

Federation Board Scholarship Essay

Living in the Computer Age: A Reason for Christian Concern?

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Computers are the wave of the future, and now, with the emerging popularity of the Internet, the computer industry is growing and expanding by leaps and bounds. Everyone, it seems, is investing in computer equipment and software in order to be online or to benefit from the other conveniences that computers provide.

Computers have a tremendous impact on almost everyone, and our schools are no exception. Many of our schools are building up their computer labs and teaching their students how to use them. This is a good practice, the children and young people in our schools have to be familiar and proficient with computers and how to use them. In order to survive in today's and tomorrow's world, students must be computer literate. Computers have many good qualities and tremendous capabilities to make tedious or humanly impossible tasks easier to complete.

However, despite their ability to make life easier for all of us, I believe that computers also give Christians reasons for concern. One of these concerns lies with the development of the Internet, and this concern is mainly for two reasons. First, many families and schools are now online, and the Internet can be a dangerous and volatile source of information. Young people can easily stumble onto things that no one should ever read or be so easily presented with. Should we make something so volatile and dangerous so easily accessible to our young people? Possibly, with appropriate supervision. Secondly, I believe that the Internet should also be viewed as one of the signs of the times. Through the Internet the world is becoming more and more connected and has become much smaller. Communication with anyone anywhere or in any country is entirely possible. The gathering of the nations through the swift communications through the Internet and other computer technology makes the teachings of Christ possible in Matthew 25: 32-33: "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."

I also feel that the Internet, although it gives our churches opportunity to spread the true gospel of Jesus Christ, can and is, also an outlet for the many false teachings and prophets whom Jesus warns about in Matthew 24:24: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

As teachers in our Protestant Reformed schools, I believe that we must be aware of those things which seem to point to the glorious second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We must make these things known to our students. However, we must not teach these essential truths in fear, but rather with the attitude of the second petition of the Lord's Prayer:

"Thy kingdom come," that is, rule us so by thy Word and Spirit, that we may submit ourselves more and more to thee, preserve and increase thy church; destroy the works of the devil, and all violence which would exalt itself against thee; and also, all wicked counsels devised against thy holy word; till the full perfection of thy kingdom take place, wherein thou shalt be all in all." Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 48, Question and Answer 123.

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