

Justice and Faith in the Literature

A Partially Annotated Literature Review for the Two-Year SSHRC Partnership Development Research Project, *Justice and Faith: Individual Spirituality and Social Responsibility in the Christian Reformed Church in Canada*

Main Research Question

How is the relationship between justice and faith currently understood and expressed/practiced in North American (especially Canadian, evangelical) Christianity?

Cochran, Clarke E., Derek H. Davis, Ronald J. Sider, Corwin Smidt and Philip Wogaman. 2007. *Church, State and Public Justice: Five Views*. Ed. P. C. Kemeny. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press. (HA)

In *Church, State and Public Justice* five scholars, representing some of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, explore the five understandings of the church's role in the public square developed within their own Christian churches. Authors Clarke Cochran, Derek Davis, Ronald Sider, Corwin Smidt, and Philip Wogaman respond to the secular ideal of a "naked public sphere" from each of their traditions, placing a great emphasis on their understandings of social or public justice. This discussion is framed within the debate about the significant presence of church organizations in American public life through social justice projects, particularly given the establishment of the White House Office for Faith Based and Community Initiatives during the George W. Bush's administration.

Editor P. C. Kemeny describes his project as a, "taxonomy of positions that different Christian traditions hold about the relationship between church and state and public justice," (13) where representatives of each tradition are able to respond to their counterparts as well as provide their own view. This book therefore attempts to give each of the authors a space to answer questions about the mission of the church in the resolution of social injustice (a goal particularly relevant to our *Justice and Faith* research project), concluding that most Christians see the need for some kind of social action to various degrees and following different rationales.

Amongst the authors, Corwin Smidt presents the "principled pluralist" approach of the Neo-Calvinist Kuyperian tradition, according to which a differentiated structure of authority evolves into a diversified structure of society. According to this take, the public square is not naked but constituted of a plurality of views, some of them Christian as well as non-Christian. Given that the redemption of the entire created order becomes a faith imperative for social justice, says Corwin, Christian work for public justice is inevitable. Within this perspective, while the role of the church is to contribute to the construction of this common good by engaging with the work of society as a whole, the role of the state is to "enforce the particular aspect of morality we call justice." (145)

Houston, Jaclyn D. and Nathan R. Todd. 2013. "Religious Congregations and Social Justice Participation: A Multilevel Examination of Social Processes and Leadership." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 52, 273-287.

This study examines questions about the relationship between individual church attendance and

participation in social justice functions and activities. Earlier studies have attempted to draw the conclusion that individuals tend to become less active in social justice-related activities due to their inordinate focus on church life. In this study, however, several factors uniquely exemplified by church organizations seem to point in the opposite direction, including, but not limited to: bonding social capital, norms for justice and leadership opportunities. The authors also explore the unique ways in which a distinctly *community* psychological approach to these issues might illuminate the positive contributions of church participation to various social justice causes.

McLaren, Brian, Elisa Padilla, and Ashley Bunting Seeber. 2009. *The Justice Project*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. (HA)

Wolterstorff, Nicholas. 2011. *Hearing the Call: Liturgy, Justice, Church, and World*. William B.. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (HA)

Insight outcome #1

Greater understanding of major social and intellectual trends shaping the way contemporary North American (especially Canadian) Christians understand the relationship between faith and justice, especially trends that encourage either a bifurcation or integration of these themes.

Dawson, Lorne L. and Joel Thiesson. 2013. *The Sociology of Religion: A Canadian Perspective*, Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press. (JH)

Haluza-Delay, Randolph. 2008. "Churches Engaging the Environment: An Autoethnography of Obstacles and Opportunities." *Research in Human Ecology* 15.2, 71-81. (IB)

In this article the author reflects on his own experience engaging Church members with issues of ecological justice. He notes four broad obstacles and three broad opportunities in this kind of engagement. The first set of obstacles he notes are paradigmatic obstacles or "those elements of theological beliefs or worldviews that disable attention to environmental concerns." One example of a paradigmatic obstacle is a "pietistic faith system" whose focus on personal, devotional practice includes implicit beliefs that "only heaven or the afterlife matters." The second set of obstacles he notes are applicability obstacles where people are concerned that the issue should not be given priority over other issues. Related to this is another applicability obstacle: faith is practiced in individualistic ways (the practice is related the pietistic paradigm which sees faith as personal as opposed to public). The third set of obstacles he notes are critical obstacles which "result from under analysis of societal and cultural factors that affect the human-earth relationships." These critical obstacles include a weakened understanding of social structures or systems and how they affect human life. The final set of obstacles are conviction obstacles which are "barrier on the level of lifestyle and willingness to act." These obstacles include things like "one's current standard of living, willingness to make changes, motivations to act" etc.

The author describes three opportunities for "faith-based environmental learning and responsive action." The first set of opportunities are subcultural opportunities which are congregational practices that lead to effective learning. Such settings include Sunday school classes and bible study groups. This can be especially effective at introducing people to topics they would not have considered otherwise. The second set of opportunities are motivational opportunities which are "those dimensions that potentially increase the effectiveness of environmental awareness because of faith basic commitment." The desire of religious people to "do the right thing even in the face of countervailing cultural norms" is an example of this

opportunity as are the sense of duty or obligation towards God and a strong moral foundation. The final set of opportunities are “those factors that can constructively engage the public discourse within a pluralist society.” This opportunity enables Churches to provide a weighty counter-narrative to Society’s dominant ones.

Hexham, Irving. 1993. “The Growth of Conservative Evangelical Religion” in *The Sociology of Religion: A Canadian Focus*, ed. W.E. Hewitt Toronto, ON: Butterworth. (JH)

Hicks, Douglas A. and Mark Valeri. 2008. *Global Neighbors: Christian Faith and Moral Obligation in Today’s Economy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (HA)

This collection of essays presents writings by thirteen Christian thinkers and church leaders as they [1]engage the “traditional Christian moral norms about economic life”(xix) and [2]suggest ways in which these norms can be applied in the current economic context. Acknowledging the difficulty of living a Christian life in the midst of a globalized capitalist society, each of the authors is tasked with providing ways to bridge the gap between the Christian moral obligations and Capitalism’s faceless interaction between producers and consumers to bring about justice. Editors Douglas Hicks and Mark Valeri argue that such disparity, between traditional Christian morality and globalized societies, is a consequence of Christianity’s traditional idea of neighbor. *Global Neighbors* arguing that there are elements within the Christian tradition itself that could speak to the world’s current situation thus providing Christians with ways to live in the world while remaining faithful to their moral principles.

In Part I, Christian ethicist Eric Gregory and biblical scholar and pastor Thomas W. Walker conclude that the author of Luke’s Gospel had already reinvented the notion of neighbor in a way that was applicable to impersonal interactions. For Walker, “Jesus’ imaginative reconstrual of the world in his parable of the Good Samaritan, and also Luke’s overall telling of the story of Jesus [...] invites us to new visions of the world and to new modes of action that center on compassion and mercy” (15), even beyond the geographical boundaries of our particular communities. For Gregory, Christians have failed to respond to the New Testament’s call to “overcome human-to-human boundaries” thus “failing to do what is right even when we do not intentionally will what is evil” (42).

Part II presents four critiques to mainstream economic theory from the Christian moral imagination. While ethicist Kent Van Til and business school dean Jeff Van Duzer suggest that adaptations within the capitalist system could bring it closer to the practices and values of the Christian faith around justice, ethicists Rebecca Todd Peters and Janet Parker argue that there is a value system already embedded in Capitalism, which runs contrary to the Christian values. Despite their differences of approach, all four authors agree on the following point, that there is a power in the Christian narrative to counter the negative effects of the global market system.

Part III develops particular ways in which Christians can act locally to address the injustices brought about by global Capitalism. A couple of recommendations that is worth sharing in this review are the call to industry leaders and particular communities to support just economic structures. Economist Rebecca Blank argues that the message of the Gospel to make any other person, without distinction, a neighbor “has particular resonance in a global economy” (245). Hicks and Valeri close by clarifying that faithful Christian lives entail as much a commitment to human action toward justice, as shown in the essays read in the volume, as the trust of God’s known or unknown action.

Roche, Douglas. 2007. *Global Conscience*. Ottawa, ON: Novalis. (Especially Part III) (HA)

In *Global Conscience*, Douglas Roche presents a brief overview of some of what he considers central social and political issues surrounding the formation of a global conscience, which he defines in terms of the increase in people's awareness of their belonging to a common humanity. Such a sense of identity, says Roche, is especially manifest in their hope for peace and economic justice. As a Canadian politician, Roche's arguments are underscored by themes like multi and cross/culturalism, interfaith dialogue, and the north-south relations.

Global Conscience combines historical references to movements, organizations, and events (most of them not carefully documented throughout the text) that have changed the way in which we think about our common hope for peace and justice, with compilations of current opinions and social trends on the issues discussed. Throughout the book, the author includes descriptions of organizations currently tackling those issues and the kind of work with which they engage.

Chapter Eight, entitled "The Global Conscience of Religion," is dedicated to the analysis of the challenges and successes in the participation of religions and religious institutions in the formation of a global conscience. Roche holds that most world religions find their grounds in the golden rule, linking the pursuit of social justice to interfaith dialogue and coexistence. He also affirms that very little has been done, particularly in the North American context, to explore this common ground. The loud voices of fundamentalist Christian and Islamic groups have shaped the way religion is understood by the majority of the population and limited its social justice outreach.

Warner, Rob. "The evangelical matrix: mapping diversity and postulating trajectories in evangelical's theology and social policy." *Evangelical Quarterly* 80, no. 1 (January 2008): 33-52. (IB)

The author reports on an early 2000s survey of Evangelicals in the UK examining diversity in theology and social policy. 250 leaders were surveyed coming from various national evangelical organizations. Under the category of social policy, the survey measured leaders' attitudes on twelve issues in three categories. Under the subcategory of social justice, they measured attitudes towards racism, sexism, environmental concerns and cancellation of third world debt. Under the subcategory of state intervention, they measured attitudes towards abortion, censorship, marijuana, divorce and underage contraception. Under the category of the church-state interface, they measured attitudes particular to the context of the UK.

Significant within British evangelicalism has been an almost full embrace by leadership of the social justice agenda while remaining ethically conservative. Evangelical leadership fully supports active steps to combat racism and sexism. It also represents a steadfast voice against environmental degradation and for the elimination of third world debt. Simultaneously, they hold traditional beliefs about abortion (albeit in a moderated form), marijuana and censorship. Theological college students were generally more conservative than evangelical leadership on matters of social justice, but more progressive in terms of social intervention. Nearly all survey participants advocated at least a partial support of both the British monarchy and the state church--with the notable exceptions of Youth For Christ workers and female Theology undergraduates.

Wigg-Stevenson, Tyler. 2013. *The World is Not Ours to Save: Finding the Freedom to Do Good*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (HA)

In *The World Is Not Ours to Save*, Tyler Wigg-Stevenson articulates a critique of the Christian activism that is

product of the Twentieth Century social turn in North American Evangelical movements. This critique leads him to formulating his own proposal of a new, scripturally-based activism which responds the following thesis, “[t]he world is not [ours], not to save or to damn. Only serve the one whose it is.” (Wigg-Stevenson 2013, p.18) The author frames his strategy within a larger commitment to comprehensive peace, which he elaborates upon the concept of ‘God’s Kingdom’ found in the Book of Micah.

Wigg-Stevenson’s own experience as a Christian activist underscores the entire book, grounding his arguments in practical concerns such as cause fatigue, reduction of the Gospel to ethics, and possible rootlessness of social justice movements. The author places the origins of these –and several other– problems in four different tendencies that crystallize the deficiencies of current Christian efforts to change the world through activism. On the one hand, he says, we [1] misunderstand our call, perceiving ourselves as heroes, or [2] misinterpret the situation of the world, underestimating the brokenness caused by sin. On the other, [3] we use God’s message for our own causes and [4] deny our complicity in the condition of the world.

Wigg-Stevenson’s suggested way out of these tendencies is to ground social action in Scriptural themes, restoring the Biblical tension between the final, consummated Kingdom of God and the transformations we are able to accomplish here and now. By acknowledging the impossibility of saving the world on our own, he argues, we “can labor without the anxiety of imagining that the welfare of history rises or ebbs on the tide of our own blood, sweat and tears.” (p.22) In a conclusion that is particularly relevant to the research that aims to connect social justice and spirituality, Wigg-Stevenson states that the grounds he has established will be encouraging to the “results-minded Christian” and respectful of the need for God emphasized in Christian churches.

Wolterstorff, Nicholas. 2008. *Justice: Rights and Wrongs*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (HA)

In *Justice: Rights and Wrongs*, Wolterstorff argues that the patient-dimension of the moral order can only be comprehended when taking into consideration its Judaeo-Christian origins. Through this argument, Wolterstorff aims to conclude that a theory of human rights, as an expression of this patient-dimension approach, ought to be comprehended from the Judeo-Christian framework. In this distinctively Christian account, Wolterstorff opposes both [1] leading secular accounts (dedicating great length to countering the eudaimonistic tradition) and [2] other prominent Christian approaches.

Underscored by Wolterstorff’s personal commitment to oppose injustice, his argument is based on the pressing need to articulate, in the language of rights, the structure lying beneath the moral universe as understood by Christianity. Failing to recognize the importance of rights in the construction of a moral society, Wolterstorff argues, would endanger the precarious situation of the wronged.

Wolterstorff argues from a position of dialogical pluralism, which abandons the search for universal foundational principles in moral discussions and acknowledges the diversity inherent to the traditions already present in the West, thus aiming to gather resources from these traditions to promote moral agency. In the context of this book, dialogical pluralism serves as a tool to start a conversation in which the Christianity would be an acceptable candidate to ground rights language if and only if Christians renounce the “right-order talk.” The understanding of justice provided by Christianity in its patient-dimension approach has, therefore, been made accessible to other traditions through the language of rights.

Insight outcome #2

Greater understanding of the way contemporary understandings of faith and justice compare to past expressions of that understanding and relationship.

Green, John C. 2007. *The Faith Factor: How Religion Influences American Elections*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers. (JH)

Pally, Marcia. 2011. *The New Evangelicals: Expanding the Vision of the Common Good*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (JH)

The author argues that the “new evangelicals” represent a politically relevant movement within North American evangelicalism, which is defined broadly as a particularly influential strand of Christianity rooted in 18th century pietism and emphasizing “personal relationship” with God independent from church authority. Whereas evangelical Christians—especially in the United States—have typically associated themselves politically with the “Republican Right” (i.e. social conservatism, free-market capitalism), the new evangelicals as a group reveal a visible shift away from this ideology towards more centrist or even leftist positions (democratic governance, religious freedom and economic redistribution). The author cites John Howard Yoder’s political theology both as a model for understanding the motivations behind this sociological shift and for normative reasons. The book does not include a detailed statistical survey, relying instead on interviews, media and actual church materials (sermons, publications, etc.) as evidence supporting its conclusions.

Taylor, Adam. 2010. *Mobilizing Hope: Faith Inspired Activism for a Post-Civil Rights Generation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (HA)

In *Mobilizing Hope*, Adam Taylor develops an analysis of faith-inspired activism in the current North American context, both attending to existent trends witnessed by the author in his own activist career, and to his recommendations for the future. Arguing for what seems to be an overcoming -within some sections of the North American Evangelical tradition- of the radical separation between individual spirituality and social justice, the author both identifies and encourages the growth a new type of activism. This, Taylor argues, finds its birthplace in the Civil Rights movement, particularly in the figure of Martin Luther King Jr. However, there is need for an activism that transcends what happened in this movement, meeting the current needs of the North American society.

In order to define the kind of grounded and lasting activism suggested, Taylor makes use of the theological concepts of faith and hope. It is possible to locate the normative edge of Taylor’s argument in the link between these two and social action proper. In the contexts in which faith is informed and nurtured by hope, social action and individual spirituality become sides of the same project, political and social preferences are framed by a Scriptural understanding of humanity and creation, allowing people to work towards a common goal, Taylor concludes.

This book is particularly relevant because it provides both an account of the landscape of current social and political activism in North America and a general analysis of the scriptural foundations of current activist movements. In his description of these current trends, Taylor develops a handbook for young Christian leaders with a strategy of how to implement activism and how to remain faithful to the call for social change.

Insight outcome #3

Greater understanding of the way contemporary Christians relate their practice and/or understanding of

justice with such faith-related themes as personal piety; evangelism/Great Commission; faith formation and discipleship; missional living/missional faith

Anielski, Mark. 2007. *The Economics of Happiness: Building Genuine Wealth*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers. (JH)

This book attempts to reevaluate the way in which we measure wealth and economic well-being in society. Whereas traditional metrics of economic growth and stability such as the Gross Domestic Product include absurd amounts of consumption and waste as “positive” indicators of wealth, the author proposes an alternative way to understand what constitutes genuine wealth: namely, what he calls the “economics of happiness”.

Although the book touches on a number of important issues related to just economic practices, perhaps the way in which the author understands his vocation as an economist is the most striking: “While some have defined economics as the dismal science, I find it akin to religion precisely because economic principles and tools form the guidance system of our modern states. Economists are the high priests of our capitalist systems. I count myself among the economic priesthood — but I am a priest who longs to understand the very premises and value-origins of our thought.”

The book goes on to do just that—exploring the structural conditions of modern economic life from the “worldview” perspective. That is to say, economic justice is always already a religious matter because happiness is an irreducibly religious phenomenon.

Cannon, Mae Elise. 2013. *Just Spirituality: How Faith Practices Fuel Social Action*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (HA)

The author explores seven different ways in which a deeply developed spiritual life fuels social activism, giving this book the structure of a social justice handbook. Starting from her own experience as a social activist, Mae Elise Cannon develops a toolkit to approach social activism from a Christian perspective, arguing that the discipline needed for any long lasting commitment to social transformation can only be achieved through a well-nurtured spiritual life. Through the examination of the spiritual lives of some of the most influential Christian activists of the 20th Century such as Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King Jr., as well as some contemporary activists—most of them North American—, Cannon concludes that following Christ’s call to do justice, at least in our current context, is first a personal experience of the Gospel mediated through spiritual practices and spiritual discipline. Throughout the book, she explores in greater detail how the integration of the practices of “silence, prayer, study of Scripture, community, worship, observance of the sabbath and submission” (Cannon p. 175) can be instrumental of long-lasting pursuits of change in society.

Merritt, Jonathan and Russell Moore. “Russell Moore weighs in on Hobby Lobby’s China dealings.” *Religion News Service*, <<http://jonathanmerritt.religionnews.com/2014/06/17/russell-moore-hobby-lobby-china/>> (JH)

Sheridan, Michael, ed. 2014. *Connecting Spirituality and Social Justice: Conceptualizations and Applications in Macro Social Work Practice*. New York, NY: Routledge. (HA)

Snyder Belousek, Darrin W. 2012. *Atonement, Justice, and Peace: The Message of the Cross and the Mission of the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (IB)

The author begins by discussing the attempt to reconcile the two commitments of evangelism and social

action in evangelical Christianity; mentioning specifically the Lausanne movement, Evangelicals for Social Action and authors such as Pedrito Maynard Reid and Ron Sider. Yet within these groups and authors he finds that none adequately connect the atonement to issues of justice and peace. The two elements of atonement and justice/peace operate independently of each other theologically.

His contention is that such a bifurcation is possible because of reading retribution – the principle of repayment in kind – *into* the Bible rather than *out of* the Bible. So for example the retributive paradigm applied economically leads to an exchange economy – “and to pay anything in excess of ‘what is due’ – so an employee can feed her child, say – would go beyond justice into generosity” (pg 26). The cross, contra retribution, shows God-in-Christ giving a “divine good in exchange for human evil” (pg 27).

God’s justice that he reveals through the faithfulness of Jesus is covenant justice. Covenant justice fulfills God’s promises, shows his faithfulness, saves humanity from their sin and makes them righteous. It is not ruled by the law but rather annuls the law in grace (“not apart from the law..”). This grace, which seems to transcend justice, is justice *precisely* because it fulfills God’s covenant.

Todd, Nathan R. and Anne K. Rufa. 2013. “Social Justice and Religious Participation: A Qualitative Investigation of Christian Perspectives.” *Journal of American Psychology* 51, 315-331.

Wright, Christopher J. H. 2006. *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible’s Grand Narrative*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic. (IB)

Christopher Wright’s “Mission of God” reads the entire Bible as a witness to God’s ongoing mission in the world. His reading hinges on a particular reading of Genesis – where Abraham’s election is God’s response to the sin, evil and death resulting from the fall. God’s calling of Abraham to “Go... be a blessing” (Gen 12:3) is a fundamental expression of God’s desire to work through his people to accomplish his mission. God’s Mission has a large scope. Wright’s focus on Exodus is important in understanding God’s missional concern for Justice.

Wright contests that popular preaching of the Exodus dismisses and distorts the historic reality of liberation experienced by Israel, “the actual deliverance out of real, earthy injustice, oppression and violence” (pg 276). He says Exodus is misused typologically. The typology is misused because the past loses its intrinsic significance and becomes a foreshadow (where Israel’s freedom from slavery is a foreshadow for freedom from sin). He proposes that instead of the New Testament *exchanging* a social message for a spiritual one it *extends* a social message into a spiritual one.

He also challenges evangelical theologians who would dismiss the social dimensions of the Exodus as only applying to Israel. This, he says, ignores the meaning of Israel’s election which, because it is *for* the nations, means that when God acts for and on behalf of Israel he does so paradigmatically. To say that God’s liberating, justice-making actions are for Israel alone would be to deny the meaning of election.

Insight outcome #4

Greater understanding of popular/predominant lines of reasoning used to describe/explain the relationship between justice and faith

Blank, Rebecca. 1992. *Do Justice: Linking Christian Faith and Modern Economic Justice*. Cleveland, OH: United Church Press. (HA)

This book was conceived as a tool to assist in the reading of “A Pronouncement on Christian Faith: Economic Life and Justice,” the United Church of Christ’s declaration on social and economic justice. As a way of furthering this church’s efforts, the author attempts to guide the reader through a number of practical implications of integrating one’s faith journey and one’s social and economic justice efforts. This integration is analyzed through three sections: [1] “a framework for linking economic decisions and faith issues” (5); [2] an exploration of the drivers behind economic decision-making; and [3] a normative section, meant to illustrate the way in which Christians should conduct their economic lives based on their faith commitments. This last section, that extends from chapter 7 to chapter 10, is the most relevant to the “Justice and Faith” research project, given that it describes the possible enablers, challenges, and successes of the justice mobilization in the context of the United Church of Christ.

Starting with the premise of the great importance of justice mobilization, this book is structured as a manual, with a series of reflections followed by sets of questions and answers, group and individual activities, and brief summaries. These activities attempt to translate what Blank calls “Biblical Lessons” into individual and collective actions directed towards the transformation of society, particularly through the collective influence in public policy. Blank’s conclusion is that there is no clear way bring the wisdom in the Scriptures into universal policy unless Christians take on the task of translating such a wisdom and making it available to everyone.

Edwards, Cher N. 2012. “Christian Social Justice Advocate: Contradiction or Legacy?” *Counseling and Values* 57.1,10-17. (HA)

Guder, Darrell. 2001. “Evangelism and Justice: From False Dichotomies to Gospel Faithfulness.” *Church and Society* 92.2, 14-20. (JH)

This brief article highlights some of the ways justice and faith have been understood in the Presbyterian Church in North America. The author, who is a Presbyterian scholar, recalls his experiences as a participant in meetings about the mission and future of the church--especially in regards to its responsibilities to both evangelism and justice. Unfortunately, according to Guder, too many leaders in his church continue to understand the two as separate interests that, while not necessarily antagonistically, tend to be opposed. This “false dichotomy” usually implies that any given congregation must “choose sides,” so to speak, in regards to their emphasis.

He cites several reasons for the formation of this false dichotomy--the church’s tendency towards a view of salvation as an individual, and “status”-oriented being the main one (“status” meaning an inside/outside dynamic that is instantaneous rather than processual). Guder’s article is also historically conscious in the sense that it recognizes the church’s mission to reunite these two Christian mandates as the only way forward for a Western church that has lost all moral credibility after the horrors of the twentieth century with which it has been complicit.

Martin, Jim. 2012. *The Just Church: Becoming a risk-taking, justice-seeking, disciple-making congregation*. Tyndale Momentum. (SV)

Insight outcome #5

Greater understanding of the reasons given for separating faith and justice or viewing them as non-related, including whatever suspicions/fears lead to such bifurcation

Ballor, Jordan J. 2007. "Kuyper, *The Problem of Poverty*." *Acton Institute Powerblog*. (JH)

This post is composed entirely of block quotes from Abraham Kuyper's famous statements on the problems associated with domestic poverty. Ballor correctly interprets Kuyper as being weary of heavy-handed welfare policies enforced by a centralized, bureaucratic state. A good example of this Kuyperian view is captured in the following block quote:

"Is state welfare an adequate substitute for Christian charity? Never: "The holy art of 'giving for Jesus' sake' ought to be much more strongly developed among us Christians. Never forget that all state relief for the poor is a blot on the honor of your Savior."

Taken on its own, this quote makes it seem obvious that Kuyper is himself a Christian advocate for a withdrawal of state power from economic affairs altogether. Absent from Ballor's account of the state's role in the economy, however, is Kuyper's more powerful theme of "public justice", which implies the just regulation of all spheres of political life without violating their respective sovereignty. Ballor's interpretation seems to imply a separation of faith and justice (from a Kuyperian perspective) insofar as he fails to complement his strategically chosen block quotes with Kuyper's ardent defense of the state's role as a preserver of public justice--which, as other authors such as Richard Mouw have pointed out, includes the alleviation of poverty.

Concerned Evangelicals. 1986. *Evangelical Witness in South Africa: A Critique of Evangelical Theology and Practice by South African Evangelicals*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (IB)

This relatively short manifesto was written in the 1980s by a group of evangelicals ("Concerned Evangelicals") in South Africa who had deep concerns over their own tradition's almost unqualified support of the status quo in the Apartheid regime of their home country. Rather than rejecting their own evangelical tradition, these authors hoped to develop a better theology to resist acquiescence to unjust systems. Theologically, the concerned evangelicals see the problem rooted in a dualism, an improper use of Romans 13 and an inadequate understanding of repentance.

Dualism, inherited from the Greeks, opposes the spiritual to the material. Thus the material (including the social, economic and the politic) is seen as unimportant to God and the concerns of the Church, whereas the spiritual is more important. According to this line of reasoning, evangelicals in South Africa are led to support the status quo, since politics and social conditions of the oppressed do not ultimately matter. Indeed "this world" itself does not ultimately matter. Instead, the concerned evangelicals emphasize that "life is a whole."

The concerned evangelicals also note how often Romans 13 is invoked as a proof-text, i.e. the crucial scripture passage supporting what they call the "theology of the status quo." The use of Romans 13 suggests an unquestioning obedience to authority with little exception. Instead, the concerned evangelicals present a theology in which the state--although ordained by God--is not necessarily in submission to God's will. The biblical history of the prophets and Jesus is evoked to counter this tendency to use Romans 13 in this way.

Finally, the concerned evangelicals note that often those who claim to be 'born again' and 'reconciled' with

God often turn out to be the “worst racists, oppressors and exploiters.” This is often due to an inadequate understanding of repentance--one in which the radical orientation away from sin (including the sins of racism that the document names) to supporting justice is rejected. Thus, reconciliation can be preached without repentance, and peace proclaimed without justice.

Gilbreath, Edward. 2006. *Reconciliation Blues: A Black Evangelical's Inside View of White Christianity*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (JH)

The book documents a black man's experience in “White Christianity,” which in this case is North American evangelicalism. The first chapter—like most of the book—contains first-person accounts of “what it's like” to be a minority in such an environment. White privilege, which manifests itself in ways that are more often than not implicit in the daily practices of white evangelicals, is for the author a problem about the subtle marginalization of people who do not share the same racial and cultural legacy. White privilege often rears its head via problematic assumptions about people of color—especially blacks.

The second chapter sketches a loose vision of what the word ‘evangelical’ has meant throughout history compared to the connotations it carries now. Too often, the author argues, evangelicalism is considered to be synonymous with the Christian Right in North America. This is a historically white movement whose roots extend well beyond the civil rights movement in the 1960s, which implies in turn an outright inattentiveness to specific concerns held by blacks in evangelical churches. Aside from a sort of bland, politically correct adherence to the basics (being anti-segregation, for example), white evangelicals simply do not have the historical resources for a serious engagement with people of color. The author encourages the reader to recover a deeper and more meaningful concept of ‘evangelical’ that is not tied to the problematic history of the Christian right.

Chapter three calls attention to the systemic problem of racism—beyond the aforementioned patterns of politically correct speech. It is simply not enough, the author argues, to say that “I'm not a racist” when there are structures of oppression even within the church that do not take the form of explicit individual acceptance.

Chapters four through eight deal with some histories of strategies of racial reconciliation in particular figures such as Tom Skinner Martin Luther King, Jr and Jesse Jackson. The author holds the North American church culpable for its political insignificance. Again, ignorance of structural issues of racial oppression are the problem.

Chapters nine through twelve outline some tentative solutions for the problems in White Christianity. Communities have to be intentional about understanding the problems of race relations, which means actively creating space for minority voices in leadership roles. The author again stresses that the Republican right cannot be the last word in evangelicalism.

The Kairos Document. 1985.

<http://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/challenge-church-theological-comment-political-crisis-south-africa-kairos-document-1985> (IB)

In the midst of the violence and repression of Apartheid a group of theologians released the Kairos Document calling for the Church to recognize its “moment of truth” where God calls for decisive action. The theologians respond to this moment by analyzing the theologies behind what is going on by isolating three

theologies: 'State Theology', 'Church theology' and 'Prophetic theology'.

The first, *State Theology*, is the "theological justification of the status quo with its racism, capitalism and totalitarianism." State theology misuses doctrines and scripture for its own political purpose. The two misuses most important are the use of Romans 13 and the misuse of the name of God. The misuse of Romans 13 gives the state absolute and divine authority and is not confined only to South Africa but has been used often by totalitarian regimes throughout Christian history. State Theology's misuse of the name of God is worse. The name of God is used by military and police chaplains to encourage the violence, repression and propaganda of the South African state. This is using the name in vain and creating an idol.

The second, *Church Theology*, is "in a limited, guarded and cautious way" critical of apartheid. Yet its criticisms are "superficial and counterproductive" for instead of an in-depth analysis "it relies upon a few stock ideas... and then uncritically and repeatedly applies them to our situation." These 'stock ideas' uncritically applied include reconciliation (or peace), justice and nonviolence. The first idea, reconciliation, seems to be a good desire to reconcile blacks and white in South Africa. Unfortunately often this seems to be a way of trying to come to terms with injustice rather than eliminating oppression. Instead these theologians point out that there can be no reconciliation and no forgiveness *without repentance*. The second idea, Justice, begs the question: What kind of justice? The foundation of this approach is reliance upon individual conversions which will never work for the situation is more than individual guilt it is structural injustice. The third idea, Nonviolence, has been used as a condemnation of all violence without considering who is using the violence and why.

The theologians of the *Kairos* document note that it is not enough to criticize 'Church theology' but they must account for it. The first thing they note is that there is "a lack of social analysis." The indiscriminate and uncritical use of "absolute principles" in 'Church Theology' is evidence of this. There is almost no attempt to analyze either what is happening or why it is happening. The lack of political strategy in Church Theology is also evidence of this. But why the lack of social analysis in Church Theology? The answer is the *type of faith and spirituality* that has dominated the Church for centuries. This type has been both otherworldly without interest in this world and secondly it has been understood to be "purely private and individualistic."

In light of the heresy of State Theology and the inadequacy of Church Theology the theologians call for a Prophetic Theology. The first task of this theology would be an attempt at social analysis. The second task of this theology is to name oppression as a major theme of the Bible. The third task of this theology is to name tyranny as a sin that the Christian tradition has responded to within its history. The fourth task of theology is to provide for, in the moment of crisis, a Christian message of hope in coming kingdom.

Insight outcome #6

Greater understanding of the reasons given for insisting on the importance of integrating faith and justice

Smith, James K.A. 2009. "The paucity of secularism?" (blog). *The Immanent Frame*.
<http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2009/03/02/the-paucity-of-secularism/>. (JH)

In this review of Nicholas Wolterstorff's book, *Justice: Rights and Wrongs*, Reformed philosopher James K.A. Smith outlines and then criticizes the thesis advanced: namely, that rights-based accounts of justice supply important correctives to "eudaimonistic" alternatives. Although Smith and Wolterstorff ultimately come

down on opposite sides of this issue (*The Immanent Frame* published subsequent responses by Wolterstorff and Smith), the two philosophers model a discussion that takes justice talk very seriously. Both Reformed philosophers share the fundamental idea that the task of public justice is both 1) intimately bound up with the Christian life; and 2) that a purely “secular” order of state and society does not have the resources to maintain justice on a conceptual or concrete level. For Smith, this is because liberal-democratic secular states such as our own operate on the assumption that human beings have to be protected *qua* individuals who are possessors of unalienable rights. This individualist anthropology cannot help but be antagonistic in the sense that justice becomes identical with *prevention*. For Wolterstorff, the critique does not run as deeply. Wolterstorff encourages an understanding of rights-language that is not individualistic--one that includes the importance of social *responsibilities* as opposed to mere prevention of wrongs. In either case, this discussion is helpful insofar as it models high-level discussion that *begins* from the idea that faith and justice belong together--even in the context of disagreement. (JH)

Steenland, Brian and Philip Goff, eds. 2014. *The New Evangelical Social Engagement*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Stout, Jeffrey. 2010. *Blessed are the Organized: Grassroots Democracy in America*. Princeton: Princeton UP. (Especially chs. 13, 15, 16, 17) (HA)

Insight outcome #7

Greater understanding of insights from social science disciplines (e.g., behavior change) that are relevant to understanding and achieving justice mobilization

Beaman, Lori G. “Religious Freedom and Neoliberalism: From Harm to Cost-benefit.” *Encyclopedia of Social Welfare History in North America*, John Middlemist Herrick and Paul H. Stuart (eds.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers, 2013.

According to the author, although Canada has earned a general reputation for resisting the more resolutely American commitment to the modern, “neoliberal” market-state, there is reason to think that this broad description no longer applies to the trajectory Canadian legal discourse. Beaman uses *Alberta v. Hutterian Brethren of Wilson Colony*, a legal dispute about whether photographs ought to be mandatory for all licensed drivers in Alberta, as evidence for this hypothesis.

Whereas past religious freedom issues in Canada have been largely adjudicated with the language of “harm”--especially harm to those who might have their religious liberties undermined--Beaman argues that the *Hutterian Brethren* case exemplifies a more starkly “neoliberal” line of reasoning that takes the form of “cost-benefit analysis” for the province of Alberta. The court’s decision, Beaman says, relies primarily “on a cost-benefit analysis which displaces considerations of equality, harm, fairness and justice, the Court enters a new era in that neoliberal logic overtakes a previous commitment to an expansive definition of religion and the fledgling promise of religious freedom, and substantive equality, for religious minorities (208).”

Bean, Lydia. 2014. “Compassionate conservatives? Evangelicals, economic conservatism, and national identity.” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 53(1): 164-186. (SV)

The study explores the observation that Canadian and US Evangelical Christians, who share very similar theology and markers of evangelical identity, exhibit rather different attitudes toward the poor, and

construct different narratives regarding the relationship between religious motivation, addressing poverty, and government programs.

By comparing churches in Canada and the US from similar theological traditions that share evangelical identity, the author challenges the assumption that evangelical Christians are necessarily “compassionate conservatives,” favouring individual charitable activity over-against government welfare programs, and that such economic conservatism can be explained predominantly through theology. That is, the author argues that there is no necessary link between theological conservatism and economic conservatism. Rather, she argues that visions of national identity shape the way that religious practice is linked to political attitudes and civic engagement, such that “US and Canadian evangelicals...use their shared theological tools in very different ways.” This difference arises because of the ways in which they imagine broader cultural membership - that is, because of their vision of national identity.

The author concludes that Canadian evangelicals see poor Canadians as members of Canadian society deserving help, thus expressing themes of national solidarity and citizenship that are reflected in and legitimize government-led welfare and other poverty-reduction programs. By contrast, American evangelicals describe poverty alleviation as their Christian responsibility to extend grace to “undeserving” American poor, thus excluding those poor from their vision of “good Americans” - i.e. from their national identity - and framing government intervention as an intrusion and symptom of national moral degradation. Thus, the author concludes that Canadian evangelicals see their faith-based compassion “as an extension of government-led efforts to fight poverty,” imbuing these efforts with religious meaning rather than as competitive with and in opposition to evangelical theology and identity.

This comparative study demonstrates that national context, particularly visions of national identity - who belongs and who does not - influences how evangelical Christians employ their theological tradition to justify and engage in anti-poverty efforts. This suggests that justice mobilization efforts should take national context into account, and can draw on visions of national identity - e.g. who is identified as “Canadian,” points of national pride such as Medicare, etc. - as well as theology in constructing a faith-based motivation for addressing justice issues.

Smith, Corwin, Kevin den Dulk, James Penning, Stephen Monsma and Douglas Koopman. 2008. *Pews Prayers and Participation: Religion and Civic Responsibility in America*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. (Especially chapter 4) (HA)

Given the current American context, marked by an increase in the political abstention and a decline in long-term memberships to volunteer-based organizations, there is a growing interest in the analysis of the role that religions play in the prompting of individuals to social action. Taking advantage of this, the authors argue that a closer look at the trends in religious and civic participation reveals a transformation, and not necessary decline, of Americans’ level of social engagement. They will conclude that the personalizing –privatizing- trend in religious affiliation is reflected in nuanced ways of civic engagement not necessarily measured by political abstention and long-term membership. In order to defend this argument, the authors extend their analysis beyond the borders of what is traditionally called “civic engagement”.

The authors argue, from what they define as a long tradition of research, that even today one can find a strong causal link between religious participation and civic responsibility. According to them, the key to understand their insights is in the distinction between civic responsibility and civic engagement. They

conclude that religion continues to shape behaviours related to civic responsibility through the strengthening of the individual virtues and capacities that underpin such participation. Therefore, the impact of “the religious” in the social landscape is not only through facilitating association –which is commonly studied- but through the grounding of civic behaviours in religious and ethical principles. Through seven sociological studies on the topic, the authors conclude that different forms of religious expression lead to different levels of civic participation and that once this fact is acknowledged one will also have to accept the important although transformed role that religion has in American society today. Even though the conclusions seem to be exclusively relevant to the American context, the distinctions drawn, between ‘civic engagement’ and the broader concept of ‘civic responsibility’, and between different levels of religious expression, could be extrapolated to a larger context.

Insight outcome #8

Greater understanding of the extent to which contemporary Christians equate justice with charity/mercy

Baker, Hunter. “Reflections on Social Justice, Government, and Society.” *Journal of Markets and Morality* 15.1 (Spring 2012), 143-159. (JH)

The author argues that the “role of government” is a primary concern for discussions about social justice. “Work in the voluntary sector” (i.e. charity) ought to be the primary realm in which we enact social justice because it does not have the same negative consequences associated with government “coercion.” Rather than “achieving some great dream for all people,” government has a legitimate monopoly on violent force only if it restricts its role to “frustrat[ing] the designs of those who do evil.” This purely negative role for government is God ordained, according to the author.

Loewenberg, Frank M. 2001. *From Charity to Social Justice: The Emergence of Communal Institutions for the Support of the Poor in Ancient Judaism*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers. (JH)

Marullo, Sam and Bob Edwards. “From Charity to Justice: The Potential of University-Community Collaboration for Social Change.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 43, 895-912. (JH)

This article argues for a transformational approach to understanding the relationship between acts of charity and social justice specifically in the context of the North American university. Whereas the predominant model of university-community relations has been carried out in the mode of “charity” (i.e. the willful distribution of an individual’s or institution’s resources to needy people in the community), the authors argues that, while helpful at times, tends to legitimate structural, long-term problems. Among these problems are power imbalances and discrepancies in the long-term availability of resources for poorer members of the community.

Rather than disparaging charity-oriented community involvement altogether, however, the article focuses on possibilities for addressing its problems by transforming it into a mechanism for systemic social change. The authors marks two objectives that fit into this larger end: (1) to transform charity work into “a larger political change strategy or process, in which charitable acts can lead to a redistribution of resources that changes institutions,” and (2) as a “first step in a process of politicization that puts community service volunteers on the path to becoming instruments of social change.”

While the literature addressing the discrepancy between charity work and social justice has often revealed how detrimental the former can be in relation to the latter, relatively few sources have explored charity's potential for community organization. Among the details necessary for such a model of university-community relations is an emphasis on interdisciplinarity in university curricula. If disciplines are compartmentalized to the extent that it becomes difficult for students in one field to converse intelligently with others, the sort of community involvement and its politicization is an impossible task. While this has been explored at the level of education *per se* it is equally if not more important for the "practical" issue of community involvement.

Beyond just teacher-student operations and curricula, though, another necessary condition for the sort of robust university-community relations pictured here are institutional and administrative commitments. Maintaining focus despite student turnover and providing faculty incentives for such maintenance are examples.

According to the authors, it is not enough to simply argue about the unfortunate relationship between charity and social justice—we have to "channel" the former into the latter by means of an intentional vision shared by the entirety of large institutions such as universities.

Insight outcome #9

Greater understanding of the weight that *normative* literature on the relationship between Christian faith and justice (especially literature from the Reformed intellectual tradition) places upon Biblical, Theological, Philosophical, etc., grounds for determining the appropriate relationship between faith and justice

Goudzwaard, Bob. "A Response to Michael Novak's 'Human Dignity, Personal Liberty'" *Journal of Markets and Morality* 5.1 (2002), 113-125. (JH)

This article is a response to the Catholic neo-conservative Michael Novak of the Acton Institute. Bob Goudzwaard, a well-renowned economist and social theorist in the Reformed (or Reformational, more specifically) tradition begins by highlighting some of the profound similarities between Reformed and Catholic Social Teaching, citing Abraham Kuyper's response to Pope Leo XIII's encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*. Although the two Christian traditions differ in vocabulary, their mutual commitment to the State's active role in both public and distributive justice is explicit.

Goudzwaard criticizes Novak for missing what he perceives to be a vital point about philosophical anthropology in Catholic Social Teaching. He cites John Paul's *Centesimus Annus* in order to stress the fact that agency is not limited to isolated individuals in a market economy. On the contrary, *social institutions* have their own acting status—one that cannot be reduced to the voluntary interaction of individuals as individuals first and foremost. In Goudzwaard's view, social institutions should be recognized not primarily as random associations of individuals' subjective preferences, but rather as a vital component of a society ordered towards a meaningful common good.

Without disparaging Novak's broadly Austrian perspective on economic matters (especially in regards to the oppressive tendencies of centralized power), Goudzwaard argues that the individualism implicit in this approach to understanding economic activity simply misses the mark on an anthropological level. Questions of what counts as "good" can never be reduced to subjective preferences. Reformed Christians and Catholics

should be able to agree on this point.

Glanville, Mark. "Ancient Laws and New Canadian Refugee Legislation: Evaluating Bill C-31 in Light of the Book of Deuteronomy." *Refuge* 29.1 (Sept 2013), 115-119. (JH)

This article is a critique of Bill-31 ("Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act"), which presents new challenges for refugees trying to obtain permanent residency in Canada in the name of national security, from the perspective of Old Testament biblical ethics--the book of Deuteronomy in particular. The author is an Old Testament scholar whose research has to do with the Hebrew word *ger* (stranger). Deuteronomic law mandates that the Israelites admit the stranger into the social, cultural and economic life of the people. This is an expression of Israel's own history as a diaspora or refugee nation.

Glanville's appropriation of Deuteronomic law is a wonderful example of what it means for Christians to have clear and distinct commitments regarding particular social justice issues from a specifically biblical perspective. Although this can and should have more purchase in the lives of Bible-believing Christians, the critique has limited potential for effectiveness when it comes to influencing those who do not view the Bible as having any normative authority in the public sphere.

de Gruchy, John W. 1991. *Liberating Reformed Theology: A South African Contribution to an Ecumenical Debate*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. (IB)

The author argues, following Kuyper and Troeltsch, that 16th and 17th century Calvinism was not just a set of doctrines and denominations but a life system contributing to the reconstruction of social reality. Yet, as history has shown, this 'world-formative impulse' can become a 'world-repressive comprise with established orders' as seen in, for example, Puritan New England and especially Apartheid South Africa. Although entrenched social, political and economic interests shape this a major contributing factor is when reformed theology loses its critical role and instead becomes static and subservient to the tradition: the reformed tradition needs a reforming theology.

In order for reformed theology to be critical and reforming it needs to receive the impact of Scripture as liberating word. This is difficult both because of the social location and ideological readings of most interpreters and even the ideological embeddedness of some of the Canon. The key for Calvin and the Reformed tradition was reading the bible in light of the reign of God revealed in Jesus Christ, thus keeping both the evangelical and prophetic aspects of the Scripture's message. What liberation theology can contribute to Reformed theology is the reminder that this Christocentric reading must be connected to the "prophetic and liberating trajectory" found in Scripture which also provides the Canon with "its own internal ideological critique" (pg 84). In light of this one can say that the Reformed tradition's understanding of the kingdom of God has been too often spiritualized and de-historicized.

The author discusses everything from original sin, to the nature-grace debate to conversion and suggests that what all have in common in traditional reformed theology is their basis in an individualist conception of reality, rather than a social one. In order to 'liberate' these doctrines they need to be understood with reference to human social reality rather than reduced individualistically. Situating these doctrines with a social conception of reality is not novel but a return to the biblical worldview and away from an unscriptural interpretive framework.

Kuyper, Abraham. 1991. *The Problem of Poverty*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Pub. (JH)

Mouw, Richard J., and John Howard Yoder. 1989. "Evangelical ethics and the Anabaptist-Reformed dialogue." *Journal Of Religious Ethics* 17, no. 2: 121-137. (IB)

After reviewing the emergence of a self-conscious evangelical movement from a mid-20th century fundamentalism marked by an unreflective reactionism, the authors' turn their attention to social ethics. They argue that since the 1950s evangelicals have been attempting to ground social ethics in a robust tradition, and that furthering this project requires close attention to the commonalities of the Anabaptist and Reformed traditions. Arguing against the 'received wisdom' that these two traditions are unfamiliar and incompatible, Mouw and Yoder note four commonalities that could greatly enrich evangelical social ethics. First, both traditions confess a *sola scriptura* principle that is more radical than other Christian traditions. Second, there is a strong 'volitionist' emphasis in both communities, meaning that both traditions emphasize the necessity of a radical transformation of the human will. Third, both traditions have a strong sense of the relationship between Old and New Testaments, even if it is expressed differently. There is also a sense of the corporate nature of the church as the people of God in each community. Finally, both traditions posit a strong connection between personal piety and corporate commitments. If the Reformed and Anabaptist traditions would be able to embrace each other's similarities in these four ways, they could seriously contribute to the formation of a more robust evangelical social ethic.

Pennings, Ray. 2003. "Kuyper's Sphere Sovereignty and Modern Economic Institutions" in *Comment*. Hamilton, ON: Cardus. (JH)

This author resources various primary material of the Dutch-Reformed philosopher and politician Abraham Kuyper in the context of contemporary economic life. According to the author, the vague middle ground upon which contemporary political discourse in North America usually settles should be called liberalism. This species of liberalism has nothing to do with the "Left"—rather, it is the concrete reality of a social order that must find compromise in a discourse of Left vs. Right, "liberal" (in another sense) vs. "conservative". One of the most difficult problems associated with this kind of liberalism is the consistent maintenance of a thriving civil society characterized most notably by robust *intermediary institutions*. These kinds of institutions are uniquely situated to do the hard work of forming virtues in citizenry at the level of local communities.

Contemporary liberalism—in both its leftist and conservative versions—has difficulties maintaining these essential structures of society because its legal and social vocabulary tends to be dominated by individual rights and freedoms. If every institution must ultimately answer to such a normative framework, successful community identity is difficult to cultivate.

Kuyper's doctrine of sphere sovereignty, which is an attempt to schematize economic life as simply one sphere among others (such as government and civil society, for example), is an attempt to address in a non-reductive manner the imbalances of power in society *as a whole*—as opposed to the aggregate of individual, rights-bearing citizens. On this model, the for-profit economy is accountable to other "spheres", yet somewhat autonomous, as well. In other words, "free markets" are legitimate only insofar as they perform tasks which can only make sense in light of society as a whole. Precisely because intermediary institutions are the life-blood of society, they acquire a new social and even legal status that demands a certain attention and cultivation from all spheres of society. This status is possible because of the twist on existing social and legal vocabulary that comes from such Kuyper's alternative to liberalism.

Smith, James K.A. and James H. Olthuis, eds. 2005. *Radical Orthodoxy and the Reformed Tradition: Creation,*

Covenant, and Participation. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. (Especially Part 3: Polis and Ecclesia: Cultural Engagement)

Wolterstorff, Nicholas. 2013. *Journey Toward Social Justice: Personal Encounters in the Global South.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. (HA)

Journey Toward Justice: Personal Encounters in the Global South is one of the volumes of the *Turning South* series, a project aiming to explore the impact that the growth of Protestantism in the Global South has had in the way in which Christianity is understood and lived in North America. In this volume, the American philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff writes a “tour” through his thoughts on justice, a non-systematic compendium of [1]his ideas on this subject and [2]the personal experiences that have informed them. Wolterstorff states that his particular insistence and way of reflecting on “justice” developed from the empathy he feels with those being wronged. Wolterstorff’s encounter with the Global South thus led his concern for justice from the periphery of his life to the centre of his professional work, a transition which is presented as indicative of North American Christianity as a whole.

Journey Toward Justice is written under the premise that the advent of global Christianity is a threefold phenomenon of Christianity’s “demography, vitality, and influence,” (vii) where the demographic transformation unfolds into a new interpretation of this faith tradition’s mandate and a reorientation of its scholarship. The foreword of this book presents Wolterstorff as an example of this larger trend, evidencing a transformation in the professional direction undertaken North American Christian scholars as a response to the Christian presence in the Global South.

Wolterstorff places injustice at the heart of his methodology, stating that it is close attention to injustice what illuminates one’s notion of justice. Since the problems of “the wronged” are not solved with fair distributions, Wolterstorff’s departs from Rawls’ understanding of justices as “distribution of rights and duties, benefits and burdens, by the basic social institutions in an ideal society,” and turns to “think about justice in our actual societies...” (245) This analysis, says Wolterstorff, led him to an inherent rights conception, strongly grounded in the Ulpian understanding of rendering to each what is her right, and heavily informed by the Christian connection between the Old Testament’s emphasis on justice and the New Testament’s attention to love.

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