

We live in the midst of inescapable **change**. Maybe this thrills you. Maybe this scares you.

We can't pretend **cultural** change doesn't impact the church. It does. It always has.

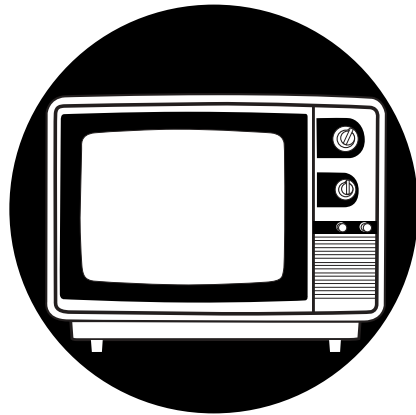
The challenge for churches is the rise of a **creative**, participatory, inclusive culture.

The role of the church is to live as a **participant** in the culture.

Inclusion, participation, **collaboration**, and beauty are essential values.

**Living** in the Inventive Age is not optional.

We can either be in on the **change** or we can be left behind.



**DOUG PAGITT** is the founder of Solomon's Porch, a holistic missional Christian community in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is author of numerous groundbreaking books and host of a weekly radio show. Doug speaks and consults on issues of postmodern culture, social systems, and Christianity.

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

ISBN 978-1-4514-0085-4



9 781451 400854

5 1499



SPARK  
HOUSE

CHURCH IN THE INVENTIVE AGE

DOUG PAGITT



# CHURCH IN THE INVENTIVE AGE

DOUG PAGITT

CHRISTIANITY NOW SERIES

# CHAPTER 1

## DEFINING OUR RELATIONSHIP

THE FUTURE IS THE SAME AS THE PAST, RIGHT UP UNTIL THE POINT WHEN IT ISN'T.

—DOUG PAGITT

Authors are often told that a book should build a relationship between the writer and the reader. So here we are, starting a relationship.

It's a rather strange relationship to be sure. I'm going to do all of the talking. I don't know you but I'm going to take my best guess so I can talk about the work you do. I'm assuming you are a church leader of some kind—a pastor, a ministry leader, or one of the saints among us who puts energy into your church without pay. Maybe you're reading this book for a class or because you are on an elder board and someone told you to read it. Maybe you've just picked it up because it's short and you need something to read on your flight. Maybe you've read other things I've written or maybe you've never heard of me.

There are enough variables in this relationship that I think we should start it with some straight talk about what this book is and what it isn't, what I'm up to as I write and what I hope you'll do as you read.

I am making one point in this book: The United States is in its fourth cultural age, the Inventive Age. Every cultural age has four components: how people think, what they value, a collection of aesthetic preferences, and a set of tools by which people do what they need to do. Today's churches need to decide how they want to fit into the Inventive Age and develop the components needed to live well.

I am going to throw out big ideas and move fast. This isn't a book in which I tell you what to think. It's a book in which I raise issues in order to make you think about the future of the church. I want this book to leave you with questions, to get your head spinning a bit. I want it to lead you into new conversations with the people in your church. I want to give you the language and categories to move into the future with a clear sense of who you are and where you're going.

It won't take you long to read this book. The average person reads between 200 and 250 words per minute. That means the average person could get through this book in

## **I'M GOING TO THROW OUT BIG IDEAS AND MOVE FAST.**

about two hours. But I hope you spend far more time talking about the suggestions in the book than you do reading about them. I hope you'll spend more time putting your ideas into play than you do learning about my ideas.

As you'll see in a moment, the Inventive Age is all about collaboration and creativity. This book is my way of collaborating with you, of inspiring you to create a faith community that can thrive in our changing culture.

I can't wait to see where this relationship takes us.