

reduce values crucial to human flourishing, and fewer values that increase dignity and work. The authors do not argue that markets are perfect; no institutional arrangement is perfect. Nor do they argue that free markets without virtue will function well. Their perspective is distinctly Christian and so they contend that capitalism is the best arrangement we have, given our humanity in the image of God and our sinfulness due to the fall. Market institutions, Grudem and Asmus make clear, are not perfect, but they can be improved. The alternatives are far worse. If nations will but implement the right policies and cultivate the right virtues, they will be well on their way to the goal of reaching prosperity and genuine flourishing for all citizens. It is not that the authors have posited a new theory but rather that they have coherently and comprehensively restated a synthesis of older economic, political, and moral ideas and have shown how and where these ideas are consistent with a Christian, biblical view. A final caveat: If the reader comes to this book with an essentially antimarket bias, he or she will probably not like it. The authors candidly tell the reader that markets are the best solution to the poverty problem. The book deserves to be read and widely discussed by Christians everywhere.

—Marc A. Clauson
Cedarville University, Ohio

Journey toward Justice: Personal Encounters in the Global South

Nicholas P. Wolterstorff

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2013 (272 pages)

Now at age eighty-two, Nicholas Wolterstorff (Noah Porter Professor Emeritus of Philosophical Theology at Yale University and senior fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, University of Virginia) has so far had a very active retirement. Since 2001, he has lectured and taught in various places, written numerous articles and two academic monographs on justice, and released several volumes of essays on various topics packed with new material alongside preretirement gems. Readers of any part of Wolterstorff's substantial and still growing corpus find a philosophical discourse distinguished for its penetrating analyses, relentless reasoning, and clear writing. *Journey toward Justice* is classic Wolterstorff with a bit of a twist: This time his philosophizing is woven into a personal narrative highlighting a series of life-shaping encounters with sufferers of injustice in the global south (mostly).

He is not ordinarily a reluctant author, though his work is rarely this personal outside of a few articles and his heart-rending *Lament for a Son*. He opens *Journey* with this notice: "Had it not been for the prodding of others, I would not have written this book." Why? "This is a story. I am a philosopher. Philosophers seldom tell stories; we deal in abstractions"—true of most analytic philosophers, at least. However, he offers this reason too: "Autobiography does not come easy to me." He attributes this to his Dutch Reformed upbringing in rural Minnesota where modesty, hard work, and understatement are the rule.

So begins one of Wolterstorff's most accessible works. He proceeds to describe "two awakening experiences" he had in the 1970s. The first was an encounter with the "so-called blacks and coloreds" living under apartheid in South Africa; the second an encounter with a mostly Christian group of Palestinians at a conference on the west side of Chicago. Later he tells of other encounters. Coming "face-to-face with the wronged" who suffered injustice as "the daily condition of their existence" disturbed Wolterstorff and stirred up a sense of divine calling that profoundly shaped his life and career as a Christian philosopher (7).

Once awoken, he began to see not only the moral imperative of justice for the wronged but the centrality of justice in Christian Scripture. Already interested in the biblical theme of shalom, he now began to think seriously about justice too. His journey had begun.

Was his concern for justice for people on the far side of the planet just another case of the "cheap liberalism" or a "belittling ... paternalism"—a generous luxury or merely a self-serving hobby a comfortable academic could well afford? Why did it take cross-cultural experiences to awaken him when there were plenty enough victims of injustice at home? "I do not defend the way things went in my life; I only describe" (16). Readers may draw their own conclusions, but his theory of justice clearly displays a commitment to the world's vulnerable, impaired, and wronged.

On reflection, he now sees that taking the wronged that he encountered as his starting point demanded a realistic, concrete, and actionable theory of justice developed from the bottom up. This theory, most fully elaborated in *Justice: Rights and Wrongs* (2008) and sketched in surprising detail here, is one grounded in the rights of the individual instead of being derived from an imagined ideal social order, *à la* John Rawls. Following the Roman jurist Ulpian's focus on rights instead of Aristotle's emphasis on equal distribution, Wolterstorff argues that "justice ... is rendering to each his or her ... right, his or her due" and that the right one is due to be treated in the way that respects one's worth (42). Among all the rights a person may possess, some rights are foundational to primary justice. Wolterstorff argues that those rights are inherent natural rights and that it is impossible, however benevolent one may claim to be, to do justice without respecting those rights of the other.

He admits that the idea of inherent natural rights is controversial and that rights language in general has been abused by some and misunderstood by others. He rejects the idea that the ground of those inherent rights is personal autonomy even as he insists that any account of the moral order must account for the rights dimension of that order. It is not enough, in other words, to speak only of our duty to do unto others; we must also account for the right of others to being "done unto" (53). Without rights language our moral discourse would be impoverished at best. Despite abuses and concerns that rights language promotes a "mentality of possessive individualism" in an entitlement-crazed culture, doing justice to the widow, orphan, resident alien, and poor demands an accounting for their rights in our explanation of the moral order.

Some theories—right-order theories—deem a society to be just "insofar as ... the members of society conform their actions to some objective standard" such as the natural

law (30). On this view, he argues, if natural rights are permitted, they can only be “bestowed, in some way, by that objective standard.” The natural law, for example, would bestow rights on an individual rather than seeing that the individual possesses those rights inherently. “Inherent-rights theorists,” on the other hand, “have their eyes on persons and human beings.... They hold that a society is just insofar as persons and human beings are treated as they have a right to be treated”—that is, according to their dignity or worth (32).

This raises the obvious question as to the ground of that dignity or worth. He tackles this question directly when he turns to the particular set of basic rights we call human rights. Human rights are rights human beings possess not because they are a particular kind of human being but simply because they are human. Summarizing, in leaps and bounds, a much more extensive argument in *Justice*, he first observes that although “UN declarations [on human rights] are all dignity-based documents ... they refrain from making any attempt to account for that dignity” (133). He then considers various secular proposals. None succeed and some, such as capacity accounts that would deprive the impaired, are morally repugnant. He then turns to theistic accounts and notes that Christians have long pointed to the image of God as something inherent in human nature. In an interesting turn that will surprise many readers, Wolterstorff rejects this option and instead looks to “God’s love for each and every one of his human creatures” (137).

This is not the only place some readers who think of Wolterstorff as a Reformed voice will find his arguments surprising, even jarring. There are discussions of the vulnerability of God, the translation of *dik*-stem words in the New Testament, Paul’s rejection of retributive justice, and the nature of forgiveness that theologically minded readers, especially those in the Reformed tradition, will want to chew very carefully. That said, the more radical departures from that tradition one finds in *Justice in Love* (2011), for example, do not enter into this text even if some of the groundwork does.

Wherever his convictions may lie, Wolterstorff has never lacked their courage. He is a trailblazer in philosophical theology who has made significant contributions in epistemology, aesthetics, Christian education, ethics, and political theology. As a trailblazer, he has often shown his readers a better way, as I think he does in much of the present volume. Hacking his way through tangles of unclear thinking, he leads readers to greener pastures and up rough philosophical crags to new vistas. New readers will find *Journey* to be a stimulating introduction to the man and his theory of justice; Wolterstorff students will value the humanizing context it offers. All readers, as always, will find the trail he blazes, wherever it may lead, clearly marked. And at the end of it you will know precisely where he stands, machete undoubtedly still in hand.

—Bruce P. Baugus

Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, Mississippi