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## Burning Alight: 12 Endtime Fuses – Part II

By Wilfred Hahn

We continue with our list of 12 burning fuses. These represent significant endtime trends that may be defined by their rapidity and explosiveness. These are notable even more so in our day, where many of the enormous technological shifts of the past century are fizzling out. For example, the speed of travel, after accelerating from horse and buggy speeds to the jet, has not advanced in 5 decades.



The impact of antibiotics is near its zenith of conquering the germ. Global communication and interconnectedness is near its maximum practical impact (though possibly still becoming cheaper). Very likely, advances in agricultural productivity are slowing ... and so on.

But is this also true of the future impact of technology in general? Aren’t the limits of technology boundless? Just as people may have underestimated the advances of technology a century ago, would it not be reasonable to trust in the ingenuity of mankind to drive further technological leaps?

Yes and no. We firstly say no, as the ingenuity of mankind is not without

limit. Only God Himself is infinite. But we also answer yes, as there is at least one more technological development that has the potential to impact the souls of humanity.

### 3. The Final Prophesied Impact of Technology

We venture the opinion that technology has at least one more role to play in the prophetic timeline of the world. In fact, it is connected to one other endtime fuse that we have already reviewed in Part I—Post-Familialism. More and more people are choosing to remain single, and this is in part linked to the increase of self-love and narcissism.

What is narcissism? Borrowing a definition from *World of Psychology*, this is



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a trait evidenced by “egotistical preoccupation with self, personal preferences, aspirations, needs, success, and how he/she is perceived by others.”<sup>1</sup> Readers will agree that such inclinations are anti-social and evidence a lack love for others. This is the last prophetically-significant frontier of technology, we think ... the facilitation of “self.” And, it is having a rapid impact.

### The “Self” Enabled Through Technology?

The most pivotal technological developments over the past several decades, as everyone will know, have been the internet and the personal cell phone. The adoption of these two consumer services has been more rapid than any other new technology ever before. Crucially, these two developments have lately converged into one leading edge—the smart phone. The conversion to internet-connected cell phones (basically, that’s what smartphones are) is even more rapid, exceeding the adoption rate of the basic cell phone.

This is significant, as it opens the gateway to the ultimate “dotage upon the individual” (the self), though within a centrally controlled, global nexus of connections. We will explain why.

Consider these statistics: While it required over 30 years for the telephone to penetrate one-quarter of North American households, the internet achieved the same penetration level in less than 7 years. Similarly, the adoption of the cell phone was also quick, requiring only 13 years from the time of invention. Consider that 419 million mobile cell phone

devices (which include smartphones) were sold worldwide in the 3rd quarter of 2012. At an annualized pace, that represents one phone for a little more than 4 people in the world! (The global population is 7.0 billion presently.)

Within this cell phone demand explosion in recent years, has been a sub-trend to buy smartphones. Hundreds of millions of these devices are being sold. In the period cited earlier, 172 million of mobile devices sold were smartphones—for example, the Apple iPhone or the Android, among others brands.

But why should the advance of these communication and media devices be more significant than any other? The key difference (besides the speed of adoption) is that the internet-enabled smartphone is a personal item. These are designed for the voice communication and internet usage of the individual human. TVs and a land-based internet connection, on the other hand, tend to be a household purchase (at least, that was the case originally).

Readers may be wondering why these developments are so prophetically noteworthy. Where is the connection to the Bible? Just where do we find any mention of an end-time burst of personal mobile devices in the Bible? Is this an evil technology that should not be used? Let’s first turn to the Bible before we return to our further examination of this end-time “burning fuse.”

### The Bible on Self

Apostle Paul wrote this to Timothy: “But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be





lovers of themselves [...], unholy, without love, [...] without self-control, [...] not lovers of the good, [...] conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (2 Timothy 3:1-4).

Paul is clearly speaking of the last days. An identifying characteristic of that time he says will be people preoccupied with the “self.” By definition, such people must be worldly. Why?

Despite the fact that many so-called Christian ministries today cater to the “self,” the Bible never endorses this emphasis. Actually, the Bible counsels the exact opposite. We are to “deny” ourselves. Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” (Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23). It could not be any clearer: Whoever wants to be a disciple of Christ must therefore deny “themselves” and be selfless.

To be self-seeking has consequences both for individuals and societies, according to the Bible. Paul says that “[...] for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger” (Romans 2:8). Moreover, a focus on self does not align with the duty to love. “Love is patient [...] It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking” (1 Corinthians 13:4, 5).

A preoccupation with the “self” is not godly; and moreover, a mass emphasis of the self would indeed be a condition witnessed in the last days. And if this is so, we can further know that it will represent an age that

will be corrupted by deceitful desires. Why? Again, because the Bible tell us so. Paul says: “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires” (Ephesians 4:22). Therefore, a last-day world of ungodly people still mastered by their “old selves,” will surely lead to a loveless and deceitful consumer culture and society of the self.

But just how could the preoccupation with the self, gain such reinforcement and enabling in a world with billions and billions of people? Technology provides the means.

### Technology Glorifying the Self

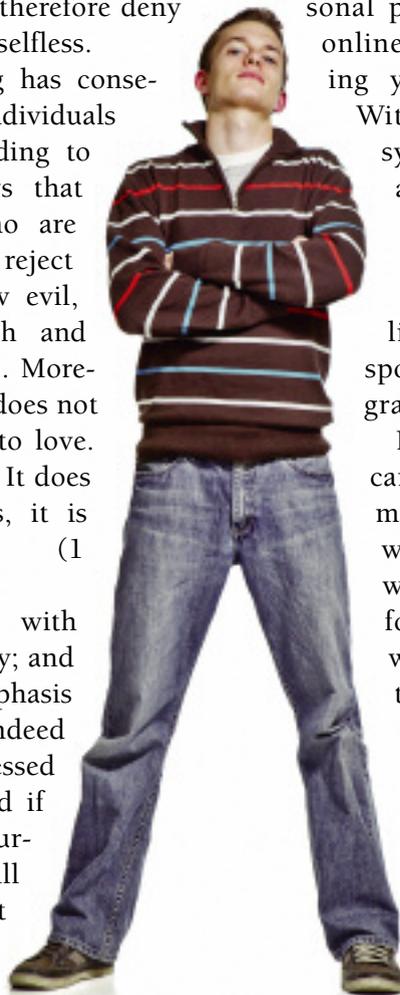
Consider these developments of the internet. Today, online tracking systems have the ability to build a personal profile about you. All your online activity is tracked. (Nothing you do online is secret!)

With this information, these systems make inferences about your likes, tastes and views. Doing so, they can then target advertisements to you specifically that are likely to attract your response. This is called “social graphing.”

In addition, these systems can predetermine what information you will want to see when you are browsing the web. Says Omar Tawakoll, founder of BlueKai (a firm whose clients track more than 80 percent of the U.S. online population): “Hyper-targeted ads will follow us to TVs and cellphones.”

The new breakthrough is this: Today,

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everything is about you. Ads are now targeted to you specifically—the you that is the one and only me, myself and I.

Even if one is not using the internet to shop, but rather to search for information, even here “personalization” is becoming the norm. Says one observer: “Courtesy of technology, we can now receive all our information from people who agree with us—which is exactly what human beings want. And, the new economics of media makes it extremely profitable for information-providers to pander to what we want to hear.”<sup>2</sup>

This is disturbing as it means that the internet is becoming a controlled system, pre-screening what it will allow you to see. However, what’s even more significant, is that all these technologies cater to the likes and proclivities of the individual. It all feeds a trend of individualism ... the world of me ... the single.

The social media revolution is a companion trend. What is meant by social media? We here refer to such services as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and others, that achieve their connectivity and platform over the internet. With these services, everyone can individually be on display and on show to the world.

Taking license with William Shakespeare’s phrase from the play *As You*

*Like It*, today, “All the world of me is a stage.”

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### The Good or Evil of Technology

No doubt, readers may think that we see nothing of value in the many new technologies of our day. Not at all. The internet and the cell phone offer great convenience. We even wonder if one could survive without them, though they have barely been 20 years in existence. [This article was partially researched through the internet.] Technology in and of itself, is not evil. That would only be possible through the agency of human action and motives. It is up to the individual to decide for what purposes they will use any technology ... good or bad.

Nonetheless, an awareness of the potential side-effects of technology is urgent. All the conveniences of technology come with a price—a trade-off. We quote here an excerpt from an earlier book, *The Endtime Money Snare: How to live free* (now out of print):

The successful advance of technology has opened mankind up to tremendous spiritual seduction, both subtle and direct, even though science is not evil in and of itself [...]. Hardly anyone reading this [article] will not have succumbed to its comfortable inventions in one way or another. Some will have swallowed the whole hook, line and sinker, flatly rejecting the



existence of God. These people instead choose instead to place their full faith in the present and future promises of technology and the intelligence of the human brain. Though this group is rapidly increasing in size over past decades, they are still small in number. Most of us would reject their conclusion as being much too extreme and stark. It's too obviously wrong. It is for that reason that the subtle seductions of [science and technology] are much more dangerous. We are not aware of [...] these seductions [as they] do not confront us in terms of black and white trade-offs. They stake their advances in tiny steps of convenience and novelty. Though we still consciously believe in the existence of God, sub-consciously He has become very small. We have allowed our faith in technology to whittle Him down. Now God is only the weatherman or the God of random chance. We need to better understand how the advances of technology impact our faith.

[...] they pose the same proposal to our souls: To trade a higher vulnerability to worldliness for new convenience; to opt for increased exposure to a godless world in return for higher material comfort. [...] We must see that all the conveniences and pleasures offered by new technology come with a price. In some ways 'high-tech' is no exception to the adage, 'There's no free lunch.' Every improvement comes with a new vulnerability in spiritual terms.

### Thoughts to Ponder

What we are witnessing today is the proliferation of personal connectivity devices. Why is this significant? It provides two-way communication and in-



formation within a globally interconnected and controlled system, that facilitates the emphasis of self. This is a development foreseen by the Bible. Ultimately, it actually becomes an instrument of bondage to the "self," and also centralized control of the entirety of humanity.

Now, everyone in the world can be on their own stage; to have their most personal wants and lusts catered to; enjoying the ultimate in individual customization to their interests and beliefs. We dare state that this is the emerging end-time world of the self ... the celebration of the individual ... the single life. The consequences of these choices are already destabilizing societies in a number of insidious ways.

Quoting Joel Kotkin, "Traditional values have almost without exception been rooted in kinship relations. The new emerging social ethos endorses more secular values that prioritize individual personal socioeconomic success as well as the personal quest for greater fulfillment."<sup>3</sup>

We can indeed benefit from the new inventions of science and technology, yet not allow them to affect our focus upon the Lord, nor to abandon a Biblical worldview. We must constantly fend

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There can be no higher personal care nor purer love and motive for relationship with each of us (individually) than through Jesus Christ. “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).



Christ. “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7). We can “log-on” with Him at any time through prayer. The Holy Spirit is the only infallible interconnection with the entire Body of Christ. Technology can only provide a cheap and deceiving substitute if we are not aware.

Next issue, we continue our presentation of 12 burning fuses of the end times. 

off subtle and luring inroads into our minds and the fleshly proposals to our wants, if we are to stand separate from the deceits of a last-day world.

But most of all, we rejoice in the fact that we have a personal Lord. He knows each of our needs, tendencies, vulnerabilities, wants, weaknesses and talents on an individual basis. There can be no higher personal care nor purer love and motive for relationship with each of us (individually) than through Jesus

#### ENDNOTES

- 1 <http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2008/08/04/how-to-spot-a-narcissist/>
- 2 Steven Strauss, *America: Drifting Towards the End of the Republic, With an Entertained Citizenry*, *Huffington Post*, July 4, 2012
- 3 Joel Kotkin, [www.newgeography.com](http://www.newgeography.com), 10/10/2012. Accessed Jan. 19, 2013. <http://www.newgeography.com/content/003133-the-rise-post-familialism-humanitys-future>

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