives last. That is not a small adjustment to theism. It is the oldest alternative to it, the dream of a god who emerges from the world rather than a world that comes from God.

The second line concerns the body. When God finished his work, he pronounced it "very good" (Gen. 1:31). He formed man from the dust and breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living creature (Gen. 2:7). We are not information patterns temporarily running on meat. We are embodied souls, dust and breath together, and God called that combination very good. Kurzweil calls it "suboptimal." Every judgment of that kind is, finally, a judgment on the Maker.

"Very good" (Gen. 1:31) versus "suboptimal." Every judgment of that kind is, finally, a judgment on the Maker.

This matters for the families I serve. A client who believes his body is a temporary substrate will plan very differently from one who believes his body is a gift he must steward and will one day receive back, glorified. The first will spend to escape his creatureliness. The second will spend to honor it.

IV. Fall: Babel, the Tree of Life, and the Deceitfulness of Technique

If creation explains why technology is good, the fall explains why it is never neutral.

The serpent's promise was not wealth or pleasure. It was elevation: "you will be like God" (Gen. 3:5). That is the root of every transhumanist aspiration, and Kurzweil's is simply the most candid version. The fall was not the discovery of knowledge; it was the attempt to seize, apart from God, what only God can give.

Then comes a detail that repays attention. After the fall, God guards the way to the tree of life, "lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever" (Gen. 3:22-24). In 2014 N. T. Wright and Peter Thiel debated this very text at the Veritas Forum in San Francisco. Wright said extending human life is not wrong, and medicine has already done it remarkably well. The danger, he said, begins when we imagine an elixir of life, a magic pill, which sounds rather like the fruit in the garden that was not allowed to be taken. Thiel countered that the tree of life was never forbidden in the original design. Both were right, and the tension is the point. Life was always God's intention for us. What is forbidden is seizing it on our own terms, as fallen people, without reconciliation to the Giver. The cherubim with the flaming sword are not a rejection of life. They are mercy: God will not let rebels make their rebellion permanent.

> **SCRIPTURE · GENESIS 3:22-24**
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> *"Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever..." He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.*

Next comes Babel (Gen. 11:1-9). A unified humanity pools its technique to build a tower "with its top in the heavens" and to "make a name for ourselves." The problem is not bricks

or mortar. It is a technological project with a theological aim: to reach heaven by our own construction and to guard our significance against being scattered. I'm sure I'm not the first to recognize this, but it's pretty easy to recognize that Kurzweil's merged, cloud-linked humanity is Babel perfected: one language, one network, one mind, reaching upward.

Scripture also tells us what death is. It is not a hardware defect. It is a verdict. "In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:17). "Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin" (Rom. 5:12). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), and "it is appointed for humans to die once and after this comes judgment" (Heb. 9:27). Engineering can delay a sentence. It cannot vacate a judgment. Only the Judge can do that, and he has, at great cost to himself.

> KEY IDEA · DEATH IS A VERDICT, NOT A BUG
>
> Engineering can delay a sentence. It cannot vacate a judgment. Only the Judge can do that, and in Christ he has.

In my Mark 9:7 framework, the Parable of the Sower supplies the diagnosis. The word is choked by "the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things" (Mark 4:19). I have spent years applying that verse to affluence. It applies equally to technique. The promise of limitless intelligence and indefinite life is the most sophisticated "desire for other things" ever marketed, and it chokes the word in exactly the same way: by making us believe we can secure our lives ourselves.

V. The Markan Hinge: Whoever Would Save His Life

I want to put Kurzweil's book and Mark 8-10 side by side, because Mark answers it almost line for line.

Mark	Function	Kurzweil's claim	Scripture's answer
1:15	The summons	The Singularity is near; prepare and adopt	The kingdom, not the Singularity, is at hand
4:18-19	The diagnosis	More intelligence, more life	"Desires for other things": technique as the new deceitful riches
8:34-36	The cost	Longevity escape velocity; why choose to die?	Whoever would save his life will lose it
9:2-7	The authorization	Merge with the cloud; self-authored metamorphosis	The Father's voice from the cloud; glory given, not engineered
10:17-22	The application	Acquire, enhance, upgrade	Sell, give, follow

Mark	Function	Kurzweil's claim	Scripture's answer
10:29-30	The promise	A millionfold mind and indefinite life	A hundredfold now and eternal life to come

Consider Mark 8:35 first. "Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it." Kurzweil's entire program is an attempt to save one's life. Jesus does not say that project is ambitious or premature. He says it fails, and that it fails precisely because it succeeds on its own terms. Gain the whole world, including a mind a million times larger, and forfeit the soul, and you have gained nothing (8:36).

Then the Transfiguration (9:2-8). It is the Bible's own picture of human metamorphosis. The Greek word is *metamorphōthē*. A human body is changed; his clothes become radiantly white, "as no one on earth could bleach them." Kurzweil wants exactly this: a transformed human being, radiant with more-than-natural power. The difference is not in the goal but in the source. On the mountain, glory is given from above, not engineered from below. It is revelation, not upgrade. And the only instruction the disciples receive is not "build" but "listen."

> *On the mountain, glory is given from above, not engineered from below. It is revelation, not upgrade.*

Finally, the rich young ruler (10:17-22). He is earnest, moral and wealthy, and Jesus looks at him and loves him. Then comes the one thing he lacks: sell, give to the poor, and follow. He goes away sorrowful because he has great possessions. I have watched that scene play out in real life more times than I can count. The Singularity simply adds a new class of great possessions: a stake in the upgrade, a place at the front of the line for longevity, a mind that can be backed up. The invitation of Jesus is the same as it was. Let go, and follow. And the promise is the same: a hundredfold now, in the family of God, and in the age to come, eternal life (10:29-30). Not from an algorithm, but from the word of the one who said, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58).

VI. Redemption: The True Singularity, Declared with Power

The Father speaks twice about his Son in a way that matters for this essay. Once on the mountain: "This is my beloved Son; listen to him" (Mark 9:7). And once at the empty tomb, as Paul puts it at the head of Romans: Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4). The

Transfiguration previews what Easter declares. Both are the Father's verdict on the Son. Both tell us whom to hear.

N. T. Wright built the third volume of his *Christian Origins and the Question of God*, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, from that text outward, and on this subject I have learned a great deal from him. (As a Reformed theologian I part ways with Wright on justification, and readers who know the debates will see that. On resurrection and eschatology, he is a formidable ally.) Wright shows that the ancient pagan world agreed on one thing about death: it was a one-way street. Nobody came back. The early Christians claimed that one man had, bodily, and that his rising was the first act of God's new creation. They were not saying his soul survived or his influence lived on. They were saying the tomb was empty and the body was transformed.

That is the true Singularity. Kurzweil defines his Singularity as the point at which human and nonhuman intelligence merge and history becomes unrecognizable. The incarnation is the real merger, and Easter is the real event horizon. At Bethlehem the eternal Son joined himself to a true human nature. The Council of Chalcedon insisted the union was "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation." Notice what that protects. Kurzweil's merger dissolves the human into the machine; the human being becomes a node, a pattern, an upload. Christ's union does the opposite. It preserves humanity whole and then glorifies it. The risen Jesus eats fish on the shore (Luke 24:42-43). He is more embodied, not less.

> KEY IDEA · THE TRUE SINGULARITY
> The incarnation is the real merger, and Easter is the real event horizon. Kurzweil's merger dissolves the human into the machine. Christ's union, "without confusion, without change," preserves humanity whole and then glorifies it.

Wright uses a helpful word for this: the resurrection body is "transphysical." It is physical, but physicality transformed, no longer subject to decay. A very good reading, in my view, of 1 Corinthians 15:50-57. Compare that with Kurzweil's claim that mind is substrate-independent, that "you" can run on silicon as well as on carbon. That is not the Christian hope. It is, as Wright likes to point out, much closer to the Platonists of the first century, who hoped to leave the material world behind, than to Paul, who hoped for the redemption of our bodies (Rom. 8:23).

Two more contrasts complete the picture. Christ, not technique, abolishes death: he "abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10), and through death destroyed the one who has the power of death, delivering those who "through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery" (Heb. 2:14-15). And Pentecost, not a brain-computer interface, is the true expansion of the human mind. The Spirit was poured

out "on all flesh" (Acts 2:17), and believers are told, astonishingly, that "we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). Union with Christ, not upload to the cloud, is the way a human being is joined to the life of God without ceasing to be human.

This is why Kurzweil's "Not yet" is not merely wrong but late. The decisive event has already happened. The Christian lives, as Vos taught us to say, between the ages: in the "already" of Christ's resurrection and the "not yet" of our own. Kurzweil collapses that tension into an engineering timeline. The gospel holds it open in hope.

> SCRIPTURE · ROMANS 1:4
> *"...declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord."*

VII. Truly Free: Healing as Sign, Not Immortality by Technique

Kurzweil promises freedom: freedom from the enclosure of the skull, from disease, from aging, from death. Jesus also promises freedom. "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). The question is freedom from what.

In John 8 Jesus speaks to people who had believed in him, and he tells them the truth will set them free. They are offended. They have never been slaves to anyone. Jesus answers that "everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin" (8:34). The deepest slavery is the one that does not know itself. Kurzweil's freedom is liberation *from creaturehood*. The Son's freedom is liberation *of the creature*: from sin, from the fear of death, from the need to secure ourselves. The first seizes; the second receives.

That distinction lets me say something I think the church urgently needs to say and say carefully.

> THE CENTRAL THESIS
> **We must distinguish healing as a sign of the kingdom from immortality by technique. The line does not run between low technology and high technology. It runs between receiving and seizing.**

Medicine is good. Jesus healed the sick as a sign that the kingdom had come near, and the church has built hospitals, hospices and clinics ever since. At the Veritas Forum Wright named medicine, education and care for the poorest as the classic signs of Christian hope,

things we can do now that anticipate what God will do in the end, when he wipes away every tear (Rev. 21:4). I agree entirely. A Christian oncologist, a research scientist working on Alzheimer's, a donor funding malaria vaccines: these are doing kingdom work. Longer, healthier lives are a gift.

But Wright also said, bluntly, that we will never cure death in this age, and that the Enlightenment reaches real arrogance when it offers longevity as an alternative to resurrection. That is the line. It does not run between low technology and high technology. It runs between receiving and seizing, between service to the sick and salvation by engineering. Healing says: "God will make all things new, and here is a foretaste." Immortality by technique says: "We will make ourselves new, and we no longer need him."

This also answers the most serious challenge I found in the sources. At the same forum, Thiel argued that what is most striking about transhumanism and Christianity is how similar they are: both promise a transformed body, radical renewal, an end to freak accidents that kill. He was skeptical of any metaphysical difference. In the transcript, Kurzweil even comes up by name; Thiel's objection to him was not that his goal was wrong but that he thought it would arrive automatically, while we sit back and eat popcorn. Thiel is right that the goals overlap. That is exactly what makes the counterfeit convincing. But the agent and the means are opposites. In one story God raises the dead. In the other we refuse to die. Christian transhumanists who enlist Wright for their cause need to reckon with this distinction; he blesses the hospital, not the elixir.

SAME GOAL, OPPOSITE AGENT AND MEANS

Healing as sign	Immortality by technique
God will make all things new; here is a foretaste	We will make ourselves new; we no longer need him
Received	Seized
Resurrection	Refusal to die
The hospital	The elixir

This is also the heart of what I call being *Truly Free*. True freedom for the affluent Christian is found in dispossession and donation, not in accumulation and possession. The Singularity offers the ultimate accumulation: more mind, more years, more of oneself. The gospel offers the ultimate release: losing one's life and finding it in Christ. That is why the Thirteenth Thesis of my *Truly Free* manifesto matters here: generosity is an eschatological act. Every gift given in Jesus' name declares that the I AM is more real than the balance sheet, and more real than the benchmark.

KEY IDEA · TRULY FREE

True freedom for the affluent Christian is found in dispossession and donation, not in accumulation and possession. Generosity is an eschatological act.

VIII. Consummation: Whose Telos?

Every redemptive history has an ending, and the ending tells you what the story was about. Kurzweil's story ends when computation reaches a threshold: 2045, and then a universe saturated with intelligence. The history Jesus described ends somewhere else. "This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14).

That verse has shaped my work for years, and it reorders everything in this debate. History's decisive metric is not processing power but proclamation. The question God asks of the age is not "How intelligent did you become?" but "Did the nations hear?" The end comes when the gospel has gone to every people, not when the last human mind has been uploaded.

SCRIPTURE · MATTHEW 24:14

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

The Bible's picture of the end is also stubbornly physical. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:44). Paul's *sōma pneumatikon* is not a body made of spirit, as if the resurrection were a ghost. It is a body wholly animated by the Holy Spirit, imperishable, glorious and powerful (15:42-43). And the setting is a new heaven and a new earth, not a mind floating free of matter: "Behold, I am making all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Wright's summary at the Veritas Forum is apt: the new creation will be like what we have now, only much more so.

Scripture also gives a sober warning about the path to the end. Babylon in Revelation is a civilization of immense commercial and technical power, trading even in "human souls" (Rev. 18:13), and the beast's system controls who can buy or sell (13:16-17). I am not predicting that any particular company or government is the beast. I am saying that concentrated technical power over human bodies and minds is exactly the kind of thing Scripture teaches us to fear (think: Matrix human body farms). Secular reviewers have noticed the same risk: *Cato*'s reviewer warned that governments can use AI to surveil and censor their own people, and *Forbes*'s reviewer argued that without restraint the Singularity

will free only the few who control access. The Christian has better reasons than they do for that caution.

IX. Borrowed Capital: The Philosophical Apologetic

Kurzweil's project also has philosophical problems that deserve brief mention, because they are not side issues. They go to whether the promise can be kept even on its own terms.

The hard problem. Kurzweil claims consciousness emerges whenever information is sufficiently complex. But complexity explains behavior, not experience. We can explain why a system reports seeing red; we cannot explain from the outside why there is something it is like to see red. David Chalmers named this the hard problem, and Thomas Nagel's question about what it is like to be a bat still stands. The Polish philosophical review of *Nearer* put it sharply: Kurzweil's gesture toward philosophy serves to naturalize a technological faith, not to settle the question.

The Chinese Room. John Searle argued that manipulating symbols according to rules is not the same as understanding them. Today's language models make the point vivid. A system can pass a conversational test by predicting probable responses without any grasp of what it says. Passing for human is not being human.

The copy problem. If my brain were scanned and uploaded, and the original left intact, which one would be me? If the answer is "the original," then uploading does not save me; it copies me. Derek Parfit wrestled with these puzzles for decades. For a Christian the answer is not a puzzle at all. Personal identity is held by God, who knows us by name and who raises the same person who died, not a backup.

Borrowed capital. Here I want to take a Van Tilian turn. Kurzweil's hope is intensely moral. He believes death is an evil to be overcome, that consciousness has special worth, that suffering should be relieved, and that the future ought to be better. But nothing in a universe of matter, energy and information yields any of those "oughts." Thiel made a striking observation at the Veritas Forum: the belief that death is unnatural, a disorder rather than the way of all things, is not a pagan view. It is a Christian one. Every pagan myth says that all that lives must die. Kurzweil's revolt against death is a Christian conviction running on atheist hardware (or course, this is nothing new in human history). Wright added that science itself grew out of a Christian delight in the goodness of creation and turned toward Frankenstein only when it was cut off from those roots. The Singularity lives on borrowed capital. (Note bene: John Milbank and the Radical Orthodoxy theologians demonstrate this convincingly, in my opinion.) The honest question is whether it can pay the loan back.

KEY IDEA · BORROWED CAPITAL

Kurzweil's revolt against death is a Christian conviction running on atheist hardware. The Singularity lives on borrowed capital.

X. A Word to Fellow Advisors: Faithful Stewards in a Singularity Economy

Now let me speak as a practitioner, to lawyers, wealth advisors and the families we serve.

"This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:1-2). Paul does not say stewards must be found brilliant, prescient or high-performing. He says faithful. The *oikonomos* manages a household that belongs to someone else, and he will give an account. God owns it all. We are God's stewards. And a such we are called to identify, resource, elevate, and delegate to the next generation of stewards who see their lives this way. That standard is the right one for our work in an age of AI, and it frames five practical disciplines.

FOR ADVISORS · FIVE DISCIPLINES FOR FAITHFUL STEWARDS

1. Faithfulness over forecasting
2. Stewarding the body, not escaping it
3. Digital legacy and the dead
4. Planning for disruption, not utopia
5. Windfalls as occasions for freedom

1. Faithfulness over forecasting. Kurzweil sells certainty about 2029 and 2045. A faithful steward plans under providence and humility: "You do not know what tomorrow will bring" (James 4:14). Treat "AI will change everything" as a thesis to diversify around, not a prophecy to concentrate in. In practice that means watching for single-theme concentration, valuation risk and any plan whose success depends on a particular date arriving.

2. Stewarding the body, not escaping it. Some affluent clients will spend heavily on longevity programs, and a few will ask about cryonic preservation and "revival" trusts designed to hold assets for a future self. These deserve serious legal conversations: duration limits and the rule against perpetuities under the governing state's law, trustee discretion, what counts as the beneficiary being "alive," and tax consequences. But beneath the documents lies the real counseling question from Mark 8:35: Is this client trying to save his

life? The better plan may fund the hospital, not the freezer. Healing as a sign of the kingdom, not immortality by technique.

3. Digital legacy and the dead. Kurzweil has described building a conversational likeness of his late father from his writings. Our clients will soon ask about AI avatars of deceased spouses and parents, and about who controls a person's data, voice and likeness after death. Estate plans should now address digital assets under the state's fiduciary-access statute, post-mortem publicity and likeness rights, and explicit instructions about whether one's likeness may be simulated at all. Pastorally, we must help families distinguish memory from simulation. Grief is holy ground, and a chatbot that imitates Dad is not Dad. The Christian hope is not a digital echo; it is resurrection.

4. Planning for disruption, not utopia. For business-owning families, AI is a real risk to margins, workforce and succession, and it arrives alongside a difficult economic cycle. The faithful response is liquidity, governance and contingency planning, not waiting for Kurzweil's abundance. This is where risk management and comprehensive life stewardship meet: a family that has prepared for disruption is free to be generous in it.

5. Windfalls as occasions for freedom. AI-driven gains in public equities and private companies are creating unexpected wealth. I encourage every advisor to frame that moment through the *Truly Free* lens: dispossession and donation, not accumulation and possession. Help clients deploy their LIFE (Labor, Influence, Finances and Experience-Expertise) toward good works prepared beforehand (Eph. 2:10), being "rich in good works, generous and ready to share" (1 Tim. 6:18). Some of the most exciting gospel uses of AI are already here: accelerating Bible translation for the remaining language groups and extending access to the Scriptures among the unreached. That is technology bent toward Matthew 24:14, and toward the Pentecost 2033 horizon many of us are praying and planning toward.

The advisor's own conscience. "What do you have that you did not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7). Our expertise, our clients' wealth and the tools we use are all received. I use AI in my own practice, gratefully. But I cannot outsource the judgment for which I will give account. Paul adds that the Lord "will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart" (4:5). The final review of every plan we write is not the market's. It is his.

FOR ADVISORS · PRACTICAL CHECKLIST FOR THE NEXT CLIENT MEETING

- Review AI-theme concentration and any plan that depends on a date arriving.
- Ask about longevity spending and cryonics interest; confirm perpetuities and duration rules in the governing state.
- Add digital-asset, data and likeness provisions, including whether a likeness may be simulated.
- Stress-test the family business for AI disruption: liquidity, governance, succession.
- Frame AI windfalls through *Truly Free*: dispossession, donation and good works prepared beforehand.

XI. Conclusion: From "Not Yet" to "It Is Finished"

Ray Kurzweil's "Not yet" deserves an answer, and the Christian answer is not "never." It is "already, and not yet." The Son has come. On the cross he said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). On the third day the Father declared him Son of God in power by the resurrection (Rom. 1:4). He will come again, and the one seated on the throne says, "Behold, I am making all things new" (Rev. 21:5).

The Singularity asks us to wait for a god who is still under construction, and meanwhile to save our lives by technique. (Watch *Good Luck, Have Fun, Don't Die*. You'll enjoy it and see this last sentence and Kurzweil at play in a wild and crazy way, imo.) The gospel invites us to trust a God who has already acted in history, and meanwhile to lose our lives in God-like and Christ-like kind, tenderhearted loving forgiveness and forgiving love (Eph. 4:32-5:2): to heal the sick, feed the hungry, fund the translators, give freely because we are free, and forgive those who just don't get us and want to abuse us. The first is optimism about a trend line. The second, as Wright rightly insists, is hope grounded in an event.

So I return to the mountain. Two clouds, two voices. One promises a merger that will make us more than human. The other says, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." As a lawyer, an advisor and, first of all, a follower of Jesus, I know which voice I want my clients to hear, and which voice I need to keep hearing myself. The church's longing is not a countdown to 2045. It is the prayer at the end of the Bible: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20).

Two clouds, two voices. "This is my beloved Son; listen to him."

Addendum A. Research Findings to Date

HOW TO READ THIS ADDENDUM

This addendum records the research gathered for the Kurzweil Project through September 28, 2026: what has been published on *The Singularity Is Nearer*, where the critical conversation stands, and what remains to be verified. Items marked *to verify* rest on background knowledge or secondary citation and need checking before publication.

A.1 Scope and method

The survey covered mainstream book reviews, academic and philosophical critiques, and explicitly Christian or theological engagements of *The Singularity Is Nearer* (Viking, 2024), along with the wider Christian literature on transhumanism and technological eschatology. It then examined N. T. Wright's work for any direct engagement with Kurzweil, Aubrey de Grey or AI, including a full reading of the 24-page transcript of Wright's 2014 Veritas Forum exchange with Peter Thiel.

A.2 The state of the literature

KEY IDEA · BOTTOM LINE

Direct engagement with *Nearer* is still thin and consists mostly of reviews, not monographs. Only three pieces engage it theologically. No sustained Reformed or evangelical critique of the book exists yet. That gap is this essay's opening.

Kurzweil's position is stable. He has held the same two dates for a quarter century: human-level AI by 2029 and the human-machine merger by 2045. *Nearer* restates rather than revises that forecast, and as of mid-2026 he was still defending both dates publicly.

Key claims in* Nearer *to engage:

- AGI by 2029; the Singularity by 2045 (p. 2).
- Nanobots connecting the neocortex to cloud computing in the 2030s, expanding intelligence "millions-fold."
- Longevity escape velocity for "diligent people" around 2030 (p. 188); death treated as a solvable technical problem (pp. 191-92).
- Consciousness as an emergent property of sufficiently complex information (pp. 80-81).
- "Biological life is suboptimal."
- On whether God exists: "Not yet."

A.3 Mainstream reception

Secular reviewers split between "prophet with a track record" and "salesman for the few." Few press the anthropological questions that matter most to a Christian critique.

- **Sympathetic.** *Cato*'s *Regulation* shares Kurzweil's permissionless view of innovation but warns that governments can use AI to surveil and censor. The Italian-edition preface and several blog reviews treat him as a reliable guide.
- **Mixed.** *The New Republic* reads the book as a progress report and a claim that transhumanism fulfills humanism. *Newcity Lit* calls Kurzweil "an evangelist at heart" who waves away barriers to adoption.
- **Critical.** *Forbes* argues that, absent regulation, the Singularity will liberate only those who control access. *Skeptic* says Kurzweil grades his own predictions on a curve. The *Book Marks* roundup collects several harsh verdicts, including that the book's real value is its candid technocratic view of humanity.

A.4 Philosophical and academic critiques

- *Zagadnienia Filozoficzne w Nauce* (2025) offers the most substantial academic critique: Kurzweil's emergentist account of consciousness naturalizes a technological faith rather than settling the question; the ethics are underdeveloped; death is recast as an engineering problem.
- A Spanish review (ICNS, 2025) argues that a chatbot can pass the Turing test by probabilistic patterns without symbolic understanding, so real intelligence, and a fortiori consciousness, remains unresolved.
- Classic resources for the critique: Searle's Chinese Room, Chalmers's hard problem, Nagel on subjective experience, Dreyfus on embodiment, and Parfit on personal identity.

A.5 Christian and theological engagements of *Nearer*

Source	Posture	Key finding
David C. Winyard Sr., *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 77:1 (March 2025)	Evangelical-critical	Kurzweil's atheism undermines his arguments; his transcendence "has no roots"; the dream remains inhuman. Closest ally for this project.
Calvin Mercer, *Catholic Books Review* (2024)	Christian transhumanist	Calls Kurzweil the leading theoretician of transhumanism; praises the consciousness chapter. The sympathetic foil to answer.
"The Singularity Has Already Happened," *First Things* (March 2025)	Girardian-eschatological	Futurist eschatology inverts the only true singularity; techno-optimism borrows Christian eschatological imagery with the theology removed.

A.6 N. T. Wright and transhumanism

> KEY IDEA · THE CENTRAL FINDING
> As far as can tell, Wright has written nothing on Kurzweil, de Grey or AI. But in 2014 he debated the transhumanist hope in person with Peter Thiel, and Kurzweil is named in that exchange. Wright's resurrection scholarship, launching from Romans 1:4, is the essay's strongest exegetical-historical resource.

Veritas Forum, "What Is the Hope for Humanity?" (San Francisco, May 2014), with Peter Thiel and moderator Ross Douthat. Transcript read in full.

- **Kurzweil named.** A speaker (almost certainly Thiel; the auto-generated transcript lacks speaker labels) mentions Kurzweil and dismisses his view as passive: the Singularity simply arrives while we sit back and eat popcorn. Thiel objects to Kurzweil's determinism, not his goal.
- **Hope versus optimism.** Optimism is a mood; hope rests on an event in history, Jesus' resurrection and the new world it launched.
- **Death and arrogance.** The "uber-Enlightenment" reaches real arrogance when it seeks a cure for death itself and treats longevity as an alternative to resurrection.
- **The elixir and the tree of life.** Extending life is good; imagining a magic pill for life resembles the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:22-24). Thiel counters that the tree of life was not originally forbidden.
- **Limits.** We will never cure death, disease or accidents in this age; healing and comfort now are signs of what God will do at the end (Rev. 21:4).
- **Signs of hope.** Care for the poorest, medicine and education are the church's classic signs of the kingdom.
- **Thiel's convergence thesis.** Transhumanism and Christianity are strikingly similar in their hope for a transformed body. Wright never fully answers this; the essay does.
- **Christianity is not Platonism.** Wright rejects Nietzsche's "Platonism for the masses"; original Christianity holds heaven and earth together.
- **Death as unnatural.** Thiel observes that viewing death as a disorder is a Christian, not pagan, conviction.

Christian Transhumanist Podcast, Ep. 38 (May 2018). Wright argues the Christian hope is more physical, not less, and calls medical technology a sign of the kingdom. The Christian Transhumanist Association claims him as an ally; the 2014 exchange shows the limit: he blesses healing and rejects the elixir.

Not to be confused: Robert Wright's *The God Test* (2026) treats AGI as a possibly godlike evolutionary successor, a secular foil alongside Kurzweil.

A.7 Lines of argument developed

1. **Eschatology.** Kurzweil's secularized telos against the gospel's telos in Matthew 24:14 and the new creation.
2. **Anthropology.** The self as information pattern against the *imago Dei*, embodiment and bodily resurrection.
3. **Death and hope.** Longevity escape velocity against Hebrews 2:14-15 and 2 Timothy 1:10.
4. **Theology proper.** "Not yet" as a god-in-the-making against the self-existent God (Ex. 3:14; Acts 17:24-25).
5. **Power and stewardship.** Surveillance and concentration of access reframed through stewardship and good works (Eph. 2:10; 1 Tim. 6:17-19).
6. **Epistemics of prophecy.** Kurzweil's self-graded track record against the biblical test of the prophet (Deut. 18:21-22).
7. **Healing as sign, not immortality by technique.** The line runs between receiving and seizing, not between low and high technology. The goal is shared; the agent and the means are opposed.

A.8 Open verification items

- Kurzweil's "Not yet" (*Transcendent Man*, 2009; cited in *First Things*, 2025).
- Page references in *Nearer* for "enclosure of our skulls," "suboptimal," longevity escape velocity, consciousness, and "why would anyone ever choose to die."
- Kurzweil's account of the chatbot of his late father (*Nearer*; Amy Kurzweil, *Artificial*).
- Speaker attribution in the Veritas transcript, checked against the video.
- Authors of the *First Things* and *Zagadnienia Filozoficzne w Nauce* articles.
- Page and timestamp citations for Wright's "transphysicality" and the Plutarch/Paul contrast.
- Arkansas and Florida perpetuities rules, digital-asset fiduciary-access statutes and post-mortem publicity statutes.

Addendum B. Annotated Bibliography

> **STATUS MARKERS**
> Entries marked *verified* were located and read during this project. Entries marked *to verify* come from background knowledge and need a bibliographic check before citation.

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