James Samuel Logan. *Good Punishment? Christian Moral Practice and U.S. Imprisonment.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008; Paul Redekop. *Changing Paradigms: Punishment and Restorative Discipline*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2008.

In *Changing Paradigms* and *Good Punishment?* Paul Redekop and James Logan respectively have added to the steadily growing literature on punishment. Whereas Logan concentrates his acumen on the prison-industrial complex and its societal harm, Redekop looks at how alternatives to punishment can be lived out in the criminal justice system, family life, and educational systems. He presents research showing that using corporeal punishment on children is more often harmful than not. Moreover, even non-corporeal punishments such as yelling or severe criticism can be equally as damaging as hitting.

In the latter part of his book, Redekop attempts to answer some biblical and theological arguments that pacifist parents use to justify using violence as punishment at home. For example, he posits that they use "literalist interpretations of select Bible passages" to justify corporeal punishment (185). Yet, he argues, by punishing in God's name, these parents impart a malformed theology of God's judgment and wrath – one in which the child's will is broken by a parents who use their power to violently enforce God's law and the parents' whims. (To borrow concepts from Logan's book, the parents humiliate and degrade their children to show who is superior and who is inferior.) According to Redekop, this can create personality issues in children who are taught to obey parents and see their punishment as an act of God. This in turn can create a tendency to being people-pleasers and to passive aggressiveness.

Thus, based on his extensive experience within the restorative justice field, Redekop concludes we cannot justify punishment on a moral or a utilitarian basis. Families, churches, and the Canadian and American criminal justice systems should orient around restorative justice principles, and restorative justice should replace rather than supplement the current retributive system (74).

Replacing retribution with restorative justice is a goal that Logan would

surely sympathize with. In *Good Punishment*, he thoroughly examines the increased incarceration rate within the United States and the ways retributive practices degrade and humiliate both the individuals and the communities of which they are a part. Logan also details the widespread effects of mass incarceration on families and communities of color in particular, and the breakdown of social cohesion that results.

Logan focuses on how structural racism plays a part in making non-white skin synonymous with criminality and thus scapegoats entire communities. By scapegoating individuals and communities of color, society inscribes a white supremacy onto itself, allowing people to feel good about what they are not. This runs against the grain of Christian practices of forgiveness, penance, and reconciliation, and therefore must be shaken off in the Christian community and denounced. In Christian theology, every person is a sinner and thus shares a very deep connection with other sinners. Not only do people who sin and get caught need forgiveness, the entire community always stands in need of forgiveness.

Working out from Christian community to the non-Christian world, Logan skillfully shows how the conditions of society create crime so that both the "criminal" and the society that creates conditions making crime attractive need repentance and forgiveness. Indeed, it is crucial for white people especially to understand how they need to be forgiven for creating the conditions under which some people are left so degraded and humiliated that their "choices" to get into crime are already conditioned by the structural racism of American society. Thus in Logan's framework, criminality is not merely the problem of morally deficient individuals but a problem with which all of us must come to terms.

If all members of American society must reckon with the massive problem of imprisonment, theologians have not seemed to notice. Logan finds very few theologians have taken up the task of critically examining the "social costs of imprisonment on such a large scale" (7). Too often white theologians in particular have proposed theories for policing and prisons that do not take into account how much race matters in how one views the entire criminal justice system. For support and as his primary dialogue partner, Logan draws upon Stanley Hauerwas's theology on church practices of penance and forgiveness and the ways they help Christians remember sin

rightly as something of which we all must be forgiven by God. Logan uses Hauerwas's idea of "ontological intimacy" and asks how it could be brought to bear on the problem of mass incarceration beyond telling the system not to kill. He thus pushes Hauerwas to deepen his thought to examine how Christian practices might help resist and change the way American society handles, views, and practices punishment. It is a welcome and sorely needed discussion that demonstrates Logan's respect for, and challenges to, Hauerwas's basic agenda.

In the final pages Logan suggests how Christian "ontological intimacy" could shape public debates on crime and prisons. For example, he recommends Michael Parenti's call for "less policing, less incarceration, shorter sentences, less surveillance, fewer laws governing individual behaviors, and less obsessive discussion of every lurid crime, less prohibition, and less puritanical concern for 'freaks' and deviants" (234). He then recommends "decarceration" and Angela Davis's work on prison abolition. I would also add the good work of Critical Resistance, a national organization working against the prison-industrial complex, which has even established "no police" zones in Brooklyn, New York.

Both Redekop and Logan provide challenges to Christians, particularly Mennonites, to find new ways to work for more consistent peacemaking practices within the church and for using those practices as models for society. Particularly when it comes to race, Logan shows that we white theologians and ethicists cannot afford to theorize about policing as if our social location and our skin color are inconsequential. If our proposals for dealing with "crime" are not grounded in a thorough look at race, we have just added to the problem rather than helped to resolve it. Redekop's book shows us that working toward societal renewal makes little sense if we are not practicing nonviolence in our lives in deep and sustaining ways. How we treat our children, for example, matters a great deal. I found both of these volumes enriching and challenging, and I will return to them in the years ahead as I work on these issues.

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Walter Klaassen and William Klassen. *Marpeck: A Life of Dissent and Conformity*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2008. Neal Blough. *Christ in our Midst: Incarnation, Church and Discipleship in the Theology of Pilgram Marpeck.* Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2007.

For those interested in the remarkable career and enduring significance of Pilgram Marpeck, these two books constitute a watershed in Marpeck studies – presenting earlier research, contributing new data and perspectives, and inviting future scholarship and reflection.

There could be no better prepared biographers than Klaassen and Klassen, who translated Marpeck's known writings in 1978, spurring a renaissance of interest in him by a new generation of students and scholars. Following a chronological trajectory of his career, the authors' narrative illuminates important aspects of Marpeck's work in relation to his historical context. Examples include his technological expertise and relationship to the civil governments in Strasbourg, St. Gall, and Augsburg; the various audiences and arguments of his three Strasbourg publications; and his position regarding women and their roles in the Anabaptist movement. Two appendices provide excellent guidance in reading Marpeck's extended *Response* (*Antwort*) to Caspar Schwenckfeld and the disparate collection of writings called the *Kunstbuch*.

As reflected in the title, *Marpeck: A Life of Dissent and Conformity*, Klaassen and Klassen characterize Marpeck as "a dissenter to injustice and a conformist to the highest human values" (Klassen and Klassen [hereafter K&K], 22). As a dissenter, Marpeck defied the Constantinian domination of people's lives and faith either by traditional, feudal ruling elites (Charles V and Ferdinand I) or by newer, urban elites (city councilors, such as Strasbourg's Jakob Sturm). As a conformist, he strove to build communities of mutual respect from the bottom up, including miners and laborers as well as those of noble birth. Affirming personal sovereignty in matters of faith and ethics, he rejected coercion in matters of faith and violence as a means to settle differences.

Marpeck's position on the various oaths common to the period reflects these dual tendencies. Refusing to split "religious realities into inner and outer, spiritual and material," Marpeck believed the gathered Body of Christ

must "affirm joy and make peace and justice available not just to members of the kingdom of God but to all humanity" (K&K, 353). Recognizing the claims on him by others outside the conventicle, Marpeck directed "public works projects in various cities, resulting in the direct improvement in people's living and working conditions" (K&K, 352). Therefore, while he rejected oaths that required the use of deadly force, he embraced those that acknowledged his responsibilities to the well-being of those in or outside the Body of Christ.

In these and other areas, Klaassen and Klassen effectively synthesize earlier scholarship and lay the foundation for further investigations.

Blough's fine book is a re-working of *Christologie anabaptiste. Pilgram Marpeck et l'humanité du Christ* (Geneva, 1984), the French publication of his dissertation. The author has substantially revised four chapters of the earlier book and introduces three new ones (*Exposé of the Babylonian Whore*, Salvation and Ethics, Incarnation, Church and Discipleship).

Blough focuses on four areas in which Marpeck makes creative contributions to his communities and to theology more generally: authority within the church, the link between internal and external dynamics of faith, the connection between justification and sanctification, and the relationship of church and state. Along with other reformers, Marpeck insists on an Christological reading of Scripture. However, his Christology – focused on a persecuted gathered community of believers – led to a theological position more critical of the use and abuse of power by ecclesiastical and civil authorities than magisterial reformers. Combining a "Lutheran sacramental logic" emphasizing the external, physical media of grace with "an almost Calvinist understanding of the 'real' (though) spiritual presence," Marpeck affirms "the visibility of the church and a communal Spirit-filled presence that reflected the humanity of Christ in the world" (Blough, 22).

By refusing to separate justification from sanctification, Marpeck, according to Blough, was truer to the positions of Augustine of Hippo and much of the medieval church than was Luther. His insistence on justification by faith and that "infused grace" flows not through institutional sacraments *ex opere operato,* but as a direct gift of the Holy Spirit, places him closer to Protestant views. The inherent connection of justification to sanctification

led Marpeck to criticize the social and political quietism of many under the sway of Luther's justification by faith alone. According to Blough, Marpeck believed that the "victory of resurrection over the forces of evil and the subsequent sending of the Holy Spirit" brings not only "forgiveness and reconciliation" but also empowers disciples in the present for such things as feeding the hungry and the "confrontation of false theological, political or ethical options." The gathered community of believers is Christ's humanity continuing to act in history (Blough, 220, 226).

Emphasizing the cross of Christ and the non-coercive nature of the Holy Spirit, Marpeck rejected the use of the sword in matters of faith, whether wielded by the Anabaptists at Münster, the princes of the Schmalkaldic League, or Charles V. Believers are empowered to follow Christ and are "transformed collectively in his image," thereby constituting the "unglorified" body of Christ, which is sent "into the world to take on the same form as Jesus of Nazareth, the form of self-giving and nonviolent love" (Blough, 220).

For the reader interested in the intersection of Christian faith, ecclesial life, the common good, and the state, an image emerges from these books of a position that may be of help today. Marpeck's theological posture, informed by his familiarity with intellectual streams of the day and by his experience in civil government, balanced a responsive and responsible engagement of others (within and without the conventicle) and a healthy, critical distance from and leverage against the strategies of domination employed by ruling elites by means of ecclesiastical mechanisms of a sacerdotal priesthood or ministrations of a state-supported evangelical clergy. Those strategies, as Marpeck had seen first-hand, did little to vitalize the church or promote the common good; in fact, they served to disrupt both.

Klaassen and Klassen catalog Ferdinand I's persistent attempts, through threats of deadly force, to impose a catholic uniformity throughout the empire. They, along with Blough, present Marpeck's vision of voluntary communities committed to mutual spiritual, social, and economic service and struggling to free themselves from the deadening virus of domination spread by such ecclesiastical practices as infant baptism. These voluntary communities are, at once, more likely to see most clearly the forces that distort human life and freer to resist them, though nonviolently. I quibble,

therefore, with Klaassen and Klassen when they say:

> But Marpeck was politically quite traditional. He upheld the legitimate authority of emperors, kings, and councils for the maintenance of social order. He had no vision for a new social order or political order such as was held by the Anabaptists of Münster in Westphalia or by John Calvin. But he believed in the autonomy of God's kingdom in the midst of the kingdoms of this world, and he devoted himself to that vision. (K&K, 26)

Marpeck did give qualified support to civil authorities as they regulated the exchange of goods and services necessary for the flourishing of an interdependent humanity. However, his commitment to the autonomy of small, voluntary communities of mutual support and discipline led to the possibility of a new, more just social and political order. That order, in his view, could not be imposed by force as in Münster and Geneva, but it could grow and spread as others were drawn to it. For him, the Kingdom of God – no matter what the next world may hold – was intended to be manifest in this one.

In that vein, Blough asserts, "only an internationally embodied Gospel can combat the disparities of wealth and privilege" in the world. Therefore, to increase the social resources available for the struggle against those disparities, Blough urges Mennonites to engage "other traditions and theologies" in a "catholic" effort to address them. His explorations of Marpeck's use of "traditional theological categories of Incarnation and Trinity" offers entry points for the possibility of ecumenical collaboration for a more just and peaceful world. It is a call consistent with the spirit of the Marpeck whom all three authors offer to us.

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Brian J. Mahan, Michael Warren, and David F. White. *Awakening Youth Discipleship: Christian Resistance in a Consumer Culture.* Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008.

"How should the Church engage young people in vital partnership with Christ, as Christ's disciples in the contemporary world?" Mahan, Warren, and White contend this question needs to be asked anew with the "scandalous beauty and sublimity of the gospel, as well as its power to challenge business as usual" in mind (xi).

According to these authors, the single greatest identifier of our culture is consumerism, with concomitant identifiers such as militarism and moralism. If the church is going to form young people to into "the way of Jesus and the social practices intrinsic to Christian discipleship," it needs to repent from both the domestication of Jesus and the domestication of adolescence (19). "Communitarian-narrativists" such as Alasdair MacIntyre, Stanley Hauerwas, and John Westerhoff have brought to the fore the need for Sabbath-keeping, hospitality, forgiveness, and testimony. However, to these practices of *anamnesis* (right remembering) something crucial needs to be added: practices of *ascesis* (right resistance or right-restraint) (xii).

A highlight of the book is the first essay in Part I, where White provides a trenchant, Foucault-like account of the "abstraction" of youth since the onset of the industrial era. Broadly characterized by fragmentation and alienation, negative effects include fragmentation of families, erosion of traditional formation such as apprenticeships, displacement of religious moral formation by the media, and reduction and objectification of adolescence to sexual and physical energy. In our present "postmodern consumer culture," White sees the failures of consumer capitalism as extended adolescence, evaporation of the middle class, loss of meaningful employment, criminalization of youth, declining ability for creative and critical thinking, exploitation of youth by the entertainment industry, and ultimately, inhibition of human flourishing and flourishing of the Kingdom of God (3-19).

In the second essay, White introduces "practices of resistance" that enable youth to do the kind of social, cultural, and economic analysis necessary for responding fully to God's call upon their lives. These practices

include critical questioning, engaging in theater and games, and the dialectical practice of "coding and decoding," based on the work of Paulo Freire (21-37).

In Part II, Warren imagines what an "inconvenient church" might look like if we sought fidelity to the Good News and to Jesus, if the Eucharist became a prototype of Christian assembly, and if all advocated for human dignity as Jesus did. These three convictions would uncloak the individualistic and mechanistic portrayal of adolescence that has become necessary for the "production of desire" in a consumer culture (41-73).

Mahan's essays in Part III offer practical suggestions for exposing cultural scripts which define "success" in consumerist terms and surreptitiously plant seeds of suspicion and resentment regarding counter-cultural interpretations of Scripture. Mahan proposes "sacred commiseration" as a practice of "ongoing examination of conscience … to uncover and study *in detail* the personal and collective constraints" of living out Gospel ministry, drawing on wisdom from the Psalms, the Desert Fathers, and, more recently, Thomas Merton (77-106).

In a sea of popularly written books repackaging strategies for reaching middle-class youth and perpetuating the cultural status quo, one strength of this volume is that it radically challenges models of youth ministry geared around entertainment and social events. Another strength is that the authors engage a wide array of academic resources, including the philosophy of Charles Taylor, the psychology of Erik Erikson, the theology of Martin Buber, the hermeneutics of Walter Brueggemann, and Scripture itself. Third, it is consistent with a theology of the church which is Christocentric and ecclesiocentric rather than personality-driven or issue-driven.

Three weaknesses of the book are perhaps endemic to the task of lifting up *ascesis*. First, a more robust account of the relationship between *ascesis* and *anamnesis* is called for. Resistance and narrative are best understood as cyclical, continually informing each other, especially since it is "right remembering" that provides the Christian with clues about *what* to resist. Second, a danger emerges in which resistance becomes simply being "anti" something and thereby still negatively bound to the old center. Themes such as love of God and neighbor, or long-term discipleship, are offered as the new center, but the authors do not sufficiently spell out what

these look like in contemporary culture. A third weakness follows, namely that the concepts of church and culture need to be more fully developed and the relationship between the two clarified.

While the authors' intended audience are people who engage in Christian formation with youth (pastors, parents, sponsors, and educators), this book will be appreciated by all who share the authors' conviction that something drastically problematic in our culture is inhibiting the Christian's ability to love God and neighbor.

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Paul Alexander. *Peace to War: Shifting Allegiances of the Assemblies of God*. C. Henry Smith Series 8. Telford, PA: Cascadia, 2009.

Paul Alexander's *Peace to War* is likely to bring a sea-change in the way the Pentecostals view their past. The Pentecostal phenomenon is huge, so Alexander limits himself to surveying the approaches to war of his own denomination, the Assemblies of God. His approach is methodical, but it is not hard to detect his commitments, and his awareness that Grant Wacker (*Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Harvard University Press, 2001) and other historians of Pentecostalism are looking over his shoulders. As Alexander reads its periodicals, pamphlets, and denominational resolutions, he notes a gradual shift that is vastly slower than Wacker asserts. Instead of a shift from the movement's original pacifism that took place within two years as Americans participated in World War I, Alexander finds one that took place over fifty years and culminated in 1967.

Early Pentecostalism, according to the author, was rooted in the primal spiritual experiences of Spirit-gifted worship and the expectation of Christ's imminent return. It also was grounded in a deep devotion to the teachings and way of Jesus Christ. These led many early Pentecostals to a

"crucifist" approach to life that expressed itself both in heroic missionary self-sacrifice and in Christ-centered social nonconformity. In arguing for this approach, they drew upon Quaker thought and pacifist tendencies in the Holiness traditions; they also, to my astonishment, repeatedly cited the early church fathers.

Alexander is careful to note that there were always differing Pentecostal voices on the subject of war. But within the Assemblies of God there was sufficient unanimity on a broadly pacifist approach to enable the General Assembly in August 1917 to pass Article XXII. This Article affirmed the Assemblies' loyalty to the government of the United States, but it "nevertheless" proclaimed their identity as "followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace," whose Sermon on the Mount teachings it listed. It stated that these scriptures "have always been . . . interpreted by our churches as prohibiting Christians from shedding blood or taking human life." It concluded by saying that the Assemblies of God cannot participate in war "which involves the actual destruction of human life," for this is contrary to "the clear teachings of the inspired Word of God."

Article XXII remained the official teaching for fifty years until 1967, when the Church Convention finally was able to agree to delete it, replacing it with a new Article XXII on "Military Service." Gone in the new Article are references to the teachings of Jesus; in their place is an affirmation of loyalty to the government of the United States, coupled with a pro-choice assertion that each member has the right to choose whether to be a combatant, a noncombatant, or a conscientious objector. In view of the soldiers whom the denomination's leaders were promoting as role models, combatant military service was clearly the anticipated ethical norm.

From 1941 onwards, denominational periodicals urged young men to enlist as combatants. The writers' focus shifted from the teachings of Jesus to stories of the Old Testament coupled with the first verses of Romans 13. Their emphasis upon mission no longer mentioned killing the enemy but witnessing to American troops. Underlying these changes was the transformation of the cultural milieu of the Assemblies, which were becoming respectable, conservative, Evangelical churches. Only domestically, in their services in which ecstatic worship still took place, was there a whiff of radicalism and risk. According to Alexander, since 1968 the Assemblies of God have been

"a pro-military and pro-American denomination" that, whatever its official position, "allowed little room for the conscientious objector."

But, the author argues, things can change. Pentecostals can recover their origins and the Christocentric crucifism present in them. They can re-open themselves to the prophetic Spirit, who empowers a critique of social sin. In view of current Article XXII, they can allow advocates of each position to "present their understanding of Jesus, Scripture, faith, and practice so that it can be critiqued by others." They can even confess that "we made a mistake" in departing from the original Article XXII. For those wishing to proceed in new/old directions, Alexander invites Pentecostals in their "thousands and thousands" to join a new organization he has founded – Pentecostals and Charismatics for Peace and Justice. He longs to see followers of Jesus who will be "cross-bearing, Holy Spirit-filled, tongue-talking, enemy-loving, nonviolent witnesses to the Way, Truth, and Life."

For non-Pentecostals who read this book, there is the cautionary tale of a peace church whose salt has lost its savor. "How easily," Alexander observes, "the Christian pacifist nonviolence can be lost." The Historic Peace Churches in particular, he is convinced, must take notice. Are we, he asks us, participating in a shift as gradual as that of the Assemblies of God, engaged in a movement from crucifism to conformity – from peace to war?

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Alexis D. Abernethy, ed. W*orship That Changes Lives: Multidisciplinary and Congregational Perspectives on Spiritual Transformation.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.

What makes this book stand apart is its focus on the relatively unexplored territory of spiritual formation in worship. While much has been written about worship theology, and many fine resources for public worship are published each year, much less has been written about the space between – the middle territory, the lived experience of worship where people meet God and lives are transformed.

Edited by Alexis Abernethy, professor of psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary and a psychotherapist in private practice, this multidisciplinary collection of essays examines the relationship between worship and spiritual transformation. The essays were written in response to a collaborative ethnographic research project called Spiritual Experience in Worship (SEM), sponsored by The Brehm Center for Worship, Theology and the Arts (Fuller Theological Seminary) with The Institute for Christian Worship (Calvin College). Organized into three sections, the essays discuss a theology of worship and spiritual growth, the role of the arts in spiritual transformation, and findings from the SEM research.

Two opening chapters provide a theoretical framework for defining and exploring spiritual transformation in worship. "Worship as a locus for transformation" by Clayton J. Schmit, professor of preaching at Fuller Seminary, engages the intriguing yet difficult question of how we can know that transformation has actually occurred in worship – whether on the personal or communal level. In another chapter, John D. Witvliet, Director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, describes formation in worship as "nonstop soul-shaping" (44). He encourages us to pay attention to the cumulative power of transformation, not just to immediate results. He also argues for a fuller understanding of the Holy Spirit's role in worship that includes both the dramatic and spontaneous as well as the ordinary or subtle manifestations of God's presence and power.

The middle section of essays explores spiritual transformation in worship through the arts – drama, dance, visual arts, music, and film. In addition, transformation is examined through the lens of various racial and

cultural groups – emerging church experience in both the United States and the United Kingdom, along with African-American, Asian, and Hispanic congregations.

The final section of the book interprets the results of the SEM study. Surveying a wide variety of congregations and denominations, the project used questionnaires and interviews to probe people's lived experience of worship. Interviewees were monitored physiologically – their heart rate and skin conductance were measured – as they were asked to remember and visualize significant worship experiences and respond to follow-up questions. Specifically, researchers were seeking to identify key conditions that contribute to worship experiences and to assess whether these experiences have behavioral outcomes.

Does worship change lives? Researchers found ample evidence of cognitive, affective, relational, and behavioral transformation. Although no significant differences were found between ethnic groups or denominations in the level of positive changes associated with worship, the study found that younger individuals (people in their 30s and 40s) and women tended to report more positive changes than other groups. Researchers also pondered the significance of their finding that sadness is often what people bring to worship and what precedes a transformational experience.

Though pastors and worship planners and leaders will find much to stimulate their thinking in this book, the best result of reading it might be inspiration for exploring how worship forms and transforms people in our own congregations. We likely assume that worship is making a difference, but if we were to ask people questions similar to those used in the research study, we might be surprised by what is and isn't happening in worship. And while this book will be of significant interest to artists who use their gifts in worship as well as emergent churches and congregations of varying races and cultures, it could also provoke meaningful conversation in interchurch settings. Without judging differences of worship style, the researchers probed the deeper dimensions of what happens as we sing, pray, and encounter God in scripture and preaching. Their findings offer language and concepts that could contribute to interdenominational dialogue.

I doubt if many laypeople will wade through this volume. In many ways, it reads more like a reference work than a compelling discussion of

spiritual formation. Nevertheless, it would be a useful addition to the libraries of those who teach worship and of pastoral leaders who are responsible for planning worship. It also makes a ground-breaking contribution to interdisciplinary conversation among theologians, psychologists, and those engaged in intercultural studies.

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Timothy J. Geddert. *All Right Now: Finding Consensus on Ethical Questions*. Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 2009.

In *All Right Now,* Timothy Geddert provides a significant resource for congregations and denominations engaged in discernment around ethical issues. His purpose is to help Christians use the Bible well in developing consensus around controversial issues, but his approach depends as much on a particular understanding of the church as it does on sound biblical interpretation. In good Anabaptist style, Geddert attempts to articulate a third or middle way between "liberal" and "conservative" approaches to dealing with issues currently polarizing the church.

Geddert begins by outlining essential biblical principles and understandings of exegesis and interpretation. The book is clearly oriented toward lay people, and the first part functions as a kind of basic introduction to biblical interpretation, succinctly organized into clear and manageable points. Geddert's ability to distil complex issues connected to biblical hermeneutics is remarkable, making the insights of scholars such as Richard Hays accessible to an average lay person.

It isn't long before the reader can't help but wonder if this book about "using the Bible well" isn't masquerading as a work on ecclesiology and what it means to be the church. This is, in my opinion, the book's greatest strength – its understanding of scripture is rooted within a particular understanding of God's covenant people, the body of Christ, the church; an understanding

that resonates deeply within the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition but need not be exclusive to it.

Another strength connected to this understanding of the church as the interpretive community is that the author allows for the possibility that, even with the best of exegetical tools and hermeneutical sensibilities, agreement may not be possible and consensus may not be reached. However, a lack of consensus around an ethical question does not impede Geddert's understanding of the church; that is, it need not be a sign of unfaithfulness. Geddert appeals to the early church, which continually had to find ways to live with the ambiguity around ethical issues, an uncertainty that is an inevitable part of all communal life.

In the second part of the book the author doesn't hesitate to deal with some of the most challenging issues connected to homosexuality, loving enemies, possessions, and what might traditionally be called "church discipline" (issues notoriously difficult to gain consensus on). The examples used in this part of the book build on insights developed in the introductory section. For instance, the chapter on homosexuality is a kind of litmus test of the principles Geddert presents at the beginning. He acknowledges the complexity of issues related to homosexuality and engages them in ways that recognize both contemporary realities and the authority of scripture, which he acknowledges is not entirely clear on the matter. Geddert provides a very helpful outline of the spectrum of views and perspectives; however, the hermeneutical conundrum currently present in many Christian communities is not fully recognized. The participation of "homosexually affected" (Geddert's term) persons in this hermeneutical community remains challenging, particularly as many continue to feel unsafe or shamed in the very communities that have nurtured and shaped them. Attention must be given to what kinds of practices are necessary in order to create hospitable communities of sufficient trust and safety that all members of the interpretive community can discern, and agree and disagree together, in love.

I was fortunate to hear Geddert give presentations on this book's themes at Canadian Mennonite University's Church in Ministry Seminars. His approach to Matthew 18, a text of significant influence on Anabaptist-Mennonite understanding of the church as a discipleship community, had a noteworthy impact on pastors attending the event. For many, Matthew

18 is synonymous with church discipline in general and excommunication in particular. According to the text, the sinner who refuses to acknowledge his or her wrong is "to be treated as a Gentile and tax collector," which has normally been assumed to mean they should be separated from the community. It was a liberating word for participants at the conference, accompanied with an audible gasp, when Geddert asked them how Jesus treated Gentiles and tax collectors (Matthew himself being a tax collector) and how this might be instructive for the church's ministry. What does it mean for the church to persist with the Gentile and the tax collector, as Jesus persisted with them, in order that they too might know the reconciliation of God?

All Right Now is theologically practical and insightful, rich in wisdom, and honest in its engagement with issues. I appreciated the book's approach, and I have recommended it to a number of pastors.

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Scott Waalkes. *The Fullness of Time in a Flat World: Globalizations and the Liturgical Year*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2010.

In my largely homogenous high school, three minorities – Muslims, Jews, Orthodox Christians – periodically reminded us that they lived by the beat of a different clock. The seemingly small fact of another calendar made them distinct. How one lives in and with time is a key part of religion. A crucial aspect that set the Essenes apart from other Jewish groups, for example, was their observance of a solar rather than a lunar calendar. In early Celtic Christian history, a major controversy revolved around the dating of Easter. In faith, time matters.

Not that you'd know it by looking at the average church-going Christian. We are as busy and distracted as most in our culture. We too are

caught up in what has been called "time poverty" and "hurry sickness." In the last church I pastored, congregants determined that busyness was one of their primary spiritual challenges and pleaded with the Elders for help. The Elders agreed, but then took two years to respond because they themselves had too much to do.

The reality is that people are busier today than forty or even twenty years ago. This is neither idle imagination nor neurotic nostalgia. But Christian resources for interpreting and responding to these new realities are scanty and scarce. Does Christian faith have anything to offer as a way forward? Political scientist Scott Waalkes believes so.

Waalkes is a Dutch Calvinist informed and influenced by the likes of John Howard Yoder, Wendell Berry, G. K. Chesterton, and William Cavanaugh. He brilliantly juxtaposes an exposé of globalization's costly effects with the rich reorientation of living by the Christian liturgical year. He certainly agrees with Thomas Friedman (of *The World is Flat*) that globalization profoundly alters our way of life. But, unlike Friedman, he is not so enamoured with the results. Waalkes notes that globalization poses huge ethical challenges and argues that the best way to respond is by observing the church calendar and living out its implications for faithfulness.

Christians bear witness to God's Reign by annually re-living and reflecting on salvation history. While Waalkes does not put his contention in these terms, this is a crucial place for us to live out what it might mean to be "in but not of the world." The "dominant narrative of globalization" (and this is his terminology) need not have the last word.

Waalkes came to these insights and convictions unexpectedly. At first he, like many evangelicals, was fond of the flat world, preoccupied with the blessings and opportunities it ostensibly offered. He gradually came to see, especially because of international travels, that globalization also has profoundly adverse consequences – economically, ecologically, politically, and culturally. Our flattened world contributes to disempowerment, disenchantment, time scarcity, and diminished morality. Moreover, the "flatness" is deceptive; rhythms of consumption replaced liturgical rhythms.

The other reason his convictions emerged slowly is that it is only in the last decade that he came to understand the rich spiritual potential of the

Christian year. Nevertheless, his Calvinist upbringing did teach him at a young age that prioritizing Sabbath-keeping helps us to live differently than many neighbors, especially in trusting that there is always time enough for the most important things, including labor and leisure.

This is a surprisingly long book, weighing in at 362 pages. Waalkes carefully walks through crucial realities of globalization and contrasting them with what the liturgical year proposes and enacts: for example, Advent and the end of history, Christmas and globalization of finance, Epiphany and globalization of work, Lent and global consumption, Holy Week and American hegemony, etc. He challenges false gods of productivity, speed, efficiency, success.

Waalkes invites us to take seriously the importance of how we live out our days. Our choices around vocation, peacemaking, consumption, food, and so on all have opportunities for living sacramentally. Along the way, he celebrates testimonies and stories of many familiar heroes – including Christian Peacemaker Teams and Elias Chacour.

I have considerable interest in both of this author's foci – the shape of how we live today as it is affected by economic and political forces, and how we honor Christian traditions of time. Yet to date I have not seen anything that compares with this book in putting those two spheres in conversation. This volume may well convince you that things are worse than they seem at first blush, but at the same time it offers us imaginative and hopeful ways forward.

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