



This week at Magdalen Road Church we started a new topical series that will be seeking to help us understand our current culture, examining various characteristics and threads of the 'iGen' (1995 onwards), as well as helping us see why the gospel is the answer. This week we considered both the blessing and also problematic nature of mobile phones

The picture will develop each week over the 6 weeks - here is an outline of our plans:

1. I'm just on my phone.
2. I'm in no hurry to 'adult', thanks.
3. I'm not feeling safe.
4. I'm not them.
5. I'm feeling anxious.
6. I'm spiritual but not religious.

We began by noting that

+ The world is changing.

Technological advance in the past 23 years has been unprecedented, and continues to be so. By choosing to buy a device, we know it will be out of date in 2 months! Our phones are a window into our hearts - our screen time reveals what we care about, what our hearts are captured by.

+ We are changing.

As technology advances, so it changes people.

- The 'i' of iGen stands for **internet**, they were the first group to have always had internet access (iPhone in 2007, iPad in 2010) but also
- The 'i' of iGen stands for **individualism**. There's an astonishing global access to information & people & cultures & knowledge & yet we largely access that as individuals rather than in bodily community now.

What does it mean to live faithfully in a world so influenced now by technology? What does it mean to be in the world but not of the world?

To begin to question and critique our use of phones, we considered the bodily nature of both our humanity and of our faith.

Christians can easily get this muddled. We too easily think we are souls with bodies and bodies don't matter that much. In reality we are both. Embodied souls. Bodies affect souls and indeed our souls affect our bodies.

a. we are made to relate with bodies

We looked at Gen 1 v26-27 and 2v21-24 to see that God made a physical creation, with physical bodies who were to image him and play a large role in the world.

b. bodies are our means for relating to God

As believers our bodies are important as we relate to God. We considered Leviticus and it's bloody, tactile nature with the sacrifices, hands laid, smoke burnt etc

c. we have fallen bodily

Adam and Eve's first sin is bodily. They see and admire and take and eat.

d. Jesus comes bodily

He lives and dies and is raised again with a body. God's rescue plan is not with an idea but rather in a person who takes on flesh and comes to live among us.

God's prophets bring words, but words and bodies are meant to go together (eg John the Baptist).

Jesus is now with a resurrection body, seated at the right hand of the Father.

e. our future is physical

As we see God face to face it will be with a body. He will wipe away tears from our eyes.

If we lose the importance of our bodies, so church might become a secondary thing (or a virtual thing).

Rather we were made to meet together and encourage each other, and to not neglect that.

God uses us together to shape and mould one another.

Here are some brief questions to introduce the series

What was your first mobile phone? What phone do you have now?

How much does your contract cost? How much time do you spend on your mobile phone? What do you use it for? Have you ever tried to use it less? When and why?

What are some of the pros of mobile phones? And the cons?

'Words and bodies were made to relate together'. Do you agree?

When are different types of communication acceptable? Is it ok to share important personal news over a text message? Email? Phone-call? Why or why not?

Have a look at these verses - how do they remind us of the bodily nature of our faith?

Leviticus 1v1-9, John 1v14, 1 John 1v1-4, Mark 1v2-6, John 20v26-28, John 21v10-14, Heb 10v19-25, Revelation 21v1-4

What happens if we forget the bodily nature of our faith?