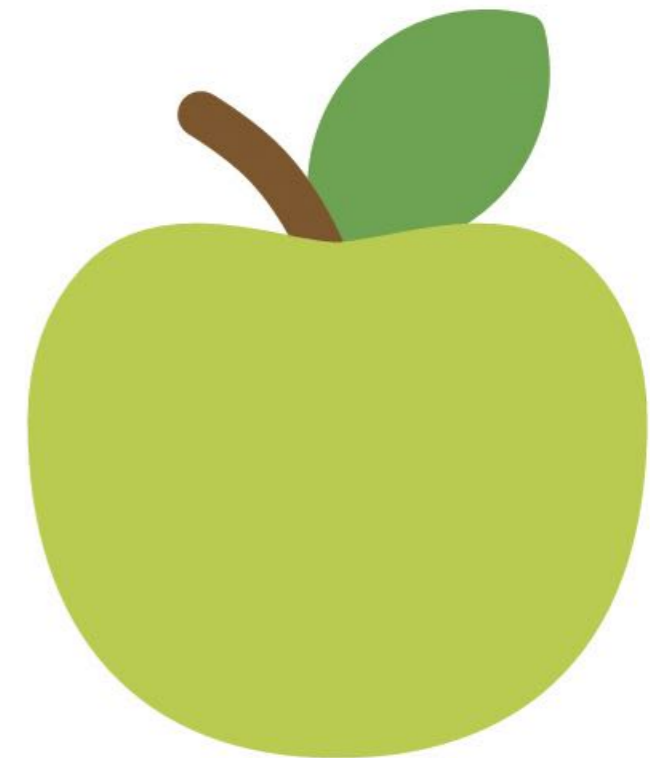


# **A New Kind of Christianity**

## 21. Living the Question in Community



**“Our quest will probably be a lot easier for people who engage it in ten years’ time, easier because some of us have pioneered the early paths and taken the brunt of the first rounds of unfriendly fire from people who, like Gamaliel’s colleagues, want to ‘keep it from spreading further among the people’ (Acts 4:17).”**

McLaren, Brian D.. *A New Kind of Christianity: Ten Questions That Are Transforming the Faith* (p. 242). (Function). Kindle Edition.

# Our Quest

Have you seen this kind of thinking?

- I know Lois has and I both have
- The AG has become a walled garden and their flavor of Orthodoxy is used like a weapon to distinguish themselves from us.

# Our Quest

## What is our Quest?

- What are we attempting to do by following the Holy Spirit in Community?
- There is a sort of “intellectual and theological suffering (242)” that comes with our emergence into a new layer of life in Christ.
- With the abandonment of old prejudices and adoption of all the people God has made, we are finding ourselves in a community of grace.

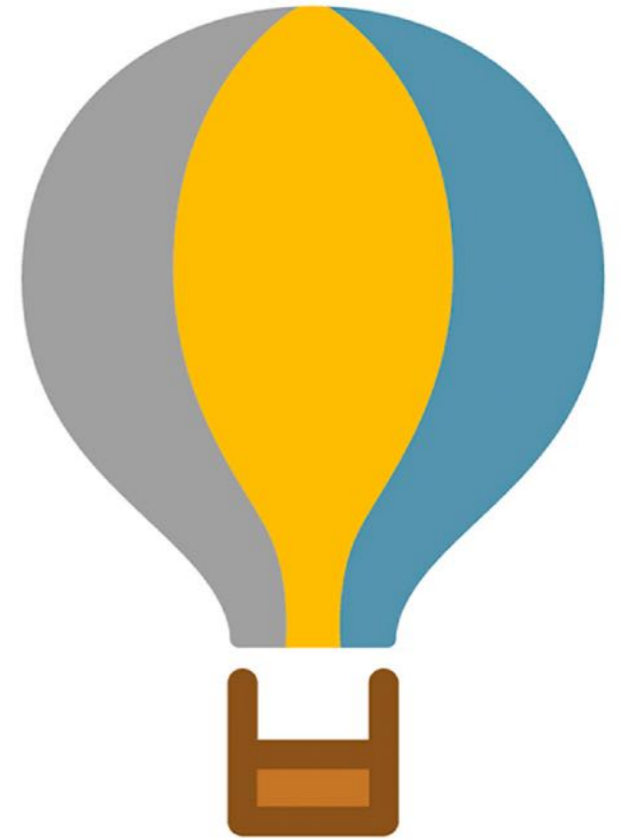
# Hold in Tension Two Things

The courage to differ & the grace to differ graciously

- “I’m far less disappointed in the number of people who are disinterested in or opposed to this quest than I am amazed by the number of people who are dying to join in the journey. (243)”
- “New perspectives must also be interpreted, translated, and incarnated into our work, our economics, our politics, our recreation, and even our church lives. In this way, our quest will be translated into action that counts, and that translation process is a communal activity, not a solo sport. (244)”

# **Five Questions of analysis**

**Question Five,  
eight bits of  
practical  
advice.**



# Question 1

## What Should I Do?

- A wise older friend once told me, “Don’t ever reject anybody. But if they reject you, be gracious and don’t stay where you’re not wanted. That’s rude, and love isn’t rude. (245)”
- Exit from ET . . .

## **Question 2**

What if my thinking and values have changed?

- Have a conversation with the pastor and offer to leave if the quest is more than the church can bear.

# Question 3

Is my congregation interested?

- Don't force the transition:
  - Bless the people and don't try to lead or challenge them until you have truly blessed them.
  - Better to go elsewhere and join or start something different than to waste your time and theirs in something that they simply aren't ready for.

# Question 1

What if our church isn't open?

- “Around the world in recent years, I’ve met many people who begin planting new churches, but in the process discover that the word ‘church’ just carries too much baggage. So, instead, they form what I call faith communities. (246)”

## Question 5

If our church is open, what do we do?

- Get a consultant.
- Build new parastructures to foster new approaches to faith . . .
- Spiritual immigrants are important, cross denominational fertilization of practices and ideas.
- Keep the old and add to it, not revolution, but new shoots on the old vine.
- Fighting institutions creates new institutions by accident with its own errors. (We wrestle not . . . .)

## Question 5 (cont.)

If our church is open, what do we do?

- The Bible is not a closed book, but a staircase.
- Abductive experience & listening teams
- Facing the institutional church, only the strong on the quest for change will survive, strong because the Holy Spirit is guiding them. This is a test of the new path. Humility is the watchword. This is a biblical pattern.
  - Christianity is an experiment. There will be failures and successes. We should not take ourselves too seriously.