

The Christian Witness in the Earthly City:
John H. Yoder as Augustinian Interlocutor

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Seek the peace of the city -- its welfare, its prosperity, its shalom. This was Jeremiah's last word to Israel's exiles in Babylon.¹ The social stance to which it called them was supple and manifold, requiring them to stubbornly preserve their identity yet sufferingly serve the common good they shared with their conquering enemy.

And so too, both Augustine of Hippo and John Howard Yoder. Intriguingly, each in his own way ended long reflections about the role of the Church in the world at this same point, exhorting Christians to follow the model of Jeremiah's exiles in Babylon. This, I will argue, is no mere coincidence. For Augustine's last word on how the "heavenly city" of Christians still on pilgrimage should live amid the "earthly city" has served Christian traditions in the West not so much as a final answer to the question of how they should order their politics within the passing societies of the age, but rather as a definitive statement of that question. We can thus construe Yoder's pacifist, ecclesial social ethic as a late answer -- perhaps the best answer -- to the very question that Augustine did so much to sharpen but ultimately left hanging: Just how are we to seek the peace of the city, without eroding our loyalty to that better one in whose hope we move and live?

Converging upon Jeremiah

St. Augustine of Hippo has exercised such an abiding influence upon political thought in the West for a curious reason: intrinsic to his vision of human society is the insight that we can

never quite set our affairs in order and never quite get our politics right. The world's best possible peace is a shadowy one; its most stable order is a tenuous one; its fullest possible justice is always only somewhat more just than current arrangements. In fact, the very effort to forge a definitive political order lies at the root of many of humanity's gravest injustices, disorders and conflicts. Inevitably if not explicitly, therefore, politics according to Augustine must always be temporal, tentative, and revisable.² This leaves every generation with a remainder to rework. And that makes Augustinian political thought itself into an ongoing debate that no age, system or ideology can definitively capture.³

If the politics Augustine charted for the earthly city is necessarily and rightly incomplete, however, the same cannot be said of Augustine's ecclesiology. Given the rigor of Augustine's critique of the Roman Empire in City of God, and the depth of political insight that his critique occasioned, one might have expected from him an ecclesiology at least as thorough as his political theory. If an adequate account of the life of the Church must include not just a theological metaphysic but a practicable sociology, however, Augustine's ecclesiology is elusive -- suggestive at best.⁴

In contrast to the proud earthly city of Rome he critiqued in City of God, the pilgrim heavenly city which is the Church thrives by humbling itself and glorifying God, not self, nor the collective self of nation. Its love is not for domination, but for God, neighbor and even enemy. And though no one can mistake Augustine for a pacifist, he recognized that the Church had in fact extended itself through the faithfulness of the martyrs and the witness of a people who, like the Hebrews, "was gathered and united in a kind of community designed to perform [the] sacred function of revelation" through "signs and symbols appropriate to the times."⁵ This witnessing presence in the world hints at the affirmation of the Second Vatican Council that the Church itself is the sacrament of the world's salvation. It also hints at the truthful power of what Yoder called the creative minority, whose presence is the "original revolution" in the world.

But by now we are only talking about hints. What Augustine's ecclesiology lacks is a politics or sociology to chart out how Christians are to live simultaneously in the earthly and

heavenly cities, without confusing their loyalties or conflating their duties. A passage often assumed to provide normative guidance for the Christian politician may illustrate.

How are we to interpret book 19 of the City of God in general, and the identity of “our wise man” the reluctant judge of City of God 19.6 in particular? The chapter begins with recognition that even in human cities that are relatively at peace, some must pass judgments upon others. But anyone informed by the best wisdom of human philosophy would recognize how imperfect was the Roman juridical process, with its use of torture. Doing one’s duty to preserve justice in the earthly city thus necessitated an array of tragic choices: release the innocent only after undeserved torture, execute the innocent upon false confession, or execute an actual criminal without certainty of the grounds. Because “our wise man” recognized “this darkness that attends the life of human society” without flinching, he would accept its claims, do his duty, and sit on the bench without shirking. “Here we have what I call the wretchedness of man’s situation,” wrote Augustine. And if the wise man was not to be called wicked, that was only because he hated the very “necessity of his own actions,” learned a further wisdom from devotion to God, and cried out for deliverance from his necessities.

To most interpreters, the lesson we should take from Augustine has seemed obvious. In the following chapter, City of God 19.7, “our wise man” now turned “wise judge” serves as template for explaining why even the best and wisest philosopher officials will not only punish wrong-doers but wage wars, however reluctantly. But though that much is straightforward in the text, the standard interpretation goes farther than the text itself warrants. For when it makes “our wise man” into the exemplar for any Christian politician it assumes that Augustine’s purpose was to provide a normative argument rather than a description of the human predicament apart from God.

In fact, most of City of God 19 is about indictment not guidance. It is one of Augustine’s many and characteristic endeavors to drive his readers to despair -- precisely in order that they like he will look elsewhere for hope, recognize their need for God and cry out for deliverance.⁶ The first chapters of City of God 19 constitute the climax to the master argument of the tome:

The Roman aristocrats who accuse Christianity of weakening Roman virtue are the ones who have weakened the empire by failing to match the virtues of the old Romans.⁷ But even the virtues of the old and founding Romans in fact had rested on vices -- love of glory, praise, domination, and self.⁸ Ancient philosophers offered somewhat better counsel about where to lodge one's hope and how to pursue the human good, especially the Platonists.⁹ But even they fell short by seeking their good through pride in their own efforts, rather than faith in God.^{hftn} And if the one thing the philosophers all agreed upon was that the human good must be social, the best that human society had to offer was a "shadowy peace" still full of ills, enmity and tragic choices.¹ Such is the panorama of misery Augustine has just finished presenting in City of God 19.5.

"Our wise man" of 19.6, then, was the one who had learned all these lessons -- the best that Roman civic culture and antique philosophical eclecticism had to offer. He was Stoic in composure, Platonic in aspiration, and perhaps somewhere upon the threshold of Christian devotion to God, but no more than that was certain. What he should do next in his official capacity simply was not the driving point of Augustine's argument.

Augustine knew and counselled many such men, of course. But the pastoral counsel he offered them often responded as much to Augustine's pragmatism as his principle. Disjunctures between his systematic reflection and his occasional letters are as much a sign that he himself was unsettled about what "our wise man" and judge should do next, once devoted to God, as they are an authoritative template for Christian political engagement.

The normative guidance that Augustine did offer to worldly-wise Christians in City of God 19, was to look to God for hope, to look to the heavenly city for citizenship, and to look at the earthly city as no better than a

¹. City of God 19.5.

'93captivity.'" They should not cease to be "a society of resident aliens" drawn from many languages and cultures (19.17) -- not abandon therefore the status that Christians had embraced prior to Constantine.¹⁰ The inadequate, shadowy peace of the earthly city surely had value insofar as it gave the Church time and space to grow in the worship of God, but Christians should merely use this earthly peace not rest in it or identify with it as their own. If Jeremiah's exiles were the template for Christian political engagement then yes, one way to seek the peace of the city might be to work as civil servants. But unlike the Roman officials with whom Augustine corresponded, Diaspora Jews had had little trouble remembering themselves to be captives. They dare not forget that they were in Babylon, that resistance to imperial idolatry could never cease to be an option, and that they belonged first to God and God's people.¹¹

For all practical purposes, Jeremiah's final exhortation was Augustine's last word on politics and Christian engagement in City of God. It does not solve but rather leaves hanging the question of how exactly Christians are to seek the peace of the earthly city. To take the practices of Augustine's wise judge as our final answer to the question of how to seek the peace of the city, is to misread Augustine's larger argument, to ignore his rhetorical practices, and above all to beg the question Augustine left hanging. The "wise man" of City of God 19 then serves as a blank for later interpreters to fill in with whatever they have already decided to be the best wisdom of their age; his "necessities" become whatever they think they must do when they "do what they have to do" on other grounds. And if Augustine himself could only barely imagine a Christian politics that helped answer the wise man's cry for deliverance -- if he himself assumed that the best his Christian friends in high places could do was act like "our wise man" and carry out their "necessities" with purer intentions and authentic grief in their hearts -- that only means that he too was begging the question that Jeremiah put to him, even as he posed it definitively for later Christian traditions.

Now, what if a later interpreter accepted the contours of Augustine's critique of the earthly city but did more than he to explore the implications of Jeremiah's guidance for life in exile and Diaspora? What if he did at least as much to help Christian "resident aliens" remain

clear about where their ultimate loyalties lie? And what if he thus identified a more complete and creative politics for the pilgriming heavenly city that is obliged to seek the peace of the earthly city? It would hardly seem remarkable for someone to describe that interpreter as deeply engaged in the Augustinian project.

Except of course that I refer to John Howard Yoder.

Diverging from Niebuhr

Reinhold Niebuhr's name appears only rarely in the last book that John Yoder prepared for publication, For the Nations.¹² Yet as Yoder turned to Jeremiah and Diaspora for models of constructive social engagement he was answering -- one more time, in one more way -- the Niebuhrian charge that often seems to have shaped his career.¹³ That charge: Christians who embrace the nonviolent ethic of Jesus might be getting Jesus right, but thus render themselves politically irrelevant and socially irresponsible.

Diaspora Judaism belied this charge. What Jeremiah had made clear was that living in exile without political sovereignty was an opportunity for mission and constructive contribution to the good of other cultures. Though counter-cultural in one sense it was pro-cultural in another. Acting "for the nations" did not depend on the ability of Diaspora Jews to gain access to reins of power, nor understanding from host cultures.¹⁴ They had contributed more not less precisely because they repeatedly became fluent in other peoples' cultural "languages" without losing the thought world of their own particular "language" or identity.¹⁵ While their social posture might be sectarian in some technical sociological sense, it was that very posture that gave them resources to be more rather than less socially engaged, responsible, and efficacious -- in other words, to be anything but sectarian in the pejorative ethical sense.¹⁶

So even though Yoder did not set out intentionally to critique one strand of Augustinian political thought by drawing upon another, closer attention to Jeremiah's exiles showed that "our wise man's" necessities might not be quite so necessary after all. Reinhold Niebuhr was nothing

if not a 20th century American version of that “wise man.” He was worldly-wise according to the best wisdom of his age, claimed remorse for actions that fell short of God’s true peace, yet was “tough-minded” enough to recognize his necessities and do what apparently had to be done. As such, having become a “wise judge” presiding over the court of public opinion in mid-century Protestant America and among its Washington elite, Niebuhr like the Stoic of City of God 19.6 provided a template for “wise” warriors to follow.¹⁷

For Yoder to move inadvertently closer to Augustine when he critiqued the putatively Augustinian Niebuhr on eminently Augustinian grounds was nothing new, however. Niebuhr sometimes portrayed his own work as a recovery of Augustine’s orthodox doctrine of sin and human limitation in the face of misguided liberal optimism about human perfectability.¹

^{footnote1.} Reinhold Niebuhr, “Reply to Interpretation and Criticism,” in Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social, and Political Thought, edited by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, The Library of Living Theology, vol. 11 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), 436; Reinhold Niebuhr, “Intellectual Autobiography,” in Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social, and Political Thought, edited by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, The Library of Living Theology, vol. 11 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), 9; Reinhold Niebuhr, Human Nature, vol. 1 of The Nature and Destiny of Man, reprint, 1941, The Scribner Lyceum Editions Library (New York: Scribner’s, 1964), 49; Reinhold Niebuhr, The Irony of American History, The Scribner Lyceum Editions Library (New York: Scribner’s, 1952), 17. Yoder had pointed out how impoverished was Niebuhr’s orthodoxy already in the early fifties.

“In spite of the appearance of the label ‘neo-orthodox,’” wrote Yoder in his 1954 essay on Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Pacifism, he “is far from what a historian of theology could call orthodox.”¹⁸ Although Niebuhr’s recovery of an orthodox doctrine of sin constituted a proper and largely biblical diagnosis of the human predicament, according to Yoder, it “consistently slighted” all “those Christian doctrines which relate to [God’s] redemption” and point to the Bible’s answer to our deepest human need. Yoder reminded Niebuhrians, therefore, of the resurrection and the “new ethical possibilities” that it opens up through grace and

regeneration. Anticipating themes in his later work, he pointed out the absence of the church in Niebuhr's thought and corrected this omission by pointing towards ways that it breaks with the patterns of group egoism that Niebuhr thought demonstrated the inevitability of war. Of course that break is not complete in the human society of the church, but in 1954 Yoder was also preparing to counter positions such as Niebuhr's by stressing the need for an adequate eschatology.¹⁹ Meanwhile, as Yoder observed in Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Pacifism, "the common denominator of the above-mentioned doctrines of resurrection, the church, and regeneration is that all are works of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is likewise neglected in Niebuhr's ethics."²⁰

Though Yoder did not say so, however, a theology that took the reality of sin seriously yet continued to chart the course of a multinational society of pilgrims being transformed truly if only partially in this life through the love of God "poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us"²¹ -- well, this was a theology that became more not less Augustinian even as it challenged Niebuhr. Ecclesiology, eschatology, pneumatology, and grace were precisely the Augustinian doctrines that Niebuhr had generally left out.

Yoder's long debate with Niebuhr, on terms that were surprisingly Augustinian both early and late in his career, does not make Yoder himself him an "Augustinian," of course. Characteristic of his life-long approach to ethical debate and ecumenical conversation alike was that very willingness he associated with Diaspora Judaism to learn other people's languages and engage them on their own terms, without confusing linguistic systems or endorsing his interlocutors' ethics or worldviews.

And yet one wonders. If nothing else, the length and breadth of Yoder's debate with Niebuhrism makes it something more than one conversation among Yoder's many. In any case, Augustinian assumptions surfaced even when Yoder moved from critique of Niebuhrian politics to constructive proposals for political engagement according to his own peace church tradition.

The primary audience for Yoder's The Christian Witness to the State was "nonresistant Christians" (6) who doubted that they could or should address policy deliberations by the state at all. Where Yoder worked from assumptions that coincide with Augustine's we may safely suppose that they respond to his own desire to articulate a biblical theology, rather than to respond to the more constraining rhetorical task of meeting Niebuhr's agenda.²² A reader familiar with characteristic ways of thought in both Augustine and Yoder will note that Yoder's Christian witness to the state corresponds with Augustine's attitudes toward the earthly city in numerous ways:

1. Both Augustine and Yoder shared a markedly eschatological frame of reference, and a corresponding recognition that the present challenge for God's people is to live "between the times."²³

2. For Augustine and Yoder, however, eschatology was not just a question of time, but a question of space, wherein the two societies are presently inter-mixed, yet distinguished according to their ends, loyalties and loves.²⁴

3. For both Augustine and Yoder, the purpose of history and the good of the social order are never knowable on their own terms.²⁵

4. To be sure, nations tend to think otherwise, so in turn, Augustine and Yoder identified pride as the great problem for the state and made thorough-going critiques of imperial presumption.²⁶

5. Still, even though the capacity of the state to effect true peace with justice is always limited -- and to think otherwise is to invite the very pride that tends toward greater injustice -- Augustine and Yoder both expect that Christians can always call the social order and the state to do somewhat better. Hence the Jeremianic injunction to seek the peace of the earthly city.²⁷

6. Finally, Augustine and Yoder stated similar motivations for seeking the peace of the earthly city²² : the aid it afforded to the mission of the Church which is the true purpose of history, and love of neighbor.²⁸

Testing the Counter-Intuitive

Of course Augustine and Yoder differed too -- most obviously in their respective acceptance and rejection of Christian participation in war. If that difference is incommensurable, my purpose is not to domesticate Augustine for pacifists but to make it all the harder for non-pacifist Christians to marginalize Yoder's witness. Stated modestly, my claim is that an Augustinian can be a pacifist and a pacifist can be an Augustinian.²⁹ Stated strongly, my claim might be that they must -- but I am not so foolish as to expect a single paper to establish such a claim. The modest claim that one can be both a pacifist and an Augustinian is counter-intuitive and challenging enough. To make it imaginable is therefore response enough. It is imaginable because John Howard Yoder himself was a serious contender for, within, and not strictly over-against the Augustinian legacy.

And yet this claim will prove stronger still if the counter-intuitive intuits more than we expected. Stanley Hauerwas, in the final chapter of his Peaceable Kingdom,³⁰ has already tested the counter-intuition by showing why pacifists need something of an Augustinian spirituality in order to sustain their struggle and witness. And he has done so by drawing on that Augustinian sensibility which Reinhold Niebuhr did properly share.

A "spirituality of peaceableness" must sustain joy, thankfulness, and hope even while training us to face the tragedy of our world -- nay, our own love of self-delusion -- with unblinking honesty. This was Hauerwas's conclusion as he surveyed the classic 1932 debate in the pages of The Christian Century between H. Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr over Japan's invasion of Manchuria.³¹

The lesson to learn from the brothers Niebuhr, according to Hauerwas, was not that we must choose between them, but that we cannot sustain "the kind of [pacifist] position [then being] represented by H. Richard Niebuhr ... without a spirituality very much like that hinted at by Reinhold." Whatever else he was up to, Reinhold Niebuhr was training us in some of the very spiritual disciplines of patience and honesty we need to sustain a struggle for justice -- one

that is not surprised by setbacks nor deceived by relative gains. God's peace is dangerous, Hauerwas noted. It exposes the lies upon which human beings to a greater or lesser extent" have built all "social orders and institutions." For on our own, we use our loves, our loved ones, and our friends to create "a conspiracy of intimacy to protect each of our illusions" and allow us a measure of false "peace." We thus lash out against the stranger who would challenge our illusions. Unless, that is, we are hospitable to the God who is our ultimate stranger and challenger of our self-images. "Joy is thus finally a result of our being dispossessed of the illusion of security and power that is the breeding ground of our violence."³²

But all of this is deeply Augustinian.³³ If we do not need to choose between the brothers Niebuhr in every way, well, let's put it this way: What H. Richard Niebuhr got right about the hope we must live out through cells of that Christian international we call the Church, Yoder would later explain at greater length and in finer detail. What Reinhold Niebuhr got right about facing our illusions unblinkingly, Augustine was training us to do all along. Surely what matters most is that we choose the way of Jeremiah and Jesus, the gift God gave us long before Augustine and Yoder. Between these two witnesses, though, we need not choose.

Notes

¹. Jeremiah 29:7.

². The broad interpretative claims so far in this paragraph are substantiated in the references to Augustine on pp. 9-17, along with corresponding footnotes.

³. For a fuller argument that the Augustinian tradition has been such a resilient and living tradition precisely because of its inherent capacity for self-correction, see Gerald W. Schlabach, "The Correction of the Augustinians," in The Early Church and the Free Church: Bridging the Historical and Theological Divide, forthcoming, edited by Daniel H. Williams (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002).

⁴. H. Richard Niebuhr suggested something similar when he noted in Christ and Culture that Augustine's City of God lacked an ecclesiology to match its philosophy of history. See Christ and Culture, Harper Torchbooks/Cloister Library (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), 215-16.

¶29⁵. City of God 7.32 (quoted); 18.50.

⁶. On this characteristic, see John Cavadini, "The Structure and Intention of Augustine's De Trinitate," Augustinian Studies 23 (1992): 103-23; John C. Cavadini, "Time and Ascent in Confessions XI," in Augustine: Presbyter Factus Sum, papers originally presented at a

conference at Marquette University, November 1990, eds Joseph T. Lienhard, Earl C. Muller, and Roland J. Teske, *Collectanea Augustiniana* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1993), 171-85.

⁷. City of God²² 1.1, 1.33, 2.2.

⁸. City of God 5.12-20.

⁹. City of God 10.1, 19.1-4.

¹⁰. City of God 10.29.

¹⁰. Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus 5-6; Shepherd of Hermas s. 1; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata 6.5-6; Tertullian, The Apology 38; Origen, Against Celsus 8.75; The Life and Passion of Cyprian 11; Gregory of Nazianzen, Oration 43.49.

¹¹. City of God 19.10,17,26

¹². John Howard Yoder, For the Nations: Essays Public and Evangelical (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997).

¹³. Long-time students of Yoder will hardly need evidence that the debate with Niebuhr, Niebuhrianism, and the assumptions that other non-pacifist Christians had held but that Niebuhr definitively articulated, run like a thread throughout his career. Mennonite students of Yoder will also recognize that the response to Niebuhr's charge had already begun in the decade or two before Yoder began writing. The following references, therefore, are only a sample of

the most forthright statements recognizing the task of taking on Niebuhr, chosen because they thread back a half a century: Guy Franklin Hershberger, War, Peace, and Nonresistance, 3d ed., reprint, 1944, Christian Peace Shelf Selection (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1969), 236-54; John H[oward] Yoder, Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Pacifism, reprint, 1955, A Concern Reprint (Scottsdale, Pa.: Concern, n.d.); John Howard Yoder, The Christian Witness to the State, Institute of Mennonite Studies Series, no. 3 (Newton, Kan.: Faith and Life Press, 1964), 5-8, noting n. 4 on p. 7; John H[oward] Yoder, The Politics of Jesus (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1972), 11-25 (noting especially nn. 4, 7), 110-13; John Howard Yoder, The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics as Gospel (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 90-91, 100-01.

li0¹⁴. Yoder, For the Nations, 33-34, 67-68.

¹⁵. Yoder, For the Nations, 71. Cf. John Howard Yoder, "On not Being Ashamed of the Gospel: Particularity, Pluralism, and Validation," Faith and Philosophy 9, no. 3 (July 1992): 290-91.

¹⁶. Yoder, —, 3-5 Yoder prepared and entitled For the Nations in part to clarify that his own position was less contrarian than his former colleague Stanley Hauerwas's often appeared to be. Hauerwas, after all, had published Against the Nations. (Cf. the hint of this purpose in footnote 6 on p. 4 of For the Nations.) Long-time readers of Yoder, of course, know that he had regularly drawn up lists of the ways that a prophetic minority, creative minority, Abrahamic

community, Jeremianic Diaspora community, or any other preferred term for a putatively sectarian group provides societies-at-large with the resources for constructive social change. See for example Christian Witness to the State, 18-22; "Christ, the Hope of the World," in The Original Revolution: Essays on Christian Pacifism, Christian Peace Shelf (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1971), 203-07; "The Biblical Mandate for Evangelical Social Action," in For the Nations: Essays Public and Evangelical (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 184-89.

¹⁷. For a fresh account of the role that Niebuhr played in the emerging managerial elite of mid-century America, see Eugene McCarragher, Christian Critics: Religion and the Impasse in Modern American Social Thought (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 64-70, 91-97.

¹⁸. Yoder, Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Pacifism, 4.

¹⁹. See Yoder's essay "Peace Without Eschatology?", published in various versions: "If Christ is Truly Lord," in The Original Revolution: Essays on Christian Pacifism, Christian Peace Shelf (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1971), 64; "Peace Without Eschatology?" in The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical, edited by Michael G. Cartwright (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1994), 152-53.

np1033 ²⁰. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from this paragraph are from Yoder, Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Pacifism, 17-19. For an explicit statement of Yoder's acceptance of "Niebuhr's

real service to theology, and to pacifism, in making real the omnipresence of sin," see p. 19.

²¹. The quotation from Romans 5:5 is one often Augustine often cited in explicating his conception of Christian love.

²². Cf. previous note.

²³. City of God 10.7, 11.1, 15.2, 18.1, with Augustine's entire march through history closing in upon the final judgement (book 20), eternal punishment (book 21), and "the eternal bliss of the City of God" (book 22, as introduced in 22.1). Yoder, Christian Witness to the State, 8-11, 13, 17.

²⁴. City of God 1.35; 10.32, 14.1, 14.4, 14. Among the Augustine passages, note that in 1.35 Augustine's discussion of co- or intermixture imply an "invisible church" in which pacifism is scarcely imagineable because Christians look so much like non-Christians, but rather leads to pacifist possibilities, because among the enemies of the heavenly city are hidden its future citizens, who must therefore be treated patiently, until they convert.

²⁵. City of God 5-11-21, but especially 5.16 and 21, and cf. 19.17. Christian Witness to the State, 10-11, 13, 16, 17, 36, 40.

²⁶. City of God 4.3-6, 11.1, 12.1, 14.3-4, 13, 14.28, 15.7. Christian Witness to the State, 37-38.

³²⁷. City of God 5.12-15, 19.10-14, 19.17, 19.21, 19.26-27. Yoder, Christian Witness to the State, 6, 7, 13, 25, 32-33, 38-39, 42, 71-73. Key to Yoder's approach was the notion of "middle axioms," which he mentions on p. 32 and treats at greater length on pp. 71-73.

²⁸. City of God 19.7. Christian Witness to the State, 10-11, 14, 41-42

³²⁹. Though the purpose of this paper was not to reply to James Turner Johnson's somewhat haughty claim in the pages of the Journal of Religious Ethics that a pacifist can hardly begin to understand much less interpret Augustine, it obviously does constitute a reply. See "Can A Pacifist Have A Conversation with Augustine? A Response to Alain Epp Weaver," Journal of Religious Ethics 29, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 87-93.

³⁰. Stanley Hauerwas, "Tragedy and Joy: The Spirituality of Peaceableness," chapt. 8 in The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 135-51.

³¹. H. Richard Niebuhr, "The Grace of Doing Nothing," Christian Century 49 (23 March 1932): 378-80; Reinhold Niebuhr, "Must we Do Nothing?" Christian Century 49 (30 March 1932): 415-17; Hauerwas, "Tragedy and Joy," 135-40.

³². Hauerwas, "Tragedy and Joy," 141-48.

³³. For an exposition of Augustine's analysis of friendship and the illusions by which we subtly but wrongly use our friends, see Gerald W. Schlabach, "Friendship as Adultery: Social Reality and

Sexual Metaphor in Augustine's Doctrine of Original Sin," Augustinian Studies 23 (1992): 125-47. The current paper has demonstrated his unblinking social critique as practiced in The City of God and his practices of thorough-going self-examination are famous from his own Confessions.

2. The Christian Witness in the Earthly City: John Howard Yoder as Augustinian Interlocutor: Gerald W. Schlabach. 3. John Howard Yoder's Systematic Defense of Christian Pacifism: Nancey Murphy. 4. The War of the Lamb: Postmodernity and Yoder's Eschatological Genealogy of Morals: P. Travis Kroeker. 5. Foucault, Genealogy, Anabaptism: Confessions of an Errant Postmodernist: Peter C. Blum. 6. Yoder's Patience and/with Derrida's Différance: Peter C. Blum. 7. Patience, Witness, and the Scattered Body of Christ: Yoder and Virilio on Knowledge, Politics, and Speed: Chris K. Huebne John Howard Yoder, *The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics as Gospel* [1984]. Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom?* [1991]. Robert Audi and Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Religion in the Public Square: The Place of Religious Convictions in Political Debate* [1997] 5. Highly Recommended Texts: Oliver O'Donovan, *The Desire of the Nations: Rediscovering the Roots of Political Theology* [1996].

Each student will identify one or two essays which he/she regards as most agreeable to her own present convictions about church and state, politics and religion and write a short essay of no more than 900 words in which she identifies the author(s), states clearly and precisely what the author's position is, and indicates why the student finds it agreeable.