

Although new media is a window into the value system of the emerging church, it is not a mandate that all emerging churches excel in the use of new media. There are plenty of emerging churches that focus on simplicity and base their meetings around a meal in a house, rather than a technologically savvy performance.

Andrew Jones

It is usually the integration of old and new media that allow emerging churches to form and grow. Convergence is better than negligence or overemphasis on one particular technology.

Andrew Jones

The new technologies are not replacing our traditional forms of church but they are allowing our concept and experience of church to take on a radically different shape. Many forms of emerging church are native to the new culture, rather than reworked models of traditional church. There are exceptions, of course, especially as we transition for a world of old media to new media and our forms of communication and organization begin to stabilize.

Andrew Jones

Our world is more like the early Renaissance with its interest in historical memory, and humble experimentation of media than the late Renaissance/Mannerist period typified by exaggeration, extremism and rejection of continuity.

Andrew Jones

The minds of the emerging generation are being shaped by the computer screen more than the television screen. We see things in layers and loops and links and labyrinths. We do not see new things replace old things (like video clips in a linear movie) but we see them find their place in nested layers. We expect motion and navigability. We distrust anything static. Emerging churches reflect this.

Andrew Jones

“The challenge of being the church in a ”postmodern, post-Christian, post-Western“ culture... should be a opportunity that we do not shy away from . We came up with Good News For Modern Man. Lets do it again with Good News for postmodern, post-Western people.”

Andrew Jones

“In Modernity, we tried to transcend time and space. ”Modernity“, said Anthony Giddens, is ”precisely the transmutation of time and space.“

Modern theologians and missiologists, just like other social scientists of their day, were guilty of abandoning history and geography in their attempt at creating or translating universal truths. Pastors developed ministry programs to be universally appropriate in any place or time. Even much of the argument today about modernism vs. postmodernism happens in ”empty space“, in the world of abstract theory and not in the real world of people, events, lifestyles and culture. Postmodernism interrupted the abstract time and space of modernity.”

Andrew Jones

This has affected the way we experience reality, and the way we do church. We are far more open to the past, more aware of the present (and less infatuated with the future). We celebrate the moment and redeem the time. We are more committed to the local space, the ground, of where we minister. We are less abstract, more real, and more authentic, more holistic. We are also more suspicious of our own singular attempts to describe mystery and less likely to place faith in people over God. There is less static worship performed from a stage and more dynamic alternative worship that involves motion - — worship in navigable space — like stations in a 24-7 prayer room, or labyrinths, pilgrimage, or prayer walking. Preaching involves greater accountability and feedback, and is more aware of the potential to abuse.

Andrew Jones

“It is not so much about conflicting philosophies but more about conflicting EXPERIENCES of reality. The Enlightenment thinkers like Newton insisted our world was held together with absolute time and absolute space.

Later scientists showed that time and space were elusive and relative. Part of finding our feet in postmodernity has to do with reconnecting with time and space, with history and geography, with ground and moment. Time feels shorter. Space seems smaller. The world is more connected.

“Time's Arrow” no longer flies straight.”

Andrew Jones

This “time-space compression” is a felt reality, rather than an actual one. The world hasn't really changed and daylight savings hasn't really made our curtains fade. What is changing is how we deal with it, the concepts and constructs we use to describe the differing experiences. But the experience itself is real. Very real.

Andrew Jones

I see three distinct stages in the postmodern transition that new churches go through in order to find a balanced approach to life and ministry.

1. A de-constructive phase characterized by the prefix “post-” eg, Post-colonial.
2. An explorative phase characterized by the prefix “re-” eg, Remash
3. A constructive phrase characterized by the prefix “con-” eg, Convergence

Its unfortunate that the early deconstructive stage (1970's and 80's) was used to characterize the movement than the more constructive or intuitive stages that preceded.

Andrew Jones

“Emergent”, as it is used in “emergent theory”, is a name given to the phenomena of how new organizational structures progress from low-level chaos to higher level sophistication without a hierarchical command structure. Emergent theory explains how birds change direction, how slime mould moves, how ant colonies are built and how Amazon.com knows so much about us. The process involves constant communication and feedback among the lowest level of organization, pattern recognition, local action affecting global behavior, and takes into consideration the element of unpredictability in a chaotic system. Solomon was wise in suggesting that we observe the ways of the ant and be wise (Proverbs 6:6) And the emerging church has been wise in allowing the vocabulary from emergent behavior to give a window of insight to the traditional church.

Andrew Jones