

ERIN ARCHER

STUDENT, BIBLICAL & CHRISTIAN
STUDIES



IT'S ALIVE! OR IS IT?: HUMANS PLAYING GOD

In the Tower of Babel story, humans wanted to make a name for themselves, which is ultimately an attempt to achieve immortality through the creation of something that would stand the test of time. In ancient times, these creations were often great buildings or cities. In modern times, these creations are artificial intelligences and transhuman advancements. However, technological advancement itself is not hubris, as observed in the Tower of Babel story. Rather, the motive behind the use of technology is largely what determines it to be a sin against God. The ideas of artificial intelligence and transhumanism can be found in all forms of media, and particularly the science fiction genre. My research examines how various video games, films, and anime use technology to gain power and immortality, and how that relates to real-world applications of those same technologies. These examples from pop culture demonstrate humanity's desire to be gods themselves. But can the creations of humans ever be

considered true creations on the same scale as God's creation of the heavens and the earth, and of humanity? Can artificial intelligences have souls and sentience? In an attempt to answer such questions, my research examines the soul theologies of two early Church Fathers – Origen and St. Thomas Aquinas – as well as the theory of apocalyptic artificial intelligence.

Research Advisor: Dr. Bill Anderson