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The Good Hacker

Christians are living in a world experiencing a technological revolution; and, with the every changing landscape of the digital space, it is becoming more difficult to judge what is good and what is not. One such realm that is difficult to judge is the world of hacking.

Hacking has seen many examples of being used of evil, such as the eBay hack and the Yahoo data breach, both in 2014 (Max). CNBC predicted that cyberattacks would cost companies 2.1 trillion dollars in 2019 (Kharpal). Even the 2016 Presidential Election came under scrutiny from an alleged Russian hacking attempt. However, with any skill or tool in life, hacking can also be used for ethical purposes. For the Christian, hacking can be used to glorify the Kingdom of God when used for ethical purposes.

The New Hacker's Dictionary defines hacking as "A person who enjoys exploring the details of programmable systems and how to stretch their capabilities, as opposed to most users, who prefer to learn only the minimum necessary." Hackers have abundant knowledge of computer systems, and they have a strong desire to learn more. However, in their pursuit of knowledge, hackers can cross into ethical grey areas that lead to questions of their motives. The question then becomes if the motives and actions of hackers can be clearly defined as ethical or not ethical. Thankfully, hackers have been classifying themselves into different categories based on their hacking morals. Three main groups of hackers are black hat, grey hat, and white hat hackers. Black hat hackers would comprise those who attacked

eBay and Yahoo, using their skills for malicious and criminal intent. Grey hat hackers comprise the moral grey area of hacking, using their skills for both good and bad. White hat hackers comprise authorized hackers employed by the government or companies, using their skills to find weaknesses in digital systems and preventing digital attacks from other hackers (GeeksforGeeks.org). White hat hackers are what Christians should look towards for moral hacking.

White hat hackers are the moral hackers, but the morals of the world are not always the morals of God. When judging the true morality of their actions, Christians can look towards the Bible to answer their questions. 1 Corinthians 10: 23-24 gives an excellent reference for this case. It reads, “‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things are helpful. ‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor” (1 Cor. 10: 22-23). Paul is clearly stating that the intentions of your actions are vitally important. The Apostle Peter writes in a similar manner, “Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:” (1 Peter 4: 8-10). Peter is stating that one should use his gift to serve others, not yourselves. White hat hackers use their skills not to seek selfish gain, but they use their skills to better the systems and safety of others. There are some evil hackers, but Christians can rest assured that ethical hackers are out there defending others from the harm of evil hackers.

Works Cited:

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