The Way to Go?

Peter Gatama, Teacher, Greaves Adventist Academy, Quebec

Technology can be defined as the systematic study of techniques for making and doing things. The term is a combination of the Greek Techne, "art, craft" with logos, "word speech," meant in Greece a discourse on the arts, both fine and applied. This was a 17th century view. By the 20th century, the term embraced a growing range of means, processes, and ideas in addition to tools and machines. Technology by then was defined as the means or activity by which man seeks to change or manipulate his environment.

Technology depends upon the principles of science. Craftsmanship and philosophical knowledge have found a common ground of operation since the days of Francis Bacon. By the 16th century, Francis Bacon, an advocate of experimental science suggested that scientists need to study the methods of craftsmen and that craftsmen acquire more knowledge of science. Man was aiming at becoming the master of nature. But can a new civilization appear that will encompass technology and still permit man to be free? Has technology indeed freed man from many restrictions of time and space?

In these modern times of information revolution, the "electronic brain" called the computer, seems capable of replacing the human brain. Computer technology has produced sedentary individuals who spend millions of hours and dollars by the computer. This technological advance has cut off communication lines in families and added greater challenges within the less educated of the world. Technology is a human product and whatever we do, it must remain man's servant. Technology grew out of man's need to improve his material condition and also out of his love of play and adventure.

Despite all the constraints, technology has grown and will continue to grow abundantly. The need to exercise control over technology raises questions of who or what is to control the controllers. Technological advances in education call for better educated teachers and technicians. A time has come when all teachers will be required to show proof of technology know how, especially in the world of computers. The gap between the developed and less developed countries is increasing at an alarming rate in the area of technology. Our churches are filled with members many of whom are not computer literate. Our schools in many developing countries are behind in computer technology in the classroom. Yet, we say it is the way to go in the 21st century and beyond. What a challenge? Even a school like Greaves Academy though in a developed nation is far behind in the area of technology in the classroom.

The way to go is up! The changing concept of technology in the classroom and outside may involve a changing concept of man himself. What is our purpose? Do we allow technology to be our master or are we going to allow Christ to change us with or without technology in the class? Technology must be made man's servant and not vice versa. Teachers must be willing to accept the changes proposed and seek technological knowledge. It is a poor carpenter who blames his tools. Let us face it, technology in the classroom is here with us. This means man's mastery over himself - with God everything is possible and I believe every teacher can say like Paul, " I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me." Let us seek to know better ways of teaching, better ways of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the way to

go is not to blame the tool but to get involved in learning more about the tool.

Technology in the classroom is opening doors for teachers to be creative and innovative. It is geared towards preparing children who can face today boldly knowing that tomorrow is in the Lord's hands. The spirit of adventure associated with technology will certainly be of value in confronting the massive challenges of the future. Technology has indeed freed man from the many restrictions of time and space. But is this what it means to be free? Is our goal to achieve progress and happiness through techniques? Are we going to allow our state of mind to be completely dominated by technical values? I leave it to you. Is technology in the classroom the only way to go? Pray and seek the kingdom of God first some may say. It is not how much you know that matters but whom you know many may argue. Yet others will say that the only way out is not technological advances in the classroom but UP! God bless.