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Jay Kim Interview—Analog Church

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Jay Kim, pastor of teaching and leadership at Vintage Faith Church in Santa Cruz, California, and one of the leaders of the ReGeneration Project, joins me to discuss his new book: 'Analog Church: Why We Need Real People, Places, and Things in the Digital Age' (https://amzn.to/2WYxuns).

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Transcript

Welcome back. Today I'm joined by Jay Kim, author of the new book, Analog Church, Why We Need People, Places, and Things in the Digital Age. Welcome, Jay.

Yeah, absolutely. Thanks for having me. This is a real thrill to be on.

Can you tell me a bit about what prompted the writing of this particular book, which as we'll see is very timely in the current situation? That's a great question. I never had one moment of epiphany or the Lord appearing in a dream or anything like that telling me to write a book. It was a gradual process of several years.

Part of my journey, I serve and lead at a church in a sleepy little sort of eclectic beach town on the coast of California here in the U.S. But before that, I was on staff as a teaching pastor at a large American evangelical multi-site mega church. It's a wonderful church. They're doing incredible work.

But at that church at the time, now they've changed in recent years, which is a beautiful thing, but at the time, because they were multi-site, they were using the video venue model where all of their teaching was done live in one location and then all the other locations were basically receiving a pre-recorded version of the sermon. And so as a teaching pastor, I had to get up on a platform and do that several times and stare at a camera and talk to that camera as if that camera were real people in a real place. And I think that sort of initially got me thinking, what is happening here? It felt like something was off or something was missing.

So that got me thinking. And my entire life, basically, I've grown up here in the Silicon Valley of California, which is the epicenter, the hub of digital technology and the digital age. And so I've always thought about it.

I've always known people in my life. Even when I was really young, my uncle, who we lived with for a while, worked at IBM. So even before the internet, just digital culture, digital technology was a part of my life in some form or fashion through relationships and such.

And so I've been thinking about it a lot. I've been immersed in it. And my entire life has been, again, lived here in the epicenter of the digital age.

And so as a church leader and as a pastor, I couldn't help but really start thinking deeply about the intersection between digital technologies and our ecclesiology, how we think about the church and what the church is. So that was several years of thought and conversation and ideas. And there you go.

A few years later, we have a book. So you use the expression digital and analog church. First of all, what do you mean by digital church? And what do you think are the attractions of digital church for people? That's a great question.

The best way for me to explain the distinction, at least in my mind, is actually probably to start with analog. I've been getting that question a lot. And I thought, I think I assumed that everybody would know what I meant by analog, and I assumed wrong.

And I think a part of it is because the word analog, it does have some elasticity of meaning, some breadth of meaning. But by analog, what I mean is analog in what I think is the most baseline, basic sense of the word, which is to mean physical, tactile, embodied realities. And so by analog church, what I mean is church as a physical, tactile, embodied, the theological word would be incarnational reality in the flesh.

And I am making that distinction of church against the backdrop of, to your question, what is the digital church? I'm just trying to comment and commentate on our sort of the modern Western evangelical churches' tendency to lean hard and fast, often carelessly and thoughtlessly and recklessly, into whatever new technology is available to us. The

moment some new platform comes out, there are so many of our churches where we just say, for the sake of reach and impact, those sorts of words, let's just leverage that technology for what it is. And the point I'm trying to make is that digital technologies, by their very nature, have a way of forming us.

And if we're not careful, first of all, we're always being formed by something or someone. And if we're not thoughtful about what it is that is forming us, then something else is going to form us into something that we never intended to become. And I think with digital technologies in particular, they're really, you know, they're really, really subtle, and yet dangerously effective in forming us in the formational process.

And we see that, you know, in so many different ways. So that's the distinction I'm trying to make. Let's be more thoughtful about what it means to be the church.

And I'm trying to argue for the fact that, in my mind, my best understanding of the scriptures and of church history, the church has always been and must always continue to be, in some form or fashion, the physical, tactile, embodied, incarnational, gathered people of God, participating in the worship of God and participating in the mission of God together. Do you think part of the challenge is that digital technology and entertainment media and other things like that have become the baseline of our more general experience as individuals and as communities? And so we come to a typical way of doing the church that has been the case for hundreds, thousands of years, and it seems strange and alien to us in a way that makes it very difficult for us to know how to engage with that experience. How do you overcome something of the disjunction between our day-to-day experience of connecting with each other and experiencing community and taking in information and the sort of ways that we're encouraged to do so in church, which have always been the ways we take things in at church and communicate and connect and enjoy each other's presence, but which are maybe foreign and strange and new to us? Yeah, absolutely.

Well, there's a lot there. I think you're hitting on some really good stuff, and I agree with you. First, you're right.

The culture, the water we swim in essentially are digital waters, right? Almost everything about our, for most of us, not all of us, but for the overwhelming majority of us listening to this, the very fact that you're listening to this, you know, or watching this, is you are swimming in digital waters, and nothing about this seems strange. You know, when I listen to podcasts, it is so normative. I don't even think twice about the incredible phenomenon that it actually is, that I can put in these little earbuds and I can hear the thoughts and ideas of people, usually that I've never met or known, who said these things hours, maybe days, maybe weeks ago, and here it is streaming into my head, you know, through my ears, like so incredible, but we never give that a second thought because, again, these are the waters we swim in.

We just, we live and breathe digital. I mean, how much time do we spend a day on our phones and checking email, and then when that day is done and you lay down to rest, how many of us are grabbing our iPad or our phone and popping on Netflix or whatever, you know, like this is the reality in which we live, and because of that, you asked the question, is it challenging to lean into more rich, timeless, analog experiences as a church because we swim in digital waters? I guess my response to that would be yes. I think on the surface, it is a challenge, but I think the challenge actually gives way to an incredible opportunity, and for me, that opportunity is to, and I get into this distinction in the book, you know, if the church leans, again, hard and fast toward all things digital, the reality is we are then going to look and sound and feel like everything else in everybody's life because everything in their life is already digital, but the opportunity before us in the digital age, I think, and I think it's a tremendous missional opportunity, is that we have a chance now by simply being what the church has always been, an analog, embodied, incarnational reality.

If we can just continue to be that, then we are by our very nature as the church, as an incarnational, embodied, analog reality, we are presenting a vision to the world for what it means to belong to something and what it means to experience the fullness of life with others that is not, it doesn't sound and look and feel like everything else in their life. It stands in stark contrast to that, which is when the church has always been most effective, you know, historically. Historically, the church is always most dynamic, most effective when we zig as the world zags, so to speak, and so that's a huge opportunity in my mind for the church today in the digital age.

One of the things that you get into at various points throughout the book are some of the oppositions between the values that characterize digital technology and a more analog sort of engagement, so the difference between entertainment and engagement or between consuming and creating or between the idea of communicating and communing or information versus presence. Could you unpack that a bit more, some of the underlying, maybe implicit, tacit values that drive these different cultures and how we can maybe bring those things that may only be implicit more to the surface of our awareness? Yeah, that's great. I think that hits on maybe one of the sort of key pillars of the entire book, you know, the idea that, and you named several of them that we get into in the book, but right, I think the underlying point I'm trying to make is that digital by its very nature invites us to, and you said this, that digital by its very nature invites us to consume digital technologies and the digital age and more specifically the economy of the digital age is designed, it is structured in a way, and I'm not critiquing tech companies here, they've added a lot of value to our lives.

You and I are having this conversation because a great tech company made a great platform that allows us literally on the other side of the globe to have this seamless conversation and that's wonderful, especially in a time like this, you know, that we're in. We're recording this on the first of April and in both of our countries we're, you know,

hunkered down and sheltering in place, but digital, the digital age, the economy of the digital age is designed to commodify our attention and our affection and ultimately, more dangerously, our allegiance and the way it does that is by pushing us to consumerism. The digital age, like all business, you know, like all commerce essentially, wants us to buy something essentially, you know, it wants us to, but here's the thing, the currency of the digital age is much more complex than dollars and cents, you know, or euros or pounds.

It is, it's actually, the currency of the digital age is, again, our attention, like that's how things are commodified in the digital age and the way you grab somebody's attention is to make them consumers, to give them products or content to consume that, again, grabs our attention. The problem is when it comes to the formational process of following Jesus, what the scriptures would call discipleship, consumption is actually on the far opposite end of what it means to be a disciple. To be a disciple of Jesus, to be a student, apprentice, practitioner, in the words of Dallas Willard, of the way of Jesus is not to consume a product, but it is to creatively participate in a life and to do so in communion with others.

It's a high calling and really demanding and offers us very little by way of products and content and rather simply invites us to creatively participate communally with others. So this is the issue at hand. If the church leans into all things digital, now again, I think that there are creative and responsible, helpful ways that the churches can leverage digital technologies, but the danger becomes if we just recklessly thoughtlessly lean into all things digital, then the church often defaults to thinking about itself as a content product making machine.

You see this in the language of church leaders. It's really dangerous in my mind. I've seen so many videos.

I cite one in the book of really well-known nationally, globally known evangelical church leaders launching some sort of online thing where it's like an online app where you can get all their sermons and stuff. And you will hear them say the words like, you can get all of our content there. It's content.

There's so much content. Dig into it. To me, that's actually antithetical.

And I'm not saying we shouldn't listen to sermons. I'm just saying, excuse me, the idea of thinking about what we're creating as content is antithetical to the life of following Jesus. It has to be an invitation to participate.

Certainly we can say, we've got the sermon online. We'd love for you to listen to it. And then after you listen to it, there's gotta be something else, right? Discuss it in your group.

Here are some practices to try to implement in your life. But if we just put it out there, like, hey, there's great content here. That's the language of Amazon and Uber.

It's not the language of Christian discipleship. And I love Amazon and Uber, but that's not what I do. I'm grateful for those companies, but that's not what we're called to do, I believe, as church leaders and pastors.

One of the themes that you often return to is the importance of the body and embodied community and fellowship. And it seems to me that a lot of technology is about relieving us of the limitations of the body, the limitations of the presence and locality of the body, that it routes me to a particular place and limits me to that place in particular ways, whether that's ease of transport from one location to another, or whether it's communication across vast distances, whether it's the limitations of time and our situatedness in time, or the way in which being in the body makes me visible to other people, that they can judge me, that they can have access to me and do things in relationship to me that they wouldn't be able to do if I were not physically present. And the body maybe could be seen as the objectivity of the self, that by which I am made accessible to and exposed to other people and their actions, their judgments, their presence, and all these sorts of things.

And the possibility of technology is being relieved from the demands of my neighbor upon me by virtue of my bodily accessibility to them. How can we recapture something of the importance of the body? First of all, why does the body matter? And how can we move towards recapturing the body as integral to our worship in a digital age where people maybe become detached from it? Yeah, well, for me, I think to answer the question, why is the body important first and foremost, I mean, if we go to Genesis 1 and 2, a fascinating story, Genesis 2 in particular, God takes the literal stuff of earth and he makes humans. What an interesting and yet vitally important detail in the story, in the narrative, that God takes the dirt, like literally the earth, you know, Adamah, right? And he makes Adam, dirt, earth, you know, we're the stuff of earth.

There's a physicality to us and woman he creates from the side of man is the language. You know, we often see the translation as rib, but it actually means side, like literally one half of a man. So human beings are made from dirt and flesh.

I mean, that's essentially the language of the story, you know, and however you read the Genesis narratives, whether you think that it's whatever, totally literal or something else, the reality is that detail is in the narrative for a particular reason. And then you see that whole, that you just see that consistently over and over again. And I think for me, culminating in Christ, his last meal with his disciples.

I mean, I just think it's so fascinating that before his arrest and crucifixion, he shares the Passover meal with his disciples and he takes a moment in that meal. And these are like some of his final moments before he's going to go do the thing that he came to do. And

he could have left us with any sort of thing to remember him by, you know, he could have said, Hey, sing this song to remember me, or remember this story to remember me or whatever else.

And what does he do? He does the most physical, tactile, embodied, human thing, the most baseline analog reality of human experience. He eats with them and he drinks with them. You know, the very thing that keeps us alive.

The only other thing would have been breathing, but they were already breathing, you know, so he eats and he drinks with them. And then he asks us to remember him by those acts, you know, the sort of sustenance that comes from eating and drinking. So there's so much more to be said here.

I delve into it a little bit in the book, but you know, embodied reality matters because we are embodied creatures, physical, material experience matters because undeniably we are physical, material human beings. And, you know, there are probably some Christian transhumanists who would disagree with me, but, but I don't think no matter where technology takes us, I don't think that we will ever have truly human experiences outside of physical, tactile, embodied, human reality. You know, we can take virtual reality as far as it could possibly go, and that's fine and well and good, but the reality is that reality is virtual.

It's not truly reality. It's not human reality with complexities and limitations and all those things. And one of the key reasons why that matters is because to me, you know, in the resurrection, we are reminded of Christ, you know, that Christ has a bodily resurrection and that that's what awaits those who follow him.

You know, that famous Doubting Thomas story when Jesus shows up and Thomas is like, I don't know about this, like what's going on? Who are you? What does Jesus do? He says, touch me, like physical, tactile, you know? And in that moment, making the emphatic point that his resurrection, he didn't resurrect into some floating spirit in the ether somewhere. He had a body. Now it was a renewed body, a body of new creation, but interestingly enough, that body holds the scars and the wound marks of his death on the cross.

And man, if that's where the story is headed, if bodily resurrection is where the human story is headed for those who follow Jesus, then how could human experience be anything other than bodily? So that's why I think it matters so much. Yeah. Yeah.

There you go. When you talk about the experience of the church, one of the things that really struck me is the way that the movement away from an analog model of church puts us in the position increasingly of the spectator. And you talk about a sort of voyeuristic relationship to a spectacle and the way that that involves a sort of disengagement.

And there are other aspects, I think, of experience in the digital age, which is a degrading on both sides. You can think about the way that the sort of communication technology that we have in social media that we enjoy, it means that we're never fully alone, but we're never fully together either. It's this sort of degraded middle thing that's neither one nor the other.

How can we become more conscious, first of all, of the changes to our experience, the ways that we're relating to each other, thinking about ourselves, experiencing our day-to-day lives? And how can the church become a point at which that change becomes a change to that becomes more general within our lives? What a great question. I guess a practical tip would be, this has been helpful for me, is to, and we've sort of touched on it already, but I think it's so important to have sort of reminders or check marks somehow, some way throughout your day, throughout your incredibly digital day for most of us, to remind yourself, even to like disrupt your digital rhythms with a reminder that you're human. Now, this is like so pragmatic, but it might be as simple as, and this is challenging right now, but it might be as simple as just, you know, log into your calendar or your schedule, a walk in the middle of your day where you get up out of your chair and go walk, you know, take a walk outside and leave your phone behind or commit to leaving in your back pocket.

And don't, you know, don't take that beautiful Instagram photo of the tree as you're walking, just walk and enjoy, you know, and breathe and be human and pray. Meditate on scripture maybe as you walk, maybe take that walk and don't listen to a podcast and don't listen to, you know, don't continue the constant never-ending flow and stream of digital. And there are all sorts of other ways, you know, I think again, once COVID-19 and the coronavirus stuff finds its resolution and we're able to get together again, I think that is one of the most important things we can do, not just followers of Jesus, but all human beings to have moments where we can sit with others over a cup of coffee or a great meal or down at the pub or whatever it might be with our phones away, right? With our phones away, face-to-face and experiencing an extended period of time where we are connecting non-digitally.

And I think this is why the church has this great opportunity in my mind. The gathered worshiping life of the church offers that opportunity and opens up that invitation every week and more than every week, you know, at our church, at most churches, you might go to a worship gathering on Sunday, but then you've got, you know, a small group on Wednesday and other opportunities to connect. I just think that's why it matters so much.

The church continues to gather that way to pull us out of what you so astutely called that strange middle, you know, where we're never really alone, but we're never really truly connected. And the writer Sherry Turkle has this fantastic book and the title of her book alone is like worth the price. The title is Alone Together.

And that's it. You know, that is absolutely it. That's the reality in which we live.

And we need daily constant reminders to snap us out of that. And this is where habits and even ritual is so important. So that like, even in the gathered life of the church, even if you show up, I think as church leaders in particular, we have to start thinking about how we can invite participation when the people of God are gathered.

You know, what sort of movement is there in the gathering? Or is there any movement? Or are we just asking people to sit in the chair and watch something happen for an hour and a half? You know, those sorts of things we've got to think about. But the more embodied we can be, the more we can invite people to participate in embodied ways, the better. And the more we can put into our weekly schedules, participatory embodied experiences, the better, whether it's a walk with a friend or coffee, or lunch, or whatever it might be.

You mentioned even putting things in your schedule, the internet doesn't really have time, you don't feel the passage of the day in the same way. It's just always on. And something about keeping a schedule, keeping a calendar, I think alone can make a big difference.

Now, considering the time that we're in, in the middle of COVID-19, there are many churches that are asking the sort of questions that you deal with in your book with a great urgency. And it has an immediacy for people when they're having to meet over zoom, or they're to find some other way of connecting maybe with Facebook videos of the sermon or some other way to get around the fact that we are, by virtue of the situation, forced to be isolated from each other. And in this sort of context, it's not necessarily a substitution for our meeting together, it's more of a compensation for our inability to do so.

But how can this time be fruitfully used to, first of all, limit some of the deleterious ways in which a digital church can shape us, and also to maybe wean us off some of the ways it already has, and help us to think more carefully about the way that it, the possibilities that opens up, and also the things that it takes from us? How would you advise people to respond to this situation, to keep their eyes open, recognize what's going on, and to move forward as this crisis passes? It certainly is a strange time we're in. And I think you said it, I think that's the first thing I would suggest and encourage and implore people to do, particularly followers of Jesus, is to keep our eyes open. I think one of the most important things that can happen, and is already happening in this time of forced and necessary physical separation, is the heightening of our awareness and deep sense in our body and bones, that even though we have any and every digital tool necessary to stay somewhat connected, I'm using air quotes here, in this time of sheltering in place, we are growing increasingly aware, and it's only been a few weeks for most of us, a couple of weeks for some, for some like a week, you know, but already so many of us are

increasingly aware in our body and bones, that although we can see and hear one another across distances through our digital technologies, something is missing, something is off when this is all we have.

So I think keeping our eyes open, paying attention to that reality, and then thoughtfully considering what is happening in, again, in my embodied experience as a human being, what is happening when all of my connection to other human beings, maybe I've got a connection with my family that I'm, you know, I'm sheltering in place with, but with everybody else, man, something is off, something is missing, and this falls short. I think universally that is the feeling that people are already, that's the angst that is already rising for almost everybody I know, and it feels like globally that's the angst for so many. I was just reading a thing the other day about online fatigue, that already people are starting to experience online fatigue, that, and it makes all the sense in the world when we really think about it, because we were not designed to have our relationships primarily work like this over digital screens.

Again, these are helpful tools, but when this becomes the only thing, then something happens in us that feels less than whole, and I think we've got to pay attention to that. I think we have to start trying to put language to that, maybe even discuss that openly with one another, because then what it can do is when this passes, when this is over, that angst will become the fuel that launches us forward into a brighter future, a more, what I would call a more analog future, meaning a more embodied incarnational future together, where we do the hard, inconvenient work of showing up, because we realize that there's no substitute for it. I mean, the reality is this is far more convenient.

Like, in terms of convenience, it is way more convenient. I actually get more time in my day because I no longer have to drive, you know, 20 minutes or whatever to my office. I just wake up, have breakfast, do everything I would normally do, and then I save myself the 20 minutes of driving in, and I save myself the 20 minutes of driving home, and I can just jump right into work.

It's incredibly convenient. I can wear, you know, my pajamas down below, because you can't see, you know, like, it's so convenient, and yet almost all of us are collectively feeling like this is, I can't wait till this is over, and we could be in a room together. We have to pay attention to that, and I think that's going to be the fuel that launches us forward into the future, and there's so many other pragmatic things.

I mean, for church leaders, I think it's important that we communicate that our leaning into digital technologies right now is a temporary compromise and not an ongoing convenience, you know, and there's going to be lots of work we have to do to make sure that that is the case, and I'm not saying we get rid of digital technologies. I don't argue for that in the book at all, actually. I'm just saying leave digital technologies in their rightful place, and one of their rightful places is to be a supplemental tool in unexpected,

surprising seasons like this.

When we, for the common good, when we physically cannot and should not be together, then great. We have this supplemental tool, but when this is over, again, we have to put it in its rightful place. This is supplemental.

It can never replace the embodied, incarnational, physical, tactile, in-person experience of being the church. I found just thinking about many of the debates that people have been having at this time about whether the church can celebrate communion at a distance, those are important questions, and I think they challenge, first of all, the fact it doesn't seem as if we, certainly to me, it doesn't seem as if we can, and there's a time maybe we're supposed to recognize we're in a state of exile for a period of time from one of the things that makes the church, or that constitutes the good well-being of the church. We're experiencing the church still exists.

It hasn't ceased to exist, but the well-being of the church has been limited for a period of time, and that experience of exile, I think, can help us to recognize and name an absence that in time, Lord willing, we'll be able to return to within a few weeks or months and be able to enjoy all the more because we recognize the absence when it is lacking. Now, you talk about the fact you're not just rejecting technology as a whole or anything like that. Your book is not a Luddite tract or anything of that kind.

Rather, it seems to me that people who are a bit more critical about technology in some of the ways that you are tend to be more digitally literate than others, simply because they're thinking about it. They're stepping outside of it, reflecting upon it, seeing where it adds, where it takes away, how it influences us in different forms and in different contexts, and could you share something of the diagnostic tools that you bring to analyzing some technology? You mentioned McLuhan and others like that. How do you bring tools to bear upon the technologies that we have in a way that is receptive but also critically so? Yeah, that's a great question.

I'll just share one that I think is sort of the plumb line for me when it comes to thinking about digital technologies. As you said, I'm not a Luddite. I'm not arguing for everybody to throw anything digital away and just churn your own butter or something, although if you want to do that, that's wonderful.

There's several things I get into in the book, but I think the plumb line for me is this idea that digital can inform and even inspire, but informing and inspiring is just the means to a much greater end when it comes to following Jesus, and I think that end is not information but transformation, right? Those who follow Jesus are committing themselves to the lifelong process and participation in what the New Testament calls transformation. It's the Greek word metamorphou, which sounds because it has the same root as the English word metamorphosis, and when we hear the word metamorphosis, the reason that's a profoundly different word than just the simple

English word change is because change is a broad word. It can mean I'm just changing my pants, you know, like I'm wearing a different pair of jeans tomorrow than I did yesterday or something, but metamorphosis, it means something different, something much more at the core of the essence of something, right? We often think of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly.

That would be an example of a true metamorphosis where something just completely changes from one thing to the other. Well, that's the biblical word transformation, and that's what we're looking for. And I think transformation along those lines is, again, by its very nature analog.

It's embodied. It demands and requires the whole of us, literally the entirety of who we are, heart, mind, body, soul, strength, all of it. And so that's the plumb line for me.

You know, at our church, we leverage digital. We do. Certainly right now, we are leveraging all digital because we have to, but even before this COVID-19 crisis and after this is done, we'll still have a website.

We'll still have, you know, social media accounts. We still post some of our sermons online, but the way we filter our decision-making when it comes to those digital mediums is to ask the question, is the point of this to inform and to inspire? If it is, then sure, let's just go digital. That's great.

But if the point of this is to transform, that has to happen in person. Now, you might say, well, isn't the point of everything to transform? Absolutely. So what that means is that anything digital for us is always pointing to an analog embodied thing.

So we never put anything online that isn't pointing to a, please show up and be physically with us. Even our sermons, you know, we post those intentionally at a certain point after we don't live. Right now we're live streaming, but we never live streamed before and we likely will not live stream after because our whole goal is to invite people to actually join us.

And so if we create the substitute where they can just watch from home, that's sort of as antithetical to what we believe to be true, that the people of God should be physically gathering. At the same time, I do understand churches that live stream for different reasons. I do appreciate actually when a church, when somebody in your church is traveling, but they want to, you know, and they do show up, they want to stay connected, they don't want to miss it.

Yeah, that's a great supplemental way to use live streaming technologies and such. And in those cases, I think it's just important for the church to state it very clearly up front, you know, before the live stream goes on. Hey, we're glad you're watching online.

Maybe you're traveling, maybe you're in some other part of the world and you're just

checking things out. We would love for you to either be with us in person at some point soon if you're in the area, and if not, contact us and we'd love to try to help you find a local church in your area that you can be a part of. You know, it's a simple thing.

There's simple ways like that to make sure that we're offering our people a sort of robust understanding of what these digital technologies can do and what their limitations are. I think that's really important. I found one analogy that's been helpful for me has been thinking of digital technology very much as scaffolding.

It's something that enables you to build concrete things that you would not be able to build without it, but it's a terrible place to live and it's not something that's designed to be permanent. It's something that's existing for the more that we use that as a substitute for actual being in the building or the presence of each other, and the more we'll feel that our fellowship, our identities and all these sorts of things are attenuated as a result. One final question.

In the process of writing this book, what were some of the things that really you were left with at the end of it that maybe surprised you, some of the developments in your own thinking that you may not have been able to predict before you started? Yeah, that's a great question. I think probably the primary thing I was left with was real personal conviction. It's an interesting thing writing a book like this because, you know, it began with a simple idea, but the simple idea sort of grew over the course of a couple of years of writing into something much more robust and in some ways complex than I expected.

But I felt like to faithfully present these ideas, I had to take some of those ideas to their very end or as far as far as I could. I'm sure others will come along now and write more books about the church in the digital age. Some already have and I think more are coming and I'm grateful for that.

You know, if I'm going to be able to provide an ongoing dialogue, then I think this book will have done its work. But as I took things to their very end, you know, the small, simple ideas at the beginning were things that I felt like I had a handle on. But as those ideas grow, I realized, oh man, there are some of these things now that I have a strong conviction about this idea or this reality or this being a better future.

But I personally struggled to do that. I need to be more reflective and honest about how I'm engaging digital technology, one, in my own personal life, but two, as I serve and lead in the local church. So that was the most surprising thing.

And writing the book has impacted me in so many ways and our church, you know, and making some shifts and some changes. And that's been surprising, but it's been wonderful. So if the book can do even a small part of something like that in somebody else's life and somebody else's church, then I'll be really grateful.

Thank you very much for coming on. Yeah, absolutely. Thank you so much for having me on.

Jay's book is Analog Church, Why We Need Real People, Places and Things in the Digital Age. And where can people get your book? Yeah, just anywhere books are sold. So online, you know, Amazon or Christianbooks.com. I think those are big ones, at least here in the States and anywhere else or just InterVarsity Press's direct page is a good place to go.

Yeah, so it's anywhere books are sold. Thank you very much. God bless and thank you for listening.