

## Q & A



### **Analog Church**

*Why We Need Real People, Places, and Things in the Digital Age*

March 31, 2020 | \$18, 192 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4158-5

**Jay Y. Kim** is pastor of teaching and leadership at Vintage Faith Church in Santa Cruz, California. He also serves on the core leadership team of the ReGeneration Project and cohosts the ReGeneration Podcast. He lives in Silicon Valley with his wife and two children. Visit his website and read his blog at [jaykimthinks.com](http://jaykimthinks.com). Follow him on Twitter: @jaykimthinks.

## How the Digital Age Is Damaging the Church

**What kind of effect do you see technology having on the church today?**

**Jay Y. Kim:** I wrote this book to shed light on how the digital age is subtly and not-so-subtly damaging our ecclesiology. And in turn, I also wrote this book to offer a better path forward in hopeful and accessible ways. Having served in local church ministry for the past sixteen years, all spent in the Silicon Valley, the epicenter of the digital age, I've experienced firsthand the ways in which our reckless pursuit of technological and cultural relevance within so many of our churches is undoing much of what the Bible and two thousand years of Christian history have shown us about what it means to truly be the church. I believe that the church is always at her best and most missionally effective when she is zigging against the zagging ways of the dominant culture, and the most subversive thing we can do in the digital age is to lean heavily in analog realities.

**What is the message at the heart of *Analog Church*?**

**Jay:** Since its earliest days, the Christian church has been marked by its invitation into transcendence, not relevance. In the digital age, some of the most transcendent things we can do as the church are to gather when the world scatters, to slow down when the world speeds up, to commune when the world critiques. These approaches, over and above the technological savviness of video-venues, online services, brighter lights, and Instagrammable Bible verses, are what will lead us forward into the future.

**What key points to you hope to convey to your readers?**

**Jay:**

- Our unchecked pursuit of digital and technological relevance is actually leading to the loss of that which the church has always been able to uniquely offer the world—transcendence.
- The digital age is affecting the way we worship together, understand and experience community with one another, and engage the Scriptures. We must recognize and respond to this reality by course correcting in creative new ways.
- The strategy of reaching new generations by creating digitally and technologically “relevant” spaces is actually imploding, as new generations are apathetic at best and repelled at worst by the way churches so often come across as “style over substance.”
- At its heart, the church has been an analog reality all along, and our most effective way forward is to rediscover a timeless and enduring path.
- While the bright lights and big shows of national church conferences may seem to imply that “successful” churches look, sound, and feel a certain way, in reality, those serving and leading local churches—big and small—must begin to recognize, embrace, and lean into the unique, often untapped potential for creativity and missional effectiveness right in their midst.

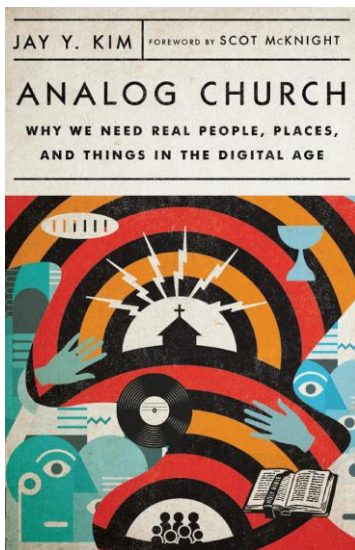


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As our culture begins to reckon with the limits of a digital world, it's time for the church to do the same. In our efforts to stay relevant in our digital age, have we begun to move away from transcendence? Pastor Jay Kim grapples with the ramifications of a digital church, from worship and Christian community to how we engage Scripture.

## The Church Can Provide What Technology Cannot

"Just as loving parents thoughtfully research the usage of technology and the impact it has on their children, church leaders must do the same for those Jesus entrusts us with. Too often we jump on the latest trends and whatever seems most attractive on the surface, without much thoughtful discernment. *Analog Church* is a wake-up call and asks us some tough, much-needed questions—whether our rush into the use of whatever new technology is available is helping or hurting people's understanding of God, worship, church, and themselves. In a digitally saturated world, where new generations are bombarded and immersed in the digital, we need to press into analog all the more. *Analog Church* shows us how."

—Dan Kimball, director of the ReGeneration Project, author of *They Like Jesus but Not the Church*

"Sometimes the best books about the future involve the ones that start with a look backward. In this very important work, Jay reminds us of God's vision for the church as the plumb line for how we view and leverage technology. In making digital the servant of analog we are moving in the right direction. Reversing the two leads us to something fundamentally different than the deep journey God has called all of us to. The church was always meant to be waiting for us when everything else failed to live up to our deep longing for transcendence. This book is the map to that."

—Nancy Ortberg, CEO of Transforming the Bay with Christ, author of *Looking for God*

"Jay Kim is a theological wizard. His writing is sharp without being cutting, pastoral while also prophetic, disruptive but not divisive. In other words, *Analog Church* doesn't just make for good content; it makes for good humans who are ready to trade relevancy for transformation. I can already think of a handful of leaders I want to pass it along to in holy passive aggressiveness or, better yet, love. On my list of things to do after reading it: 'To gather when the world scatters. To slow down when the world speeds up. To commune when the world critiques.'"

—Erin S. Lane, author of *Lessons in Belonging from a Church-Going Commitment Phobe*

"Pastors and church planters today face a bewildering variety of options and opinions about how to 'do church' in our contemporary, digital age. It's an age-old dilemma: When do our efforts to 'adapt' to a new cultural setting end up compromising what the Jesus movement has to offer the world? In this book Jay Kim offers a timely and poignant set of reflections that no ministry leader can afford to ignore."

—Tim Mackie, cofounder of The Bible Project

"We are clearly sitting within a technological and digital revolution—but a revolution against what? And to where? In this book, my friend Jay Kim serves us as a true pastor, showing us that this revolution is unparalleled in its spiritual implications. After reading this book, I have a much clearer understanding of how technology has shaped the church and

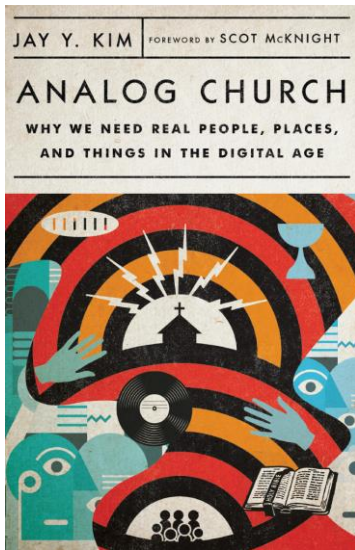


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how we can change. With an impressive bibliography, thoughtful exegesis of Scripture, and terrific prose, Kim shows us how the digital revolution requires an analog response—and why God’s church is the essential respondent.”

—Chris Nye, pastor and author of *Less of More: Pursuing Spiritual Abundance in a World of Never Enough*

“We’re at a point in history where churches are investing considerable amounts of time and money into the digital age. Jay carefully critiques this booming movement with eyes set on a direction far less attractive and all too necessary—detaching more from digital technology and stepping back into patient communion with God and one another. *Analog Church* is not another call to gather the masses and burn it all down but a compelling and, I believe, prophetic invitation to reorient our values to reflect the spiritually enriching practices of generations past. Jay paints us a wonderful picture of life ahead, if we are willing to adjust, where we are faithfully connected to the digital age without being controlled by it.”

—Zach Bolen, songwriter, producer, and frontman of *Citizens*

“At a time when so many are despairing over the declining attendance and lack of engagement in our local churches, I cannot wait to give this book to usher in some hope! Jay Y. Kim describes how we can lean into what the church is uniquely poised to provide—transformation, community, and shared moments of wonder and awe. I closed the book grateful for a sense that, with God’s help, we can do this!”

—Nancy Beach, leadership coach with the Slingshot Group, author of *Gifted to Lead: The Art of Leading as a Woman in the Church*

“In *Analog Church*, Jay Kim rings a bell. He sounds an alarm warning us of the potential dangers inherent in our increasingly disengaged digital age. But he also sounds an invitation—like a distantly familiar dinner bell—calling us back to the transcendent presence of God and the warmth of deeply rich communal life in the Kingdom. I resonate deeply with both these sentiments, and I believe you will too.”

—Manuel Luz, author of *Honest Worship and Imagine That*

“It’s a grave miscalculation for the church today to think relevance depends on the ability to keep up with the pace, gloss, and hype of our technological world. Our frenetic, fidgety age does not need a frenetic, fidgety church. Our Insta-perfect, polished age does not need a photoshopped, inauthentic church. Our tech-weary world does not need a tech-obsessed church. Jay Kim’s *Analog Church* understands this, presenting a compelling case for the church’s most radical act in today’s world: not to be a trendy, shape-shifting, chameleonic copycat, but to be a transcendent Christ-centered community whose difference from the world is why it makes a difference.”

—Brett McCracken, senior editor at The Gospel Coalition and author of *Uncomfortable: The Awkward and Essential Challenge of Christian Community*

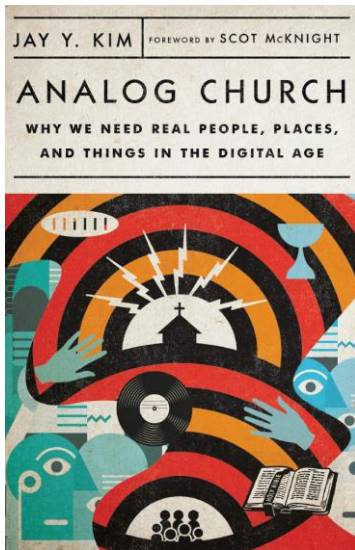


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"In his book *Analog Church*, Jay raises important questions and addresses crucial issues for the church in a digital age. Instead of continuing to adapt and acquiesce, he calls us to come out of hiding from behind our digital walls, to bridge digital divides, and to be human with one another in real time, real space, and real ways. He invites us to move beyond relevance to transcendence. And it is a welcome invitation!"

—Ruth Haley Barton, founder of the Transforming Center, author of *Life Together in Christ*

"How do you keep real people and genuine fellowship in a virtual world? Jay Kim wrestles brilliantly with the issues and realities of the march to utilize digital technologies both inside and outside the building. *Analog Church* is an essential resource for churches seeking to use digital technologies without falling prey to the disastrous distortions that come to thoughtless adopters."

—Gerry Breshears, professor of theology at Western Seminary, Portland, Oregon

"In our media-saturated age, what we need more than ever is not relevance so much as transcendence. In *Analog Church*, Jay Kim asks the right questions about our use of technology as churches, regardless of whether one lands with every conclusion, that can help us move from the digital emphasis on information to the biblical emphasis on transformation, from our preferences to others' presence, and from mere communication to the majesty of communion—together as the flesh-and-blood people of God."

—Joshua Ryan Butler, pastor of teaching and direction at Redemption Church, Tempe, author of *The Skeletons in God's Closet*

"With wisdom and grace, Jay Kim urges the church to consider the ramifications of the digital age. Without noticing it, we quickly become content with efficiency over intimacy, convenience over transcendence, and results over transformation. *Analog Church* invites us to slow down, to breathe deeply of the human connectedness that we were designed to experience in our communal search for God. This book isn't an invitation to join a sectarian group forsaking all things modern or digital but instead illuminates a relevant, ancient pathway into the profound beauty and mystery of God. I highly recommend this book!"

—Kurt Willems, pastor, author, and podcaster at [TheologyCurator.com](http://TheologyCurator.com)

"Perhaps now more than ever, the church can offer a radical alternative to a digital world. In *Analog Church*, Jay Kim calls us to a greater sense of self-awareness and reminds the bride that she is drastically different, beautiful, and real. Jay opens our imaginations to see a unique, gritty, personal, and embodied path—the path toward transcendence, not relevance."

—Tara Beth Leach, senior pastor of PazNaz, Pasadena, California, and author of *Emboldened*



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