

Examination of Ecclesiastical Strategies for Implementing AI-Generated Content in Alignment with Philippians 4:8

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Abstract

Fostering comprehensive spiritual growth was both facilitated and complicated by the rapid integration of digital technology and artificial intelligence (AI) in contemporary church ministry. Digitalization enhanced ministry effectiveness, involvement, and communication, yet research indicated that technological advancement did not necessarily foster spiritual maturity. Many churches used AI-generated sermons, devotionals, and media without a theological framework to ensure that such content strengthened faith rather than merely boosting visibility. Grounded in the moral and theological precepts of Philippians 4:8, this study sought to develop a strategic model for AI use in church ministry. It employed a qualitative literature-based method and synthesized empirical studies on digital churches, reports on AI-enabled ministry, and contemporary theological scholarship to evaluate how the chapter's eight virtues could guide content filtering and digital governance. The results identified five pillars: mission-oriented design, theological oversight, discernment-based curation, ethical-aesthetic coherence, and spiritual impact assessment. Through Spirit-led digital stewardship, this study presented a biblical value-anchored AI paradigm that positioned AI as a servant of the Gospel.

Keywords: *AI-Generated Content; Discernment-Based Curation; Philippians 4:8; Church*

Introduction

A healthy church experiences growth in both membership and the spiritual development of its congregation. The equilibrium in church expansion, regarding both magnitude and quality, is regarded as an indicator of ecclesiological robustness in modern Christianity.¹ A recent study indicates a pattern of sluggish growth and spiritual decline across diverse religious groups worldwide, primarily due to cultural trends, social dynamics, and diminishing engagement among younger generations.² This forecast emphasizes the need for churches to cultivate adaptive, responsive, and transformative strategies to anticipate and mitigate this decline. These activities encompass the revitalization of ministries, the enhancement of discipleship quality. The fortification of community relationships, and participation in missions aligned with the demands of modern society.³

In light of this urgency, church growth cannot be assessed solely by numerical metrics or by the increase in baptisms. Genuine growth prioritizes a discipleship process that methodically cultivates mature followers of Christ, accountable servants, and

¹ David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements: A Practical Guide for Growth in the 21st Century Church*, Rev. ed. (Richmond: Mission Press, 2021), 45–47

² Barna Group, *The State of the Church 2023: Trends in Faith, Attendance, and Spiritual Practice* (Ventura, CA: Barna, 2023), 28–30

³ Alan J. Roxburgh, *Leading the Missional Church in a Post-Pandemic Era* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2024), 121–124

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spiritual leaders equipped to impact their communities. Recent research indicates that robust church growth necessitates the fortification of faith. The cultivation of spiritual character, and active engagement in ministry as fundamental components of qualitative advancement. This qualitative growth encompasses strengthening trust in God, deepening theological understanding, integrating Christ's values and teachings into everyday life, and experiencing spiritual transformation that influences both individuals and the community. Consequently, church growth is not perceived solely as quantitative expansion but as a holistic, continuous process of spiritual development.⁴

In alignment with this understanding, Jesus affirmed that He would build His church. He also entrusted His followers with the responsibility to disciple those who were identified as disciples. Thus, the erection of churches is a hallowed undertaking, but discipleship is the responsibility of the faith community. The primary aim of the discipleship process is to promote continuous church growth. From an ecclesiological perspective, church development is an essential characteristic of a flourishing church; thus, an effective discipleship process is critical for the sustainability and vigor of church life.⁵

To support effective and lasting discipleship in the modern age, digitalization in the church is essential for strengthening ministry, discipleship, and congregational engagement. Digital technology empowers churches to broaden their mission outreach, enhance communication effectiveness, augment spiritual education, and improve service accessibility.⁶

Recent studies indicate that churches that adopt technology experience heightened involvement, enhanced ministry effectiveness, and greater relevance among younger generations.⁷ Moreover, technology facilitates the development of hybrid ministry models, enhances administrative efficiency, and cultivates more immersive worship experiences.⁸ Consequently, digitalization is not merely a technical choice, but a strategic necessity for churches to sustain the vitality of their ministries and guarantee the ongoing spiritual development of their congregations.

Balke's 2023 study experimentally confirmed earlier findings. He explained that that congregations that adopted digital ministry strategies observed substantial enhancements in communication quality, participation levels, and community integration in the post-pandemic context.⁹

In the practical implementation of strategic digitization, it is essential for the church to reconfigure worship practices. This reconfiguration enables the church to address the challenges and requirements of the contemporary era and fulfill its ministerial mandate. The present generation is witnessing swift, unparalleled change. From this

⁴ Stimson Hutagalung, et.al., *Pertumbuhan Gereja* (Jakarta: Yayasan Kita Menulis, 2021), 2

⁵ Ibid, 5

⁶ Tim Hutchings, *Digital Church: Theology and Ministry in the Age of Online Worship* (London: Routledge, 2021), 34–36.

⁷ Barna Group, *The State of the Church and Technology 2023* (Ventura, CA: Barna, 2023), 12–15.

⁸ Heidi Campbell and Michael Walters, *Ecclesiology for a Digital Church: Ministry, Community, and Worship in the Hybrid Era* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2022), 55–58.

⁹ Samuel E. Balke, "Digital Transformation and Congregational Vitality in Post-Pandemic Churches," *Journal of Practical Theology* 45, no. 2 (2023): 148.s

perspective, digital church services that integrate the Internet of Things (IoT) pose several significant challenges. The church must develop a structured, adaptable digital strategy to prevent obsolescence amid technological progress.¹⁰

A new wave of technology is affecting contemporary church ministry: the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI). Technologies like ChatGPT for scriptwriting, Midjourney for liturgical visuals, and automated video and audio generators are currently employed to enhance the production of church content, encompassing devotional materials, digital announcements, and training tools.¹¹

Campbell contends that advancements in AI have transformed the methods by which religious communities generate, disseminate, and engage with spiritual content.¹² The Barna Group reports an increasing number of churches contemplating the utilization of AI for ministry management, congregational communication, and sermon preparation.¹³ The Pew Research Center indicates that artificial intelligence is increasingly integrated into daily activities and influencing interpersonal interactions, particularly in religious practices.¹⁴

In light of the ever-sophisticated application of AI, dynamics have arisen that churches must heed. David Hirome's research indicates that the advent of advanced chatbots like ChatGPT and Bard has profoundly altered how Christians pursue answers to spiritual inquiries, formulate personal prayers, and construct sermons, often presented in a style resembling that of human pastors. This advancement has prompted several new theological inquiries concerning the essence of humanity, spiritual authority, and the church's mission in the age of artificial intelligence.

Moreover, the use of AI solutions for the automated production of reels, brief spiritual videos, and visual content enables churches to expand their ministry outreach more swiftly and efficiently on digital platforms. Consequently, the implementation of AI transcends mere technical advancement and has become an integral component of the church's digital transformation, necessitating ethical discernment and accountable pastoral care.¹⁵

Cross-national empirical evidence further corroborates this development. Research by Mónika Andok and associates on religious communities in Hungary indicates that religious leaders are increasingly using AI for sermon preparation, biblical text searches, and administrative tasks. In contrast, laypeople use it for spiritual guidance and to disseminate information within their communities.¹⁶

¹⁰ Stimson Hutagalung, et.al, *Pertumbuhan Gereja* (Jakarta: Yayasan Kita Menulis, 2021), 171

¹¹ Heidi A. Campbell, "Religion and Artificial Intelligence: Emerging Questions," in *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*, 2nd ed., ed. Heidi A. Campbell (New York: Routledge, 2023), 215–217.

¹² Campbell, "Religion and Artificial Intelligence," 220.

¹³ Barna Group, *AI and the Church: Emerging Trends in Ministry and Technology* (Ventura, CA: Barna Group, 2024), 8–12.

¹⁴ Pew Research Center, *Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Humans* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2023), 14–18.

¹⁵ David Hirome, "A Missional Church Strategy in an Era of Humanlike Chatbots," *Ecclesial Futures* 5, no. 1 (2024): 51–53, <https://doi.org/10.54195/ef18743>

¹⁶ Mónika Andok, Zoltán Rajki, and Szilvia Dornics, "The Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools for Religious Purposes: Empirical Research Among Hungarian Religious Communities," *Religions* 16, no. 8 (2025): article 999, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16080999>

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The rising implementation of AI in digital services does not inherently lead to the spiritual advancement of congregations. Churches are rapidly utilizing diverse forms of digital content, including live broadcasts, reels, short films, devotionals, and sermon texts generated by AI. A recent study indicates that, without thorough theological evaluation and thoughtful pastoral consideration, such content may not effectively foster faith development or spiritual maturity within congregations. This situation underscores the necessity of properly situating digital worship services theologically. A study by Hengki Wijaya et al. emphasizes that virtual worship sessions should be regarded as an adjunct rather than a replacement for spiritual development practices.¹⁷

Within this paradigm, the emergence of cyber churches represents a notable phenomenon that presents both advantages and constraints. Cyber churches enable congregations to enhance their spiritual growth through their adaptability and accessibility.¹⁸ However, the development of online worship sessions has not sufficiently met the spiritual and social requirements of church communities. The rapid integration of technology may introduce ethical quandaries and other risks that jeopardize congregational confidence, doctrinal purity, and community allegiance. Digital religion presents numerous opportunities while simultaneously generating significant tensions. Presently, digital religious practice is undergoing transformation, wherein its vast promise coexists with continuously emerging challenges.¹⁹

Although numerous studies have confirmed the significance of digitalization and AI in church ministry, such as enhanced participation, improved ministry efficiency, and broadened mission outreach, the current literature still presents a research gap. It lacks a comprehensive theological framework to ensure that these technologies truly foster deep spiritual growth. Prior research has concentrated on technical advantages, hybrid worship frameworks, or trends in AI adoption.

However, it has not examined how biblical principles, particularly the ethical and spiritual tenets of Philippians 4:8, can form the basis for a strategic model for the screening, curation, and production of AI generated content. This gap reveals the absence of a conceptual framework that connects digital technology with a holistic discipleship process. Such a framework must emphasize not only ministry efficiency but also doctrinal purity, faith maturity, and the spiritual integrity of congregations amid swift digital transformation.

This study integrates Philippians 4:8 theological-ethical virtues with a structured methodology for evaluating and developing AI-assisted ministry content, a novel approach. This study uses biblical virtues as evaluative criteria and operational guidelines

¹⁷ Hengki Wijaya et al., "Virtual Worship and Spiritual Growth in Digital Church Era," in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Theology, Humanities and Christian Education 2022 (ICONTHCE 2022)*, *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* 802 (Paris: Atlantis Press, 2023), accessed November 17, 2025, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-160-9_36.

¹⁸ Tamu Ama et al., "Cyber Church: Between Innovation and Tradition in Christian Education and Practice," *International Journal of Christian Education and Philosophical Inquiry* 2, no. 3 (Juli 2025), accessed 17 November 2025, <https://international.aripafi.or.id/index.php/IJCEP/article/view/330>

¹⁹ Giulia Isetti, Michael de Rachewiltz, dan Harald Pechlaner, "The New Normal in Pastoral Care: The Enduring Legacy of Media Appropriation in the Post-Pandemic Roman Catholic Church," *Religions* 16, no. 1 (Januari 2025): artikel 90, accessed 17 November 2025, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16010090>

to align digital innovation with spiritual formation, doctrinal fidelity, and Christ-like character in digital ministry contexts, unlike previous studies that focused on technological adoption.

According to the aforementioned explanation and the identified research gap research, the problem formulations is: how can a strategic model be developed based on the principles of Philippians 4:8 in the application of AI content in the church?

Theoretical Review

Philippians 4:8 as an Ethical and Theological Foundation

The letter to the Philippians elucidates Paul's theological and pastoral ideas, rooted in his profound relationship with the Philippians as one of his closest ministry partners. Within the context of imprisonment, Paul presents an unwavering joy as the central theme of his letter. This joy arises not from external circumstances but from his participation in Christ's mission and the unity of the faith community. In this profound letter, Paul integrates incarnational theology (2:6–11), communal spirituality (1:27; 2:1–4), and ethical admonitions that influence congregational existence.

The letter is a unified articulation of Paul's vision for a Christ-centered, joyous, and spiritually harmonious community.²⁰ The letter to the Philippians articulates participatory theology within the ecclesial practice of suffering, as the church is called not only to believe but also to "suffer for Him" (1:29). Paul perceives suffering not as a deficiency of faith, but as an engagement in the gospel koinonia, a term he employs to signify spiritual, emotional, material, and missional collaboration. Koinonia transcends mere social connection, evolving into a collaborative participation in God's mission of reconciliation.²¹

Paul emphasizes a spiritually oriented trajectory with an eschatological focus. In 3:12-21, he contends that the dynamics of Christian existence represent a movement towards the fulfillment of God's intentions, employing sports metaphors to illustrate endurance, focus, and hopefulness. Scholars contend that this eschatological viewpoint strengthens the church's sense of itself as a citizen of the heavenly kingdom, exemplifying the kingdom's values within the Roman Empire.²² Consequently, Paul's eschatological emphasis not only shapes believers' inward disposition but also informs practical ethics in everyday life.

Philippians 4:8 asserts that the Christian life, including digital relationships, is to be directed towards whatever is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy. This verse provides an ethical theological foundation for the church in developing its strategy for employing AI-generated information: any content produced, assessed, or distributed by the church must be carefully evaluated.

Is this information precise and trustworthy? Does it honor the dignity of the human individual as the imago Dei? Does it enhance and fortify the congregation, rather than merely amuse or coerce? Authors on Christian media ethics consistently promote Philippians 4:8 as a standard for media assessment. Graham Heslop notes that Paul encourages Christians to contemplate whatever is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, admirable,

²⁰ Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 32–35.

²¹ Lynn H. Cohick, *Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2013), 54–56.

²² Moisés Silva, *Philippians*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 177–182.

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excellent, and praiseworthy. He also observes that much of the content Paul encountered failed to meet these standards. In this context, churches employing AI to generate devotionals, liturgies, spiritual materials or service texts are encouraged not only to follow the algorithm. They must set clear boundaries by rejecting content that fosters lust, hatred, misinformation, or cynicism. They should proactively produce digital material that are truthful, equitable, and compassionate.²³

Recent research in digital theology indicates that incorporating AI into religious contexts is valid only if it aligns with theological principles and fosters character development. In his 2025 study on AI in Religious Education, Christos Papakostas concluded that AI can augment religious education when utilized judiciously and ethically. Nonetheless, it should not supplant the relational and formative components essential to faith development.

This indicates that a church's AI content strategy, grounded in Philippians 4:8, must ensure that AI serves solely as an adjunct to pastoral care and catechesis, rather than as a replacement for the living body of Christ.²⁴ To strengthen the theological basis for the application of AI in the church, the discourse must revert to the original framework of Paul's moral exhortation in Philippians 4:2-9. This sections provides the original ethical structure necessary for interpretation. It also serves as the immediate background for the passage.

Philippians 4:8 concludes Paul's exhortations in 4:2-9. Underscoring the importance of living for the community and emphasizing the cultivation of ethical attitudes as a manifestation of life in Christ. The text begins with the line "τὸ λοιπὸν, ἀδελφοί" (finally, brothers), indicating a transition to moral guidance that includes eight categories of virtue. Scholars interpret the list as a compilation of ethical principles recognized in the Greco-Roman context; nonetheless, Paul reinterprets it with a Christocentric significance.²⁵

The term ἀληθῆ (right) signifies not just factual truth but also moral rightness rooted in God's nature. The term σεμνά (noble, honorable) is commonly used in Greek literature to denote a character deserving of respect and wisdom. It indicates that the Christian life should include distinct ethical qualities worthy of emulation. The term δίκαια (just) signifies the alignment of human actions with divine justice, encompassing both social relations and judicial justice. Ἀγνά (pure) signifies purity of heart and untainted intentions, frequently linked to moral integrity.²⁶

The phrases προσφιλῆ (beautiful, pleasing) and εὖφημα (pleasing to hear, praiseworthy) augment Paul's ethical argument by underscoring the moral-aesthetic dimension. They affirm that the thoughts and acts of Christians ought to be beautiful and tranquil.²⁷ Ultimately, the two concluding notions, ἀρετή (virtue) and ἔπαινος

²³ Graham Heslop, "Digital Consumerism: Where Is the Line?" *Rekindle*, 2 June 2021, accessed 17 November 2025, par. 3–4 <https://rekindle.co.za>

²⁴ Christos Papakostas, "Artificial Intelligence in Religious Education: Ethical, Pedagogical, and Theological Perspectives," *Religions* 16, no. 5 (2025): 5–6.

²⁵ Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 406–408.

²⁶ Silva, *Philippians*, 196

²⁷ Hawthorne and Martin, *Philippians*, 250.

(praiseworthy), function as encompassing categories. Paul rejects the idea of a mere moral checklist. Instead, he establishes a comprehensive framework that evaluates the entire inner life of God's people, demanding that every thought, choice, and action be examined through these eight ethical perspectives.

Commentators contend that the phrase focuses on the discipline of active meditation (λογίζεσθε ταῦτα (ponder these things), indicating profound thought that shapes identity and conduct. Thus, Philippians 4:8 serves not merely as an ethical guideline for conduct but as a cognitive liturgy that shapes Christians' perception of reality. This corresponds with Paul's concept of cognitive transformation (Rom. 12:2).²⁸ This verse implies that the Christian life should integrate contemplation and action. Paul asserts that the quality of thought influences the quality of relationships, ministry, and testimony by offering a compilation of qualities to the Philippian community as it confronts internal strife and external challenges. Philippians 4:8 delineates the foundation for a comprehensive Christian ethic. Theological truth must align with moral integrity and aesthetic beauty that reflect God's character.²⁹

Christian Values and Digital Ethics

From a Christian theological perspective, the use of digital technology should be a means of conveying the values of the Kingdom of God- truth, love, integrity, respect for others, and ethical accountability. A Christian's presence in the digital space is not simply about using a device or platform, but about reflecting the character of Christ in every interaction, choice, and piece of content shared online.³⁰

Christian digital ethics demands that every online activity, whether content creation, social media interactions, or the use of artificial intelligence, be weighed against the principles of love, justice, and integrity. In this way, the digital space becomes not a place that degrades humans, but rather a channel that strengthens, protects, and enhances human dignity.³¹ Thus, digital ethics not only regulates online behavior technically but also becomes a concrete expression of Christian spirituality and character within the context of a technological culture.

Digital transformation offers extensive opportunities to transform culture.³² However, it also introduces ethical hazards, including manipulation, misinformation, data abuse, and the dehumanization implicit in technology. Consequently, Christian communities must cultivate faith-based digital literacy to ensure that digital behaviors align with the principles of the imago Dei.³³

²⁸ Markus Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, Black's New Testament Commentary (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998), 158–159.

²⁹ Lynn H. Cohick, *Philippians*, The Story of God Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 224–226.

³⁰ John Dyer, *People of the Screen: How Evangelicals Created the Digital Bible and How It Shapes Their Reading of Scripture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 187.

³¹ Heidi A. Campbell, "A Christian Ethical Framework for AI and Digital Culture," *Journal of Religion, Media and Digital Culture* 11, no. 2 (2023): 245.

³² Rolyana Ferinia, "The Influence of Organizational Culture on Green Business Strategies Through Digital Transformation," *Adbispreneur* 8, no. 3 (2023): 233–247, <https://doi.org/10.24198/adbispreneur.v8i3.45680>.

³³ Paul Mitchell, "Digital Discipleship and Christian Responsibility in the Age of Artificial Intelligence," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 36, no. 1 (2023): 58.

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Digital Content and Artificial Intelligence Techniques in Church Ministry

Artificial intelligence now permeates nearly every facet of congregational life, shaping a wide range of church activities. This ensures that technology truly advances the the mission of reconciling humanity with God, rather than merely enhancing organizational efficiency.³⁴ Advancements in generative AI allow churches to effectively produce, organize, and distribute sermon texts, scriptural materials, images, and videos, thereby enhancing research methodologies, administrative processes, and ministry communication. Moreover, church leadership must possess digital proficiency and ethical awareness to ensure that the use of AI does not undermine the integrity of pastoral ministry or the welfare of the congregation.³⁵

A Barna Group analysis reveals that numerous congregations are utilizing AI for administrative tasks. These include content marketing, attendance monitoring, and digital communications. Nevertheless, pastors exhibit reluctance to deliver sermons or offer advice through artificial intelligence. Consequently, Barna recommends that churches develop a comprehensive theology of technology and clear ethical standards³⁶ When churches employ chatbots, spiritual recommendation systems, and other AI tools to answer religious questions or create digital content, they must exercise careful discernment.

Theoretical Framework

As shown in Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of this investigation. Philippians 4:8 serves as the pinnacle and moral-theological foundation of Paul's epistle to the Philippians. Beginning with the letter's core themes incarnational theology, communal spirituality, ethical behavior, and joy amidst adversity Paul employs the Christ Hymn to illustrate the significance of faith. The hymn demonstrates God's humility and how Christ can bestow a new identity upon believers.

This entails a call to *koinonia* and missionary engagement, an emphasis on eschatology, and a progressive Christian ethos. Philippians 4:8 enumerates eight essential virtues that serve as moral principles for the church, particularly regarding online conduct. These attributes encompass love, honesty, respect, accountability, and the safeguarding of human dignity as the representation of God. The church's application of technology and AI should be assessed in accordance with Philippians 4:8 to establish a strategic framework centered on spiritual curation, theological supervision, mission-driven design, aesthetic-ethical integration, and the monitoring of spiritual impact. This will result in Spirit-guided digital governance, with AI supporting the Gospel instead of supplanting the body of Christ.

³⁴ Pamela Gales Conrad, "Opportunities and Threats of Artificial Intelligence in Christian Ministry: An Interdisciplinary Approach Through the Lens of Scientific Exploration and Technology," *Religions* 16, no. 9 (2025): 1092, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16091092>

³⁵ Kudzai Tagwirei, "Acclimatising Church Leadership to the Thrills and Spills of Artificial Intelligence in Zimbabwe," *Theologia Viatorum* 49, no. 1 (2025): a331, <https://doi.org/10.4102/tv.v49i1.331>

³⁶ Barna Group, "AI and the Church: How Pastors Can Lead with Wisdom in a Digital Age," *Barna.com*, October 10, 2025, accessed November 18, 2025, <https://www.barna.com>

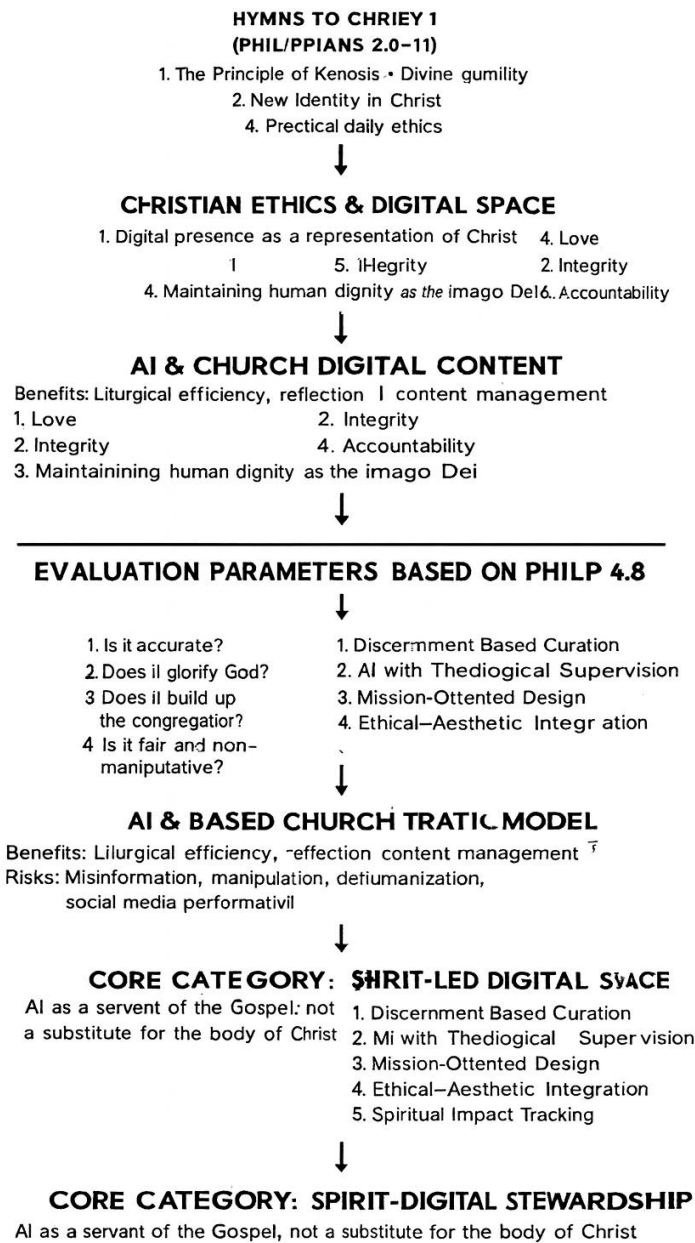


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Source: source: processed by the author

Method

The analysis had multiple qualitative steps^{37, 38}. First, a hermeneutical-theological analysis examined the historical, literary, and theological context of the Letter to the Philippians, focusing on kenosis, koinonia, eschatological hope, and ethical formation in

³⁷ Rolyana Ferinia, *Metode Penelitian Sosial: Panduan Lengkap, Tips, Trik, Teknik, Praktik* (Jakarta: Media Sains Indonesia, 2023).

³⁸ Rolyana Ferinia and Stimson Hutagalung, *Metode Penelitian Sosial* (Bandung: Yayasan Kita Menulis, 2023).

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Philippians 4:2–9. A cross-disciplinary synthesis incorporating New Testament theology, Christian ethics, digital ecclesiology, and AI ethics followed. This synthesis revealed conceptual overlaps between biblical ideals and modern technology. Final analysis involved interpretive examination, linking Philippians 4:8's theological qualities to actual church ministry AI practices and determining if they sustain, distort, or neglect these biblical ideals.

Comprehensive source selection was used to ensure theological, intellectual, and ethical integrity of all evaluated works. The data came from four main groups. First, peer-reviewed journal publications on theology, biblical studies, and Christian ethics were evaluated to explain Philippians 4:8's historical and theological context, including *koinonia*, *kenosis*, and Christian ethical reasoning. Second, Barna Group, Pew Research Center, and Lifeway digital ministry reports were evaluated to find AI use in modern church ministry. Third, the EU Guidelines for Trustworthy AI, Responsible AI frameworks, and Christian digital ethics whitepapers illuminated technology adoption ethics. Fourth, synodal pronouncements, digital ministry protocols, media ethics rules, and pastoral instructions were analyzed to determine theological boundaries for incorporating AI into worship, discipleship, and spiritual development.

This study categorized and interpreted data using theme analysis. Each textual source was reviewed to determine how AI-generated ministry materials addressed or represented Philippians 4:8's eight virtues: true, noble, just, pure, beautiful, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy. Deduction from Philippians 4:8 virtues and induction from literature patterns led to coding categories. These codes were then grouped into three thematic clusters: AI-enabled strategic ministry patterns, promising digital discipleship and church involvement potential, and ethical hazards and theological difficulties needing pastoral deliberation. This classification approach allowed systematic evaluation of whether AI-generated content promotes Christian witness, follows biblical ideals, or raises ethical issues.

Discussion

A Strategic Model for AI Content Utilization in a Value-Based Church, Based on Philippians 4:8

As shown in Figure 2, a systematic framework of the AI content utilization model. It shows that AI functions not only as a tool for producing digital material but also as a channel for spiritual ministry that aligns with biblical truth. This paradigm asserts that the digitalization of church services should be rooted in ethics and spirituality. It emphasizes that AI is not meant to chase followers, maximize increase online metrics, or produce viral content. Instead, its purpose is to support spiritual ministry and nurture authentic community. The Lausanne Movement asserts that every church must embrace technology both creatively and critically, seeking to communicate the truth of Christ while maintaining the integrity of the Bible.³⁹

³⁹ Lausanne Movement. "Technology and Mission: Lausanne Occasional Paper No. 96." *The Lausanne Movement*. Accessed 23 November 2025. <https://lausanne.org/content/lop/lop-96>.

Foundation of Values: Philippians 4:8

Philippians 4:8 provides the ethical and theological basis for developing a framework for the use of AI materials within the church. Christians must adhere to Philippians 4:8 when participating in AI activities. These activities include social media use, creating spiritual content, preparing sermons, designing ministry materials, and the producing spiritual music or films. This passage serves as a content filter, ensuring that digital production reflects Christ rather than merely following trends.

Guidelines for the Application of Artificial Intelligence in Religious Institutions

As shown in Figure 2 delineates five prioritized principles in the utilization of technology: love, integrity, accountability, respect for human dignity (Imago Dei), and Christ as the focal point of the digital message. These five principles are interconnected and cannot be applied independently. Technology must uphold human dignity, as humans are made in the image of God; they are not merely regarded as data users. This reverence for dignity is actualized through the principles of love, integrity, and accountability, ensuring that every application of digitalization is ultimately focused on Christ.⁴⁰

Domains of Ecclesiastical Ministry Utilizing Artificial Intelligence

As shown in Figure 2 delineates ministry domains positioned to use AI. These include automated devotions and liturgy, pastoral counseling chatbots, digital worship content management, church publications and marketing, and the creation of ministry films and graphics. Ethical norms must be maintained in every digital application. Artificial intelligence will undoubtedly enhance ministry operations, streamline events, aid pastors and teams in generating consistent materials, facilitate counseling through chatbots, and oversee behavior during worship.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Christianity Today. "Artificial Intelligence and the Ethics of Church Ministry." *Christianity Today*. Accessed 23 November 2025. <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2024/technology-ethics-ai-church-ministry.html>.

⁴¹ Daryll Joseph. "AI and Digital Ministry Ethics." *Journal of Christian Ministry*. Accessed 23 November 2025. <https://journalofchristianministry.org/ai-digital-ministry-ethics/>.

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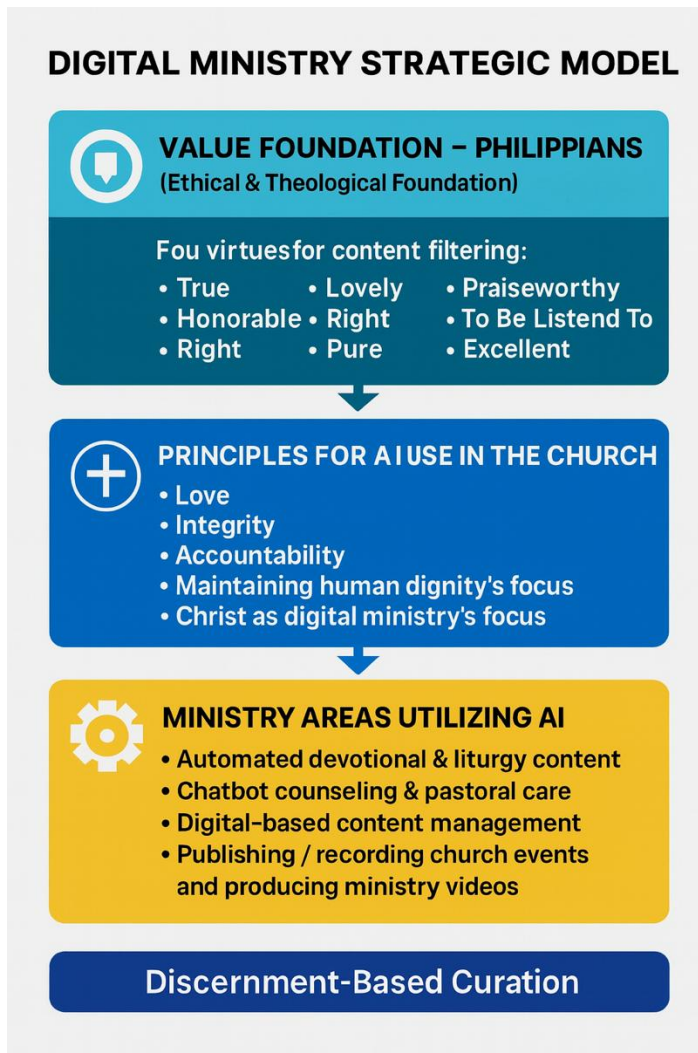


Figure 2. Philippians 4:8 Value-Based Church Strategic Model in the Use of AI Content
Source: source: processed by the author

Discernment-Based Curation

The extensive digital ministry process, encompassing content development and AI application, is regulated by the Discernment-Based Curation framework. Discernment-based curation is founded on spiritual acuity and discernment. This underscores that not all types of information, technologies, visual formats, or digital marketing strategies are intrinsically suitable for deployment based solely on their statistical effectiveness. Spiritual curation mandates that content and technology undergo prayer, contemplation, theological evaluation, and ethical scrutiny. This methodology corresponds with digital theology research, which asserts that sustained digital ministry within the church necessitates a process of value curation at each phase of its digital lifecycle.

As shown in Figure 3 offers a comprehensive elucidation of Discernment-Based Curation. Barna emphasizes that digital ministries must establish stringent spiritual

vetting protocols for every piece of distributed content. Churches should prioritize assessing communications according to gospel truth, theological precision, and their spiritual influence on the congregation, rather than pursuing mere visual allure or viral fame. Each piece is selected through prayer and theological contemplation to honor Christ and edify the body of Christ. This approach emphasizes that digital media should not be used merely for practical purposes. Instead, its use must be guided by wisdom as an expression of faithfulness to the Gospel and loyalty to the church's mission.⁴²

This model serves as a framework for church digital ministry that rejects pragmatic, marketing-driven approaches. Instead, it promotes a theologically grounded, values-centric digital ministry strategy. This model exhibits a consistent progression. Biblical principles must be anchored in the AI Ethical Principles across all areas of digital ministry, employing a Discernment-Based Curation approach. Churches that adopt this paradigm can engage modern technology while preserving their spiritual identity. In doing so, digitalization becomes more than content production and functions as an extension of Christ's mission in the digital realm.

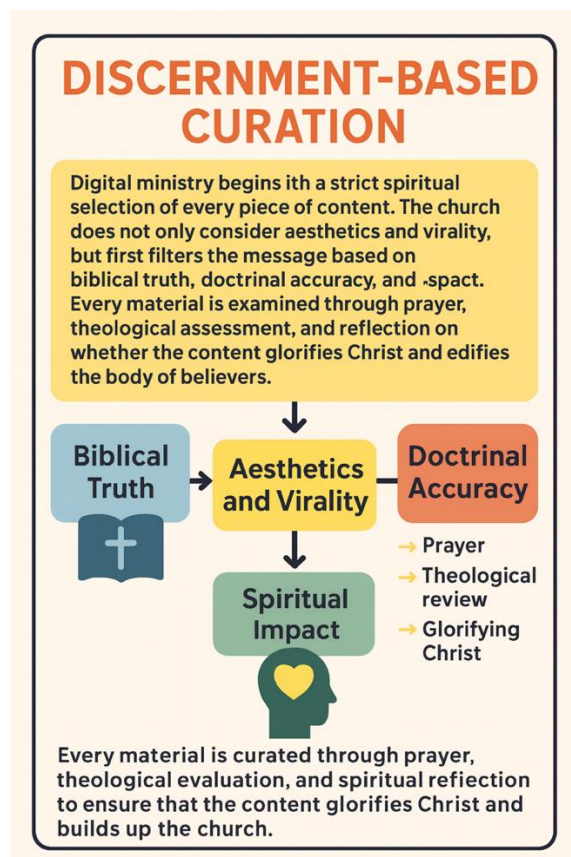


Figure 3. Discernment-Based Curation

Source: Bryan G. Hurlbut, *Toward the Establishment of Discernment Theory: A Phenomenological Study of Discernment in Strategic Leadership Decision Making*. Skripsi. (2014), 1.

⁴² Barna, G. (2021). *Faith and Digital Discipleship: Navigating Christian Ministry in the Media Age*. Barna Group.

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Conclusion

The strategic model for employing AI content, grounded in Philippians 4:8, affirms that church digitalization is not intended to achieve virality or boost follower counts. Its primary goal is to strengthen spiritual service rooted in love, integrity, accountability, and human dignity as the *Imago Dei*. Christ remains the central focus in every digital message. Through the Discernment-Based Curation framework, every form of material and technology must undergo theological and ethical evaluation. The goal is to ensure that AI never replaces the body of Christ, but instead serves as a tool for the Gospel, strengthening faith, preserving doctrines, and fortifying the community in the digital era.

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