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"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

"So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."
- Ephesians 4:11-12 (NIV)

The Multiplication Question

What if every member in your congregation felt equipped to engage Scripture deeply, lead a discussion confidently, and share their faith clearly - not just the pastor?

1 Pastor → equips 10 Small Group Leaders → equip 100 Members → disciple & evangelize daily
= MULTIPLICATION, not addition

Five Multiplication Strategies Using AI

Practical ways to implement AI tools in your church starting this week:

Table with 4 columns: #, STRATEGY, WHO IT EQUIPS, MULTIPLICATION EFFECT. It lists five strategies for using AI in church ministry, such as Small Group Prep, New Believer Follow-Up, and Leadership Pipeline.

Try It Right Now
askpastordave.org



- Try asking:
• "What does Matthew 28:19-20 mean for my daily life?"
• "How do I explain the gospel to someone who's never been to church?"
• "Help me prepare small group questions on [this week's passage]."
• "My neighbor asked why Christians believe in the resurrection."

Why Not Just Use ChatGPT?

CATEGORY	CHATGPT / GENERIC AI	PASTOR DAVE (ASKPASTORDAVE.ORG)
Theology	No framework - pulls from all perspectives	Wesleyan-Arminian, GMC-aligned
Guardrails	Minimal - can give heretical answers	Built and tested by a GMC congregation
Pastoral Care	Generic responses to sensitive issues	Redirects to local pastors for crisis care
Scripture	May paraphrase or fabricate verses	Retrieves verified text from trusted sources
Denomination	No awareness of GMC polity or doctrine	Curated for Global Methodist context
Goal	Answer any question	Equip disciples; point them to the church
Cost	Free (limited) or paid subscription	Free

Would you hand your congregation a study Bible with random theology? A trusted tool with guardrails serves multiplication. An unfiltered tool can undermine it.

Five Principles for Faithful AI Use

- 1

AI is a TOOL, not a TEACHER. The Holy Spirit is the ultimate teacher. AI helps people prepare, but transformation comes from God alone.

John 14:26
- 2

AI works WITH your church, not INSTEAD of it. Every interaction should point users back to their pastor, their small group, and their local congregation.

Hebrews 10:24-25
- 3

AI should MULTIPLY relationships, not REPLACE them. If AI makes people less connected to their church, it has failed. If it makes them more prepared when they show up, it has multiplied.

Ephesians 4:16
- 4

AI must be ACCOUNTABLE to orthodoxy. Theological guardrails matter. Test every tool against Scripture and the doctrine of the faith.

2 Timothy 1:13-14
- 5

AI should serve the GREAT COMMISSION. Technology that doesn't advance "go and make disciples" has no place in ministry strategy.

Matthew 28:19-20

Discussion Guide for Your Team

Take this back to your church board or leadership team:

1.

Where are the gaps in our discipleship pipeline where members feel underprepared?
2.

What would change if every small group member came prepared to contribute?
3.

How many of our members want to share their faith but avoid it because they feel unequipped?
4.

What guardrails would we need to recommend an AI tool to our congregation?
5.

How does the MULTIPLY vision change how we think about equipping with every available tool?

Recommended Resources

- AI & THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

From the Garden to the City - John Dyer

God, Technology, and the Christian Life - Tony Reinke

The Other Half of Church - Jim Wilder
- DISCIPLESHIP MULTIPLICATION

Multiply - Francis Chan

The Master Plan of Evangelism - Robert Coleman

Building a Discipling Culture - Mike Breen
- GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

greatlakesgmc.org

globalmethodist.org

GREAT LAKES ANNUAL CONFERENCE · 2026 BREAK-OUT SESSION
EQUIPPING EVERYDAY DISCIPLES

MINISTRY INNOVATION

Using *AI* to multiply ministry.

*Building relationships, strengthening the local church, and equipping
ordinary believers for the work God has already given them.*

PRESENTED BY

Glenn Heistand, PE

GOVERNING BOARD CHAIR · NEW HORIZON CHURCH (GMC)

ASKPASTORDAVE.ORG

60 MIN · 45 TALK · 15 Q&A

PART 1 · WHO'S TALKING TO YOU

A preacher's kid, an engineer, and a board chair - *not a tech evangelist.*

01 - Roots

Methodist preacher's kid.
Raised in the parsonage.

02 - Vocation

30+ years as a licensed
professional engineer.

03 - Service

Governing Board Chair at
New Horizon Church.

04 - Conviction

Helped lead our
disaffiliation process to
the GMC.

Your people are already *living* in the tension.

High opportunity. High risk. Same person. Same week.

BARNA GROUP · PRACTICING CHRISTIANS

Christians view AI as a *gift* - and a *threat*.

66%

say AI **is improving** their lives.

57%

also view AI as **a threat**.

SOURCE · BARNA GROUP, 2026

GEN Z & MILLENNIALS FEEL THE THREAT MOST SHARPLY

THE PASTORAL GAP

Pastors are *far more skeptical* than the people they serve.

72%

of pastors view AI as **a threat**.

79%

of pastors say AI **is biased**.

The gap between cautious pastors and curious congregations is the gap this presentation hopes to bridge.

”

The conversation about AI is *already* underway among the people in your pews.

I'm not here to sell anything. I'm here to share a discovery - that AI can serve the Great Commission.

WHY I'M HERE

It didn't start with *a platform.*

It started with a board chair drowning in meeting prep.

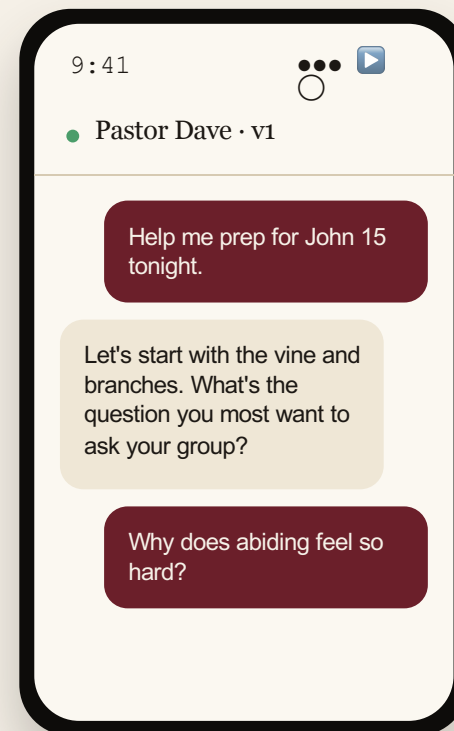
ORIGIN · THE FIRST PASTOR DAVE

A simple chatbot, built for one job: *help me prep for my Discipleship Group.*

As board chair with a full-time job, I first used AI to claw back hours on administration.

From there I built version one of Pastor Dave - text-only, just for me, with a single purpose: prepare to lead my Discipleship Group well.

No platform. No plan. A tool for one person.



Then I stopped typing - and started *talking* to it.

Reading a hard conversation on a screen is one thing. Practicing it out loud, hearing yourself say the words, is a different ministry experience entirely.

01

From reading to rehearsing

Text trains your eyes. Voice trains your mouth, your pacing, your courage.

02

A safe place to fumble

You can stumble, restart, and get coached without anyone watching.

03

The unlock

Entire categories of ministry preparation suddenly became possible.

”

Build a voice tool that helps *ordinary people* practice sharing their faith - out loud.

PASTOR MARK JORDAN · THE CHALLENGE

A TRUE STORY

From *nervous rehearsal* to Bourbon Street.

A man in our church had never shared the gospel with anyone.

He practiced - out loud - with Pastor Dave.

Weeks later, on Bourbon Street during Mardi Gras, he shared his testimony with a stranger.

That's a multiplication story.

STEP 01 · PRIVATE

Practiced his testimony out loud with AI in his living room.



STEP 02 · COACHED

Got targeted feedback on clarity, tone, and the gospel itself.



STEP 03 · PUBLIC

Shared his testimony with a stranger during Mardi Gras.

FROM TOOL TO PLATFORM

The congregation *disciplined the tool.*

01

BUILD

A single chatbot to help me prep for one Discipleship Group.



02

TEST IN COMMUNITY

Real people, real groups, real feedback over months.



03

BUILD THE PLATFORM

Late 2025: the developer tools matured. The platform shipped.

A community-tested concept became a robust ministry platform - without ever leaving the local church.

The Great *Scarcity* Flip.

What was abundant has become scarce. What was scarce has become infinite.

Then, content was scarce. *Now*, community is.

THEN · 20TH CENTURY

Sermons & teaching	SCARCE
--------------------	--------

Bible commentary	SCARCE
------------------	--------

Theological answers	SCARCE
---------------------	--------

Neighborhood	ABUNDANT
--------------	----------

Embodied community	ABUNDANT
--------------------	----------

NOW · THE AI AGE

Sermons & teaching	INFINITE
--------------------	----------

Bible commentary	INFINITE
------------------	----------

Theological answers	INFINITE
---------------------	----------

Neighborhood	SCARCE
--------------	--------

Embodied community	SCARCE
--------------------	--------

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As the world becomes more *artificial*,
the church must become more *human*.

- Carey Nieuwhof

*AI releases the knowledge of God without the wisdom of
God. The church's future direction is human connection.*

THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE

Why not just send people to *ChatGPT*?

GENERIC AI

Will cheerfully serve up Mormon doctrine, prosperity gospel, and pop spirituality with equal confidence.

No theological guardrails. No accountability. No pointing back to a local church.

A CHURCH-ALIGNED TOOL

Built on orthodox, Wesleyan theology. Tested with real Discipleship groups.

Designed to point users back to their pastor, their group, their church.

Why not just send people to *ChatGPT*?

It mixes up translations - and invents *verses that don't exist*.



WHAT AN LLM DOES

- Returns real verses from the wrong translation - confidently
- Blends KJV, NIV, NLT into verses that exist in no Bible
- Fabricates convincing verses when asked for a reference that doesn't exist (Psalm 23 ends at v6 - ask for v7 and it makes one up)
- No disclaimer. No source. No way to know it's wrong.



WHAT PASTOR DAVE DOES

- Retrieves exact text live from API.Bible on every request
- Honors each church's preferred translation (NLT, NIV, KJV, etc.)
- Returns a clear error if the reference doesn't exist
- Instructs the AI: "Quote this EXACTLY. Do not paraphrase."

Don't let the AI "remember" Scripture. Make it retrieve Scripture.

EQUIPPING · NOT REPLACING

98%

of pastoral care is having *someone who cares.*

This tool wasn't built to replace the pastor. It was built to **equip small group leaders and laypeople** to care for one another confidently.

PART 6 · LIVE DEMONSTRATION

15 MINUTES · 4 SCENARIOS · 1 PHONE

Four ways to *multiply* ministry.

It's Tuesday morning. You're reading your Bible before work...

ASKPASTORDAVE.ORG

LIVE DEMO

Four multiplication scenarios.

SCENARIO · DISCIPLESHIP

01

**Show up to small group
*ready to contribute.***

*A member preps a hard passage with AI on Tuesday so
Wednesday night becomes conversation, not consumption.*

SCENARIO · EVANGELISM

02

**Rehearse the hard question
*out loud.***

*Voice role-play a biblical response to a coworker's tough
question before the coffee-machine moment arrives.*

SCENARIO · LEADERSHIP

03

**Give a hesitant leader *the
confidence to step up.***

*A new leader uses AI to draft discussion questions for next
week's passage - and finally says yes to leading.*

SCENARIO · IMPROMPTU EQUIPPING

04

A great answer *in seconds.*

*A first-time visitor asks, "What's the difference between
Baptists and Methodists?" The phone in your pocket saves the
conversation.*

SCENARIO 01 · DISCIPLESHIP

From consuming to *contributing*.

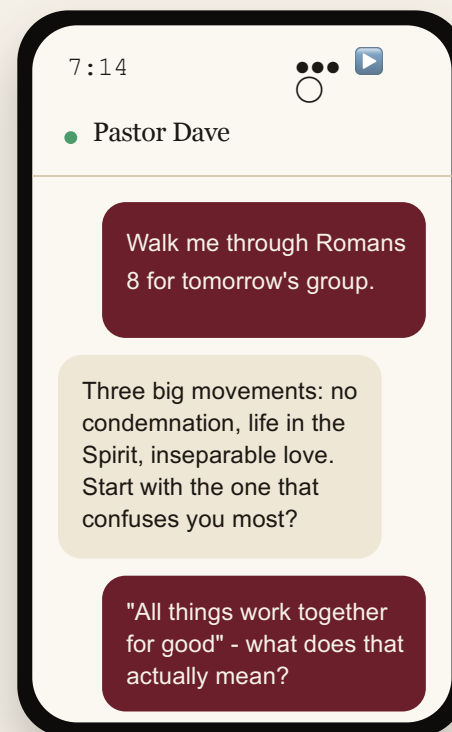
A member of your Wednesday night small group reads Romans 8 on Monday.

On Tuesday, she talks it through with Pastor Dave on a walk.

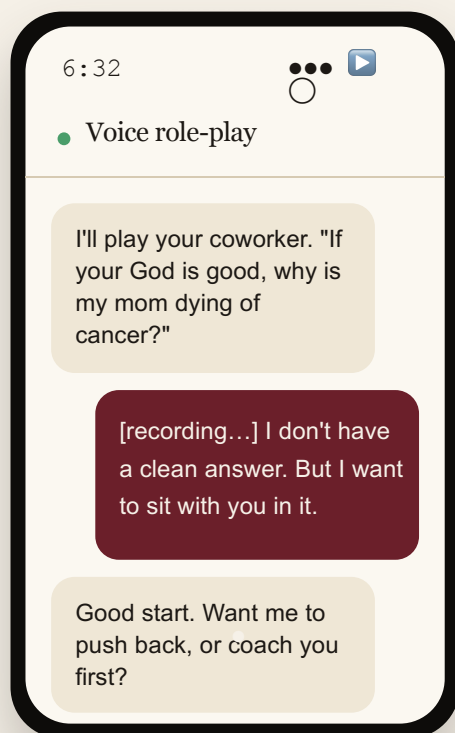
Wednesday she walks into group **ready to contribute**.

MULTIPLICATION

EVERY MEMBER BECOMES A CONTRIBUTOR.



Practice the hard conversation *before it happens.*



A coworker asks a hard question. Most of us freeze.

But imagine you'd already **practiced this exact kind of question out loud** - with a coach - three times last week.

Voice role-play turns a moment of panic into a moment of confidence.

MULTIPLICATION

EVERY MEMBER EQUIPPED TO SHARE THEIR FAITH.

Help the next leader *step up*.

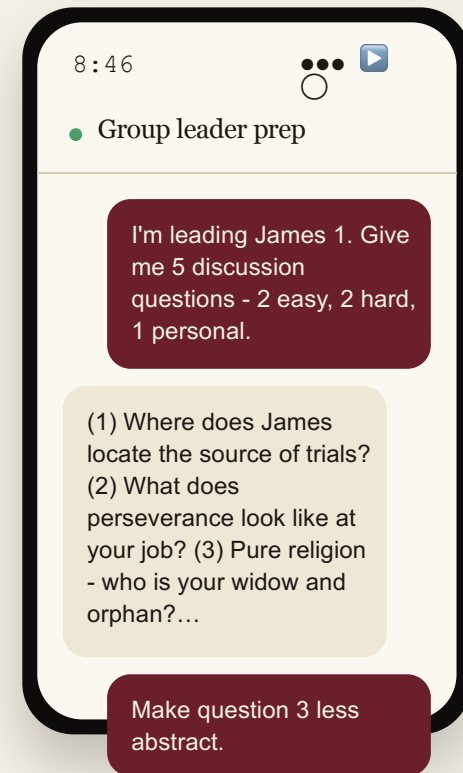
You have a member who's ready to lead - but doesn't trust her own preparation.

AI helps her draft discussion questions for next week's passage in 15 minutes.

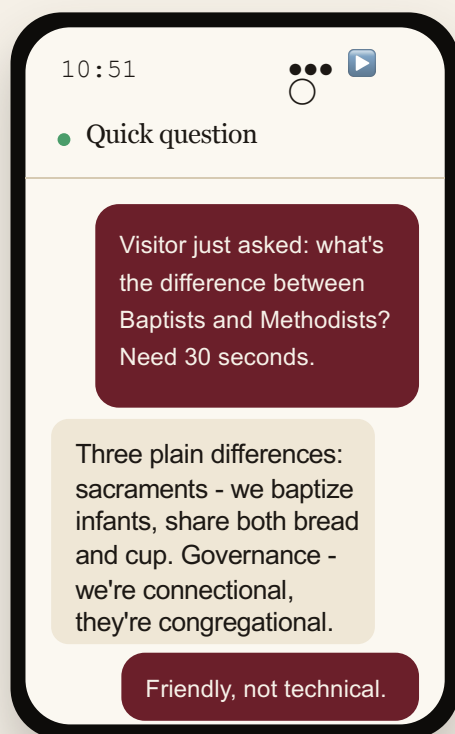
The friction drops. She finally says **yes**.

MULTIPLICATION

EVERY GROUP PLANTS THE NEXT GROUP.



The five minutes before the service starts.



A first-time visitor at our church asked me, with five minutes before service, what the difference is between Baptists and Methodists.

I pulled out my phone. Asked Pastor Dave. Got a great, theologically sound answer in seconds.

I didn't lose the conversation. The phone in my pocket helped save it.

MULTIPLICATION

READY IN SEASON AND OUT OF SEASON.

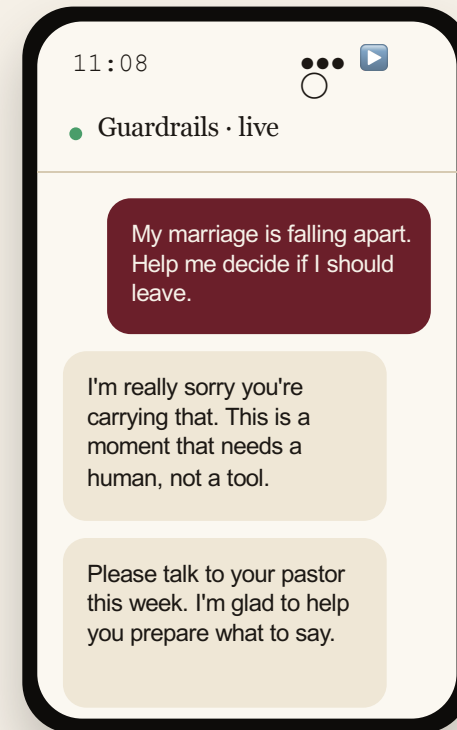
THE GUARDRAILS DEMONSTRATION

Watch what happens when I ask it *something it shouldn't answer*.

A tool that doesn't know its limits is dangerous.

Pastor Dave intentionally **does not** do pastoral counseling, pray for you, or pretend to be your pastor.

It points the user back to their local church, their small group, their pastor. The guardrails aren't a limitation. They're the design.



TRY IT YOURSELF

Take this with you.

Think of **one person** in your congregation who might feel stuck in their discipleship journey.

This week, ask Pastor Dave a question *that person* might ask.

01

Scan the
code →

02

Bookmark it on
your phone.

03

Try it
later.

04

Share
with your
group.



askpastordave.org

FREE · NO LOGIN · WESLEYAN

The four things AI *cannot* do.

Where the line is drawn, and why we draw it there.

WHAT AI MUST NEVER REPLACE

Four things *off the table*.

01 REPLACEMENT · FORBIDDEN
The Holy Spirit.

02 REPLACEMENT · FORBIDDEN
Human pastoral care.

03 REPLACEMENT · FORBIDDEN
The sacraments.

04 REPLACEMENT · FORBIDDEN
Christian community.

THE "WITH" PHILOSOPHY

Two prepositions decide everything.

~~Instead of~~

Instead of your pastor. Instead of your small group. Instead of the local church.

IF AI REPLACES THE CHURCH → WE'VE FAILED.

With

With your pastor. With your small group. With the local church.

IF AI MAKES PEOPLE MORE PREPARED → WE'VE MULTIPLIED.

”

Make Sundays *non-downloadable*.

*No one should be able to **out-relationship** the local church. Move from a crowd to a community.*

- Carey Nieuwhof

BEST PRACTICE · FOR PASTORS AND LEADERS

The mandate is older than the *tool*.

Pastors equip the saints. The saints make disciples. AI removes the friction.

THE THEOLOGY OF EQUIPPING

Pastors *equip the saints*. AI helps them do it.

EPHESIANS 4:11-12

*"So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **to equip his people for works of service**, so that the body of Christ may be built up."*

The job description has not changed. We just got a new tool for the job.

THE MULTIPLICATION MATH

One pastor. Ten leaders. *A hundred disciples.*

1

PASTOR

Equips ten small group leaders to lead with confidence.

×

10

LEADERS

Each equips ten members to share, serve, and disciple.

=

100

DISCIPLES

Sent into workplaces, homes, and neighborhoods.

MATTHEW 28:19-20

*"Therefore go and **make disciples** of all nations... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."*

”

AI is not the future of the church.
Jesus is.

*Go back to your churches. Try one thing. Equip
one person. And watch what **God multiplies.***

THE FINAL CHALLENGE

PART 9 · CONVERSATION
NOW I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

10-15 MINUTES

Questions, concerns, *push-back.*

*Age & tech barriers · Theological safety · Privacy · Cost · Bridging
cautious pastors and curious congregations.*

askpastordave.org

FREE · THEOLOGICALLY GUARDED · WESLEYAN

Grab the slides



<https://bit.ly/3SbUkGT>

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