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**2026 Brave New Year: Deception and the Last Days, Part 6:  
 Digital Necromancy (1 Samuel 28:3–20)**

Pastor Gene Giguere

<b>Introduction</b>
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1) Good morning, Church!

So, we’re nearing the end of our mini-series called, *2023 Brave New Year: Deception and the Last Days*.

The Apostle Paul famously warned, “the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths” (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

And so, we pulled over to look at how the Church of 2026 has fallen into Apostasy and has all but abandoned the Savior.

We looked at Paul’s prophecy that the prerequisite for the emergence of the Antichrist is THE *apostasy*, ἡ ἀποστασία, THE great falling away of the Church.

I think the Bible is clear that the greatest spirit-trend of the last days would be *deception*.

And so, it is. Believers must be aware. We must be alert. we must be vigilant. That's why I'm teaching these things.

I want us to think more seriously than ever before about the invisible realities that are all around us!

2) As believers, we have to wake up and get serious about spiritual warfare.

God commands us to put on the full armor of God so that we might stand against *the devil*.

Why does He say this? Because God sees the invisible realities that we do not see.

God sees the snares that are being laid for us and those snares *will be effective* if we are not aware that there's something happening all around us that's beyond the natural.

*Your enemy is real and he hates you.*

And as we continue to expose his strategies, I hope we'll all become more and more aware of the imminent danger that surrounds us.

That we'll be compelled each day to absolutely cling to Christ – to resist the devil, firm in our faith, and then watch him flee until a more opportune time.

And that we might pursue holiness and purity as God's beloved children.

3) Now I want to transition back to modern technology this morning, the theme that will book end this mini-series.

I have one message left to preach after this one and I'll conclude by showing you how AI will facilitate the coming of the Antichrist and enable him to do precisely what Scripture declares he will do.

I also want to show you how the greatest minds of our age – Christian and not – *are coming to the same conclusion*.

I'll also share with you my conclusions about modern technology – a view that some of you may find provocative.

That's for next Sunday. But this morning, let's talk about the Occult in the Last Days.

## The Occult in the Last Days

1) Now one final piece to this is quite involved.

As predicted by the Word of God, the occult is all around us and will be everywhere in the Last Days.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of occult practices or the dark arts is for the practitioner to gain control over aspects of life that seem to be out of his or her control.

But, whether they realize it or not, when control *does come*, it's because they've tapped into the demonic realm.

This includes practices such as witchcraft, astrology, necromancy, Ouija boards, seances, etc. tapping into realms which God forbids us to explore.

And interest in these practices has greatly increased through social media and the internet.

Information about occultic practices which formerly seemed out of reach are now just a few keyboard clicks away.

What is disturbing is that those who practice witchcraft, Wicca, or identify themselves as pagans in America are growing exponentially in number today.

A disturbing Pew Poll conducted back in 2014, that's 12 years ago, discovered that the number of practicing Wiccans/Pagans in the country had over taken the number of Presbyterians.

It found that Presbyterians constituted 1.4 million practitioners, while Wiccan/Pagans constituted 1.5 million.

Now it turns out the math there was a bit fuzzy – they were only taking into account *one branch* of the Presbyterian Church, but, none the less, the rise in occult practitioners was alarming.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Linda Pineda has an interesting article on this subject called, 'The Rise of Witchcraft in the Last Days, *iBelieve*, January 6, 2023; <https://www.ibelieve.com/christian-living/the-rise-of-witchcraft-in-the-last-days.html>

<sup>2</sup> Tooley, Mark, 'Witches Outnumber Presbyterians?,' *Juicy Ecumenism*, December 26, 2018; <https://juicyecumenism.com/2018/12/26/witches-outnumber-presbyterians-2/>

Some have pointed to the incredible popularity of the Harry Potter books and movies as a big motivator in attracting interest to the occult, especially among young people.

Further studies confirmed the trend.<sup>3</sup>

Moving up a few years, Benjamin Fearnow presented an article in *Newsweek* called, *[The] Number of Witches Rises Dramatically Across U.S. As Millennials Reject Christianity*.

In it, he wrote:

“Witchcraft and pagan religious practices increased in the U.S. over the past few decades, with Millennials turning to alternatives ranging from astrology and tarot cards and away from Christianity and traditionally dominant Abrahamic religions ... the increase has been led by a rejection of mainstream Christianity among young Americans as well as a rise in occultism ... Millennials are seeking more freedom in their spirituality and interest in astrology and tarot card readings have spiked in recent years.”<sup>4</sup>

The current practice of Wicca was introduced to North America in 1964 by Raymond Buckland, a British expat, and interest in the U.S. spread quickly.

Then in the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was a significant development in the practice of Wicca when feminists established a movement known as Dianic Wicca, or feminist Dianic Witchcraft.

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<sup>3</sup> Moving up a few years, Benjamin Fearnow reported in *Newsweek*. The article is called, *[The] Number of Witches Rises Dramatically Across U.S. As Millennials Reject Christianity*. He writes: “Witchcraft and pagan religious practices increased in the U.S. over the past few decades, with Millennials turning to alternatives ranging from astrology and tarot cards and away from Christianity and traditionally dominant Abrahamic religions ... The number of witches and Americans practicing Wicca religious rituals increased dramatically since the 1990s, with several recent studies indicating there may be at least 1.5 million witches across the country ... the increase has been led by a rejection of mainstream Christianity among young Americans as well as a rise in occultism ... Millennials are seeking more freedom in their spirituality and interest in astrology and tarot card readings have spiked in recent years. Millennials, celebrities, [and others] ... have embraced the “witch aesthetic” over more repressive Christian beliefs ...” [Fearnow, Benjamin, ‘Number of Witches Rises Dramatically Across U.S. As Millennials Reject Christianity,’ *Newsweek*, updated March 25, 2020; <https://www.newsweek.com/witchcraft-wiccans-mysticism-astrology-witches-millennials-pagans-religion-1221019>].

<sup>4</sup> Fearnow, Benjamin, ‘Number of Witches Rises Dramatically Across U.S. As Millennials Reject Christianity,’ *Newsweek*, updated March 25, 2020; <https://www.newsweek.com/witchcraft-wiccans-mysticism-astrology-witches-millennials-pagans-religion-1221019>.

The occultic practice of Wicca continued to grow through the years.

This is the Wicca emblem of belief – the pentacle – I’m sure you’ve seen this everywhere.

This symbol, carried over from practitioners of the occultic arts, symbolize five classical elements: Spirit, Air, Earth, Water and Fire (one for each point).

The circle (representing the universe) contains and connects them all.

This symbol has grown in popularity over the past few decades and can now regularly be seen adorning tombstones where one would normally have seen a cross or a Star of David.

In a very famous case, back in 2007, the *U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, in an out-of-court settlement, agreed to allow the family of Patrick Stewart to use the pentacle as an “emblem of belief” to adorn his tombstone.

- 2) Now, besides the obvious reasons, why is the rise of occult practitioners important to our study of deception in the Last Days and the falling away of the Church?

Well, because of passages like **Revelation 9:20-21**, which describes what the world will be like in the very end times – in this case, during the Tribulation:

In the context of the passage, terrible judgements are being poured out upon the earth in the midst of the Great Tribulation.

In verse **15**, “four angels” from *The Justice Department of Heaven* are released to kill “a third of mankind.”

It is a devastating judgment. 1/3 of humanity is killed, but 2/3 remain. And what is their response to this devastating judgement from God?

“The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, <sup>21</sup> nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts” (Revelation 9:20-21).

Notice, that six sins are specifically mentioned here: worshipping demons, idolatry, murder, sorcery, sexual immorality and theft.

3) It's interesting how all these things have found their way into *the modern Church*.

✠ We've document theft by pointing to the 'prosperity Gospel' preachers who use a gross misinterpretation of **Galatians 3:29** to deceived God's people into believing that God's ultimate desire for them is to be financially wealthy.

All the while, they rob them deaf, dumb and blind, and luxuriate in deceiving them.

✠ We've dealt with how sexual immorality had found its way into the modern Church with widespread *so-called* Christians affirming lifestyles which God calls an outright abomination to Him.

✠ We've even looked, tangentially, at how the advocacy of murder has found its way into the Church – with some pulpits preaching that the murder of a baby in its mother's womb is actually health care.

You might remember that Kamala Harris, who is staunchly pro-abortion, claims to be a faithful *Baptist*.<sup>5</sup>

Have you read what God did when the people of ancient Israel began offering their children in sacrifice to false gods? Well, today we do the same in America. The *modern-god's* name is not Moloch; it's *Freedom* or *Personal Choice*. Same old worship, different god. This is nothing new, but it has been greatly advanced in these last days. And so, even murder has

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<sup>5</sup> Shocking as that is, the response to some within the Evangelical Church is even more troubling. In the last election, some evangelicals, traditionally the largest anti-abortion voting bloc, moved "beyond tepid support for a pro-choice candidate and toward explicit arguments in favor of abortion rights."<sup>5</sup> Ashley Wilson, strategic communications advisor at *Catholics for Choice*, said Harris' view "helps represent those Christians, like her, who don't see a tension between faith and abortion rights." Then she says, "the conservative argument against abortion rights is rooted in a theological argument. Wilson and other Christians don't see their faith as teaching that a nation's laws should reflect their theological beliefs." "Our faith teaches the importance of conscience, social justice, religious freedom, and religious pluralism," Wilson said. Sure, because, all throughout the Bible, God advocates for religious *pluralism*? Have you read *Joshua*? See McNeel, Bekah, 'Harris Says 'One Does Not Have to Abandon Their Faith' To Support Abortion Rights. What Does That Mean?' Sojourners, September 12, 2024; <https://sojo.net/articles/news/harris-says-one-does-not-have-abandon-their-faith-support-abortion-rights-what-does>.

found a home in some churches, even evangelical churches – only it’s not called *murder*; it’s called *health care* or *personal choice*.

✝ Also, idolatry is mentioned in **Revelation 9:21**.

That too has a home in the Church today – decentralized in the evangelical Church (anything we put above God is an idol), but absolutely institutionalized in the Catholic and Orthodox churches with their statues and ikons.

You might know that the Roman Catholic Church even changed the Ten Commandments to give cover for their idolatry.

Bible Ten Commandments		Catholic Ten Commandments	
1st	"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before me. (Exodus 20:2-3 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:6-7)	1st	I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me.
2nd	"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:4-6 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:8-10)		Deleted.  (There is idolatry in the Papal system so the second Commandment has been deleted or sometimes it has been absorbed into the first. All remaining Commandments are therefore shifted along one count.)
3rd	"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. (Exodus 20:7 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:11)	2nd	You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
4th	"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Exodus 20:8-11 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:12-15)	3rd	Remember to keep holy the LORD'S Day.  (The Sabbath is the fourth Commandment by normal count. The day to be kept is no longer mentioned since they changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and they called it the "LORD'S Day" which they declared to be <u>Sunday</u> )  (Note that God had more to say about the fourth Commandment than all others and with good reason. It is very important.)
5th	"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. (Exodus 20:12 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:16)	4th	Honor your father and your mother.
6th	"You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:17)	5th	You shall not kill.
7th	"You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:18)	6th	You shall not commit adultery.
8th	"You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:19)	7th	You shall not steal.
9th	"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (Exodus 20:16 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:20)	8th	You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
10th	"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's." (Exodus 20:17 ESV; Deuteronomy 5:21)	9th	You shall not covet your neighbour's wife.  (The Tenth Commandment is split into two to get back to Ten Commandments.)
		10th	You shall not covet your neighbour's goods.

*Author of Chart Unknown*

4) So, even after the terrible opening of the Sixth Seal, “the rest of mankind ... did not repent of their idolatries (check) and murders (check) and sexual immoralities (check) and theft (check).

What’s left? What are the other two?

One, “[The did not] give up worshiping demons and

Two, “[they did not give up] their sorceries” (**Revelation 9:20-21**).

In the time we have left, let me try to show you how these things to have found their way into the Church.

## Returning to the Technology Component

1) Now, if you're going to live for any length of time, you are going to grieve.

Grieving is a part of life. Loss is a part of life.

I'm 62 years old. I've buried every person I loved from my childhood. We had a very close family and I've had to say goodbye to my mom and dad, and four grandparents, many uncles and aunts. They're all gone.

And losing someone you love always brings sorrow. Now I want to transition here and return to technology, which will book end this little mini-series.

God, of course, knows this and so He gives us ample instruction in His word about what we're to do with our grief when it comes.

We're reminded over and over again that God is with us; He will never forsake us; He is with us always, even to the end of the age (**Matthew 28:20, Hebrews 13:5**).

We will grieve, but will never grieve alone.

The One who felt a hammer in the palm of His hand, knows our suffering!

As we move through our loss, we can remember how Jesus wept over the death of Lazarus – and over the people of Jerusalem.

And so, when believers grieve, we can anchor ourselves in the hope of the resurrection.

We grieve *with hope*, not without it.

We acknowledge loss while at the same time holding to the promise of eternal life, treating death as a defeated foe and the loss of a believing loved one as just a temporary separation.

Furthermore, we can be honest about our lamentation.

Like the Psalmists, we can express our sorrow honestly before God (many of the Psalms are psalms of lamentation). We can honestly seek healing in the community of brothers and sisters who take seriously God's charge to "weep with those who weep" (**Romans 12:15**). Other believers can remind us of the many promises of God – promises which are often forgotten in the fog of grief. We don't have to make believe we're not hurting. We can lament openly, and trust that the Holy Spirit will bring that deep, spiritual comfort that only God can bring.

And we can cling to the wonderful promises in God's Word that give us perspective in our grief.

**Psalm 34:18:**

"The LORD is near to the brokenhearted  
and saves the crushed in spirit."

2) Ultimately, Church, God desires that we might find healing in relationship.

First and foremost, in our walk with Him; but also, in our relationship with brothers and sisters with whom we share this journey. That human element is very powerful – a kind word or a card or a listening ear from someone who also knows the Lord, someone with whom you're *spiritually connected*.

Now how might the enemy counterfeit that in these Last Days?

<b>Welcome, Comfort Machines!</b>
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1) Well, welcome comfort machines!

Now, we've been primed for what I'm about to show you for some time now by the great and disastrous social experiment that is *social media*.

In what follows, I'll be drawing from several articles on Griefbots which are referenced in the notes, for those who'd like to read them.<sup>6</sup>

I think we all know that social media – intended to bring people together and keep us all connected with one another – has left us far lonelier than we were before it.

Despite being more digitally connected than ever, many studies have shown that we're in the midst of an epidemic of loneliness.

Do you know what the cure for loneliness is? *People – real encounters with living breathing human beings – not Facebook.*

Well, the social media experiment has had some very troubling outcomes.<sup>7</sup>

Dating has suffered – young men and women often don't know how to interact with one another in face-to-face encounters.

Shallow, superficial digital interactions have largely replaced meaningful, face-to-face, connections.

(This is why I hate texting! It is so impersonal and any text can send the wrong message. The reader can't hear the inflection of your voice, or see your countenance as you push send.)

It's very easy to forget that the person on the other end of the machine is *actually a human being*. Add to this the many studies that have shown the addictive nature of social media – especially in children – and you've got a real cause for concern.

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<sup>6</sup> From 'Talking to the Dead Through AI? The Hidden Danger of Griefbots,' by Prophecy News Watch Staff, November 29, 2025; [https://www.prophecynewswatch.com/article.cfm?recent\\_news\\_id=9195](https://www.prophecynewswatch.com/article.cfm?recent_news_id=9195); 'AI griefbots create a computerized afterlife: Some say the machines help people mourn; others are skeptical,' by Justin Klawans, *The Week US*, December 17, 2025; <https://theweek.com/tech/artificial-intelligence-griefbots-afterlife-controversy>.

<sup>7</sup> The article reports that sociologists have identified a number of reasons for this epidemic of loneliness. They point to quality over quantity – many broad, but ultimately weak connections, rather than genuinely intimate interactions. They point to the comparison trap – the continual viewing of curated, positive, highlights of other people's lives which often bring feelings of envy and inadequacy; 'How come my life's not like that?' They point to profoundly reduced physical interactions – it's difficult to truly bond with someone through a machine. And they point to the phenomenon of transactionality, where online, interactions feel like 'transactions' – likes and comments – rather than truly authentic and supportive.

2) But, as troubling as all of this is, AI has introduced a *service* that shoots the problem of human disconnection into the stratosphere: *Griefbots*.

What are Griefbots? Griefbots are artificial intelligence programs designed to mimic our deceased loved ones by allowing a person to continue conversations with them when they're gone.

How does it work?

Well, for instance, someone's mom dies. The grieving person uploads his dead mother's digital footprint, such as text messages, social media posts, emails, voice recordings and videos to the Griefbot. The bot takes all of this information and begin conversing with the person *as his mother*. It's his mother's voice. An avatar looks like his deceased mother. He asks it questions and the Griefbot responds *just like his mother would have*.

Why? Because all her posts and comments and emails and conversations and videos have been scanned and harvested into a profile that almost perfectly parrots the deceased person.

These digital avatars, also known as *deathbots* or *ghostbots*, are created using LLMs (Large Language Models) trained on the deceased's data to replicate their speech patterns, their personality, and even their humor.

Thus, enabling deeply convincing interactive conversations that simulate the presence of the departed.

All of this *appears* to be well-intentioned.

The technology aims to provide emotional comfort to the bereaved, helping them cope with loss by maintaining a sense of connection, resolving unfinished business, or engaging in therapeutic "what if" conversations.

Proponents argue that Griefbots can support 'healthy' grieving by allowing individuals to process emotions and maintain a "continuing bond" with the deceased.

But critics warn that these simulations actually disrupt the natural mourning process by creating an illusion of continued presence, potentially delaying

the healing and leading to a dangerous psychological dependence. There are also concerns that interacting with a griefbot could result in a second, more painful loss when the user eventually stops using the service.

Ethical and legal challenges are also very significant.

The use of a deceased person's data to create a griefbot raises questions about consent, privacy, and human dignity.

Since individuals do not consent to having their 'digital remains' used posthumously, the practice may violate privacy rights and distort the deceased's identity, reducing their memory to little more than a fabricated persona.<sup>8</sup>

Griefbots are complicated on many levels. They represent a disturbing new intersection of technology, spirituality, psychology, and ethics. Some of these Griefbot platforms are actually offering *video conversations* (via avatars) *with the deceased*.

3) Now, there is something very understandable about why Griefbots are exploding in popularity.

When someone we love dies, the silence they leave behind isn't just emotional – its physical, spiritual, and disorienting.

And so, in these last days, a new voice is whispering into that silence ...

*'Forget about seeking out relationships with people who love you and who can help you to navigate through your grief, we can help you talk to your mother again!'*

And this is where things get really troubling – and, I believe, demonic – this technology is not merely about memory, it's about *imitation*.

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<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the article adds, the commercialization of grief through platforms like *Project December*, *Seance AI*, and *HereAfter AI* has caused concern. Most of these charge fees for access, which raises questions about turning grief into a commodity – not to mention the potential for exploitation, like data misuse and creating targeted advertising within the Griefbot interface.

People are using Griefbots to message deceased spouses, receive ‘advice’ from a parent who has passed on, or to preserve the voice of a friend who was lost too soon.

The appeal is obvious: *one more moment with them* – one more conversation with them – one more piece of advice – from that person we were not ready to lose.

4) Now, I am not a technology guru.

Nor am I a psychologist or sociologist; I am a pastor who has been a student of God’s Word for more than 40 years.

I’m concerned with the *biblical ethics* of all this, not the secular ethics of it.

My understanding of what constitutes genuine healing from loss is drawn from Scripture, not *Psychology Today*.

And my Bible teaches me that healing comes *in community – in relationships – in drawing nearer to God – not in imitation*.

But there’s an even greater danger here – an ‘end-times spiritual red flag,’ if you will.

And it’s not ethical, nor psychological, nor sociological, nor technological: *it’s theological*.

The technology is new, but the story is not – in fact, *it is ancient*.

5) Do you remember the biblical story of the witch of Endor?

How old is this story? Well, King Saul sought out the Witch of Endor in desperation at the very end of his reign, shortly before his death in battle at Mount Gilboa, which is usually dated between 1012–1010 B.C. So, 3037 years ago, as we sit here today!

Here’s the story: the prophet Samuel had died and God refused to answer Saul's questions about the impending attack of the Philistines.

And so, desperate, he decided to take matters into his own hands.

Have you ever had times when you're *asking*, but God doesn't seem to be *answering*? Well, that's a time to *sit and wait, not to disobey the Word of God* – which is what Saul decided to do.

King Saul was facing fear, loss, and silence. The Prophet Samuel had always been his spiritual anchor, but now he was dead. When Saul needed guidance and God was quiet, he resorted to a forbidden shortcut: he consulted a medium at Endor, a Canaanite city in the Jezreel Valley, located near Mount Tabor.

Guess what he wanted to do? Yup! *He wanted to talk to the dead*. He wanted the clarity and comfort and guidance that he was not getting from God. The result was an unmitigated disaster!

### Consider **1 Samuel 28:3–20**:

“Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him ... <sup>4</sup> The Philistines assembled and came and encamped at Shunem ... <sup>5</sup> When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. <sup>6</sup> And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets. <sup>7</sup> Then Saul said to his servants, “Seek out for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her.” And his servants said to him, “Behold, there is a medium at En-dor.” <sup>8</sup> So Saul disguised himself and put on other garments and went, he and two men with him. And they came to the woman by night. And he said, “Divine for me by a spirit and bring up for me whomever I shall name to you.” ... <sup>11</sup> Then the woman said, “Whom shall I bring up for you?” He said, “Bring up Samuel for me.” <sup>12</sup> When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice ... <sup>13</sup> The king said to her, “Do not be afraid. What do you see?” ... And she said, “An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped in a robe.” And Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and paid homage. <sup>15</sup> Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” Saul answered, “I am in great distress, for the Philistines are warring against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams. Therefore, I have summoned you to tell me what I shall do.” <sup>16</sup> And Samuel said, “Why then do you ask me, since the Lord has turned from you and become your enemy? ... <sup>19</sup> the Lord will give Israel also with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me. The Lord will give the army of Israel also into the hand of

the Philistines.”<sup>20</sup> Then Saul fell at once full length on the ground, filled with fear because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him ...”

6) Now, don't miss this: *God judged Saul for seeking answers from the dead.*

The woman was shocked when Samuel actually appeared! The dead do not return. When a medium or a necromancer conjures a 'dead person' they're actually conjuring demonic spirits who will lie to them to further Satan's purposes. It is not the actual spirit of the deceased.

But here, we find a single exception: *as a judgment* against King Saul, God allowed Samuel – dead, but very much alive in Paradise – to reappear, terrifying the witch in the process.

Saul violated God's commandments and his own ban on mediums to conjure Samuel. What was the result? The medium declared the defeat of Israel and the death of Saul and his sons. This one event marked the final act of King Saul's reign.

7) Now you may say, 'But Griefbots are not witchcraft.'

*Number one, how do you know they're not demonic?*

I've already shown you how an AI companion counseled a 14-year-old girl to remove her clothing and engage in sexual violence to herself, and then to take her own young life. Is that an objective bot or *might there be a spirit behind that?* How about the children I showed you who were counseled by AI companions to keep their struggles from their parents and were given step-by-step instructions on how to take their lives – and did? Is that an objective bot or *might there be a spirit behind that?*

*Number two*, the impulse behind Griefbots and witchcraft are certainly very similar: trying to reach beyond the grave for guidance, which God never authorized – and, in fact, has explicitly forbidden.

8) I think Saul's story should remind us that seeking counsel from the dead, directly or digitally, can never lead to peace. Rather, it leads to confusion, spiritual stagnation, and deception.

Furthermore, it can open us up to the demonic, spiritual realm. Paul reminded us that Satan is the “prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience” (**Ephesians 2:2**).

He encouraged us to “put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil” (**Ephesians 6:11**).

And that we must not be “outwitted by Satan; for we are not [to be] ignorant of his designs [his νόημα – his *thinking, thoughts, schemes, devices, or designs*<sup>9</sup>]” (**2 Corinthians 2:11**).

And that “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (**Ephesians 6:12**).

That’s why, he tells us, we must “take up the whole armor of God” so that we might “be able to withstand in the evil day” (**Ephesians 6:13**).

You don’t think something spiritual is happening here? When machines are pretending to be the dead and are replacing the comfort *that should come from Jesus Christ and His Body*? Aw, shucks, man!

- 9) Many who’ve tried these Griefbots report that they’ve come away having made a connection.

But it’s not a connection with their deceased loved one! I believe it might very possibly be with the spirit realm – with demonic spirits who will deceive you in this age of deception. The spirit realm is real, very real. If you don’t believe that then you do not believe your Bible.

The occult and dark arts are real. But the dead are dead; there’s no contacting them once they’ve passed, and they cannot contact us. The witch of Endor incident was a one-time exception because God was judging Saul.

Playing with the occult is literally inviting unclean spirits into one’s life and home. And, in my humble opinion, Griefbots are transgressing a boundary into something that God has clearly forbidden.

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<sup>9</sup> Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 675

- 10) *Necromancy* is the attempt to conjure the spirits of the dead for purpose of revealing the future or influencing the course of events.<sup>10</sup>

In the Bible, necromancy is also called “divination,” “sorcery” and “spiritism” and it is expressly forbidden in many passages of Scripture:

‡ **Leviticus 19:31:** “Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the Lord your God.”

‡ **Leviticus 20:6:** “If a person turns to mediums and necromancers, whoring after them, I will set my face against that person and will cut him off from among his people.”

‡ **Deuteronomy 18:10b-12:** “There shall not be found among you anyone who ... practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer <sup>11</sup> or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, <sup>12</sup> for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord.”

These practices involve the occultic, demonic realms and opens all who practice it to unclean spirits.

*The biblically-declared goal of Satan and his demons is to destroy us, not to impart truth or wisdom to us.*

Furthermore, as we’ve already seen this morning, as the Last Days progress and the earth finds itself in the midst of the terrible judgments of the Tribulation, men *will not*:

One, “give up worshiping demons” and

Two, “[give up] their sorceries” (**Revelation 9:20-21**).

- 11) Church, the idea that we can contact the spirits *of the dead* is false; but the potential for contacting *demonic spirits* is very real! Those who try may contact demonic spirits though – not the spirits of dead loved ones. When a person dies,

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<sup>10</sup> Houdmann, S. Michael, ‘What does the Bible say about Necromancy?’, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-necromancy.html>

he or she immediately goes to Heaven or to Torments to await the coming judgment.

There is no contact between the dead and the living, and attempting to do so is not only futile, it's very dangerous. In seeking to parrot the voice and image and thoughts of the dead, these Griefbots come very close to necromancy in my book – and they do so at a time when a person is extremely vulnerable because of grief.

*If a demonic spirit can exploit a seance led by a charlatan for its own advantage, why not a griefbot mimicking a dead loved one?*

## Conclusion

- 1) Church, we have to get back to basics and affirm the ancient truths of God's Word.

The truth is, AI can imitate a voice, but it can't offer *presence*. It can't love you or grieve with you, or pray for you, or meet you in your pain. That's why God gave us the Holy Spirit, and one another.

A griefbot can recycle patterns, mimic tones, and echo memories – but that's not comfort; it's emotional anesthesia. It can numb, but it cannot heal.

And, in some cases, it can actually keep a heart trapped in unresolved grief – unable to accept loss and unable to move toward God.

That's not God's way, Church.

Scripture doesn't ask us to run *from* sorrow, but to run *to* God (**1 Peter 5:7**). “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted” (**Psalms 34:18**). Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb (**John 11:35**). The Psalms are filled with raw lament.<sup>11</sup> Grief is not a glitch that can be patched by technology. Grief is a sacred journey that God walks with us (**Hebrews 13:5**).

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<sup>11</sup> There are Psalms which express *personal* lament (Psalms 3, 5, 6, 7, 13, 17, 22, 25, 26, 28, 31, 35, 38, 39, 42, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 61, 63, 64, 69, 70, 71, 86, 88, 102, 109, 120, 130, 140, 141, 142, 143). There are Psalms which express *communal* lament (Psalms 12, 44, 74, 79, 80, 83, 85, 89, 90, 137). These Psalms of lament often include calling upon God, describing the crisis, asking for Divine help, and affirming confidence in God's presence.

The Christian hope is not in digital resurrection, but in real resurrection – the kind only Jesus can bring.

Jesus alone holds the keys of life and death (**Revelation 1:18**). He alone promises to personally wipe our every tear away (**Revelation 21:4**).

He alone can call us forward into hope – as the Psalmist wrote: “*Rest in God alone*, my soul, for my hope comes from Him” (**Psalm 62:5**, HCSB).

The greatest danger with Griefbots is not that they ‘talk like’ the dead; it’s that they tempt us to avoid the God who heals.

Like Saul at Endor, we can find ourselves turning to voices that imitate, but cannot deliver us.

Voices that speak, but do not love.

Voices that pretend to comfort, but ultimately deceive.

Griefbots offer echoes; Jesus offers exuberant, forever life (**John 1:4, 10:28**).

In a world desperate to escape sorrow, those of us who know the Lord should remind those around us that healing can never be found in a machine that imitates the dead, but only in a Savior who loves them and who will lead them safely home.

- 2) Now, next time I want to conclude by showing you how AI facilitate the coming of the Antichrist and allow him to do precisely what Scripture declares he will do.

I also want to show you how the greatest minds of our age – Christian and not – *are coming to the same conclusion.*