Introduction

Jesus and Justice

The city streets exhibit a peculiar justice. Poets, filmmakers and songwriters romanticize it, but many of those found at the margins of city life must live by it. It is an adversarial justice, often enacted violently. It is a world where "just desserts" are meted out with Old Testament severity. Occasionally this includes demanding a "life for a life." Security guards regulate access to many nightclubs and entertainment venues on the main strips. Cloistered inside the boardrooms and backrooms, albeit with slightly more sophistication, the same, adversarial justice reigns. Found amidst the rough justice of the alleyways, the clubs and the cops of the inner city are a handful of small communities of faith whose primary allegiance is to Jesus Christ. This book emerges from the life of two such inner-city communities in Sydney, Australia. The *restorative* Christ found in the Scriptures taught, lived and died by a very different kind of justice. Most disciples of Jesus Christ are familiar with the words of Luke 6:39: "to one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also." The Anglican Churches in Darlinghurst/Kings Cross and Glebe aspired to follow the *restorative* Christ by practicing his justice. To many in the surrounding neighborhood we were seemingly naïve "god-botherers." What impact could we make on the violence and brokenness characterizing these kinds of neighborhoods? What contribution could an ethic of "turn the other cheek" make in a place where any weaknesses is immediately exploited for advantage? The stories in this book of wrongdoing and justice, victims and wrongdoers, reconciliation and repair, emerge from the everyday life of the Christian communities in those neighborhoods. Following Jesus Christ delivers justice in the most broken parts of our cities and our worlds.

Some reading this book will share its convictions about Jesus Christ but remain skeptical about his vision of justice. I hope you become convinced that he is the *restorative* Christ. Four, reliable theological guides are employed across the main chapters to develop the restorative calling and character of Jesus Christ: Chris Marshall's *compassionate* Jesus; John Howard Yoder's *nonviolent* Jesus; Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Jesus *for others*; and, Miroslav Volf's *embracing* Jesus. Each chapter contains a core sample from Luke-Acts that provides the biblical-theological resources for my *restorative* Christ. Others reading this book will share its convictions about restorative justice but remain uncertain about Jesus Christ. Surely religion in general—and Christianity in particular—have caused as much enmity, violence and injustice in the world as they have solved? I believe discipleship of ordinary victims, wrongdoers and their local Christian communities described in this book provide a powerful witness to the justice of Jesus Christ.

Each chapter explores the discipleship practices required for that justice to be enacted. Following Jesus Christ must be imaginative, conversational and embodied. Imaginative practices include disciplines of remembering, seeing and desiring; conversational practices include disciplines of naming, questions and forgiving; and embodied action involves absorbing, embracing and repairing. These nine disciplines are to be practiced by victims, wrongdoers and the community, that is, they cannot be legitimately separated. These practical disciplines are more crucial and most effective in those middle-levels of school, workplace, neighbourhood and church. It is these very places, among the least, where I have learned to follow the *restorative* Christ. They have been my teachers in living justly alongside the celebrated theologians who appear in this book. Each chapter begins, therefore, with the street view describing a commonplace encounter with those who taught and trained me to become a streetwise disciple of the *restorative* Christ.

STREET VIEW

One of my teachers was Rick, usually found at the bus stop directly opposite the church and rectory on the main strip of the village of Glebe. Rick, fueled by his 2 liter bottle of Diet Coke, was always ready for a chat. Over the years I had many conversations with Rick ranging from the profound to the nonsensical, varying in length from a few seconds to discussions lasting several days. Some time after Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* was released

I resorted to lifting a few of the floorboards in the church to prove to Rick there were no secret treasures—only bare earth—a few centimeters beneath the church floor. Even then he found it hard to let go of such conspiracy theories.

On one occasion that I was walking around Glebe, moving between cafés for various meetings, I had several encounters with Rick. We had a brief, pleasant exchange on the first occasion. On our second encounter, he quickly began rambling about lawyers, lawsuits and the houses he owned—numbering (apparently) in the hundreds. The "nonsense" conversation with Rick was familiar terrain, so after a few minutes of semi-polite listening, I was glad to have an excuse that I was on my way to a meeting, and needed to depart. He held out his hand to shake, as was his custom, but as he grabbed my hand he pulled me in close and said conspiratorially, "I forgive you as well." Sensing the conversation had suddenly shifted from nonsense to more profound matters, I replied: "As well . . . ? When did I forgive you?" "Aaah!!" he replied rather triumphantly, "now remember, you don't have the authority to forgive me." I felt caught between conflicting desires. I didn't have enough time for one of our long, theological or philosophical discussions. But neither did I want the conversation to finish on this note (perhaps the old preacher's habit of wanting to have the last word?). Fearful of what I was getting myself into, I responded "technically, that's not quite correct." He quickly countered with the hint of challenge: "in what way?" "God says we should forgive one another, as Christ has forgiven us" I responded. "Good answer" he replied with a wink, adding "I'd better let you get to your meeting." Rick let go of my hand and sent me on my way.

The brief exchange unsettled me enormously. I cannot remember hearing or saying anything of value at those meetings I dutifully attended that day. The conversation with Rick reverberated around my mind posing many questions, challenges and paradoxes: did Rick, despite his battle with mental illness—or was it because of his struggle—know more about forgiveness than I ever would? I was sure I had wronged Rick on many occasions: not listening to him with full attention; not caring about his various struggles and disappointments in life; and, completely ignoring him on occasions. I was certain that, on at least one occasion, I had been exactly like *that* priest in Jesus' story who crossed to the other side of Glebe Point Road (as opposed to the Jericho Road) to avoid getting involved. There was no question in my mind that I had wronged Rick. But I had never apologized, never repented of any wrongdoing or my failure in Christian

concern and care. I realized I had not properly considered my *relational* or *spiritual* obligations to Rick before this particular conversation. Rick announced [God's?] forgiveness to me with his words, "I forgive you as well" reversing the order and the role of a penitent's confession and the priestly absolution.

There was another dimension to our relationship and conversation. It was equally true that Rick had wronged me. On countless occasions he had hijacked my goodwill, exploited my compassion, often at the most inappropriate moments. The week previous to this conversation he burst into the Church in the middle of a wedding rehearsal with some trivial matter of urgency! I had rarely confronted him about his behavior or called for true repentance. Nor had I ever sought to forgive him for any of these offences. Probably the most unsettling aspect of this conversation on forgiveness was that Rick took the lead, offered me forgiveness, and named what true forgiveness involves. The role of student and teacher were also reversed! Rick graciously ended the conversation so that I would not be late for my meeting: even the roles of the pastor and the one cared for had been inverted. The street was the place where the demands of Jesus and justice shaped my discipleship: mine, Rick's and the Church community. The roles of victim and wrongdoer are well established in the principles and practices of justice. Why do I privilege the community in the discussion and disciplines of the *restorative* Christ? The impetus for the research that led to this book was dealing with wrongdoing in inner city neighborhoods consistent with Christian faith and discipleship. The disciplines involved—for the victim, the wrongdoer and the wider community—transcend these faith communities to be suggestive for other local communities: schools, workplaces and local organizations. The overlapping insights of sociologist Ray Oldenburg's identification of the *third place*, American peace-builder John Paul Lederach, and Ugandan theologian Emmanuel Katongole have intentionally focused on the village-neighborhood as the site for reconciliation and justice-making confirm my conviction that local communities are better equipped at enacting the justice of the *restorative* Christ.[1]

The reason can be discerned in another typical incident from both inner city communities to which I belonged.

A person known locally enters a community space owned and staffed by the church. They are loud and more aggressive than usual. After a while

1. Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*; Lederach, *The Moral Imagination*; Katongole, *The Sacrifice of Africa*.

he (it is usually a male) gets into an argument with another person. Threats are traded and violence erupts. In attempting to diffuse the situation, a female volunteer is physically knocked to the ground. Fortunately, she is not seriously hurt. The question arises: what constitutes a just outcome in responding to this situation? There are several stakeholders entertaining different views of what constitutes justice. *First*, there are those gathered in the community centre who have been promised a place free from the violence of the streets. *Second*, there is the victim who was promised relationships based on generosity, compassion and respect. *Third*, there is the volunteer who was promised physical and emotional safety in the context of serving others. *Fourth*, there is the wrongdoer who is possibly a victim of the street environment he inhabits. *Fifth*, there is the Christian community who owns and operates the place where such a diverse group of people can gather and make these kind of promises. *Sixth*, there are the surrounding neighbours (such as local shopkeepers and residents) who expect to work and live in a safe and respectful environment. The crucial question is this: how can this web of interconnected relationships be justly restored in the concrete realities I have described?

Through trial, error and training, the Christian community called *Rough Edges* discovered a number of steps that helped them to act justly. They functioned as a kind of *aide memoire*.

Step one: to prevent further violence and aggression, the wrongdoer might be excluded for a period of time, or in extreme cases, reported to the police.

Step two: listen to the stories of the various stakeholders to understand their interpretation of what had occurred.

Step three: name the wrongdoing (a moral verdict) while acknowledging this is always a fraught undertaking containing the possibility that further injustice might be done.

Step four: impose a sanction (such as a ban) on the person who has been aggressive and violent.

Step five: enable those who were labelled as "victims" and "wrongdoers" to reconnect with the community after the sanction. (This step, in my experience, is usually more important than the ban itself. The community's commitment to both justice and reconciliation was commonly referred to as "forgiveness-with-accountability").

Step six: require an act of deliberate repentance by the wrongdoer, with a renewed commitment to abide by the values of the community.

Step seven: bring reconciliation to the whole community by considering who needs or deserves an apology. An apology may be due to the victim, the volunteer or the entire community (some circumstances demand a public apology).

Step eight: continue the process of restoring relationships between individuals within the wider web of relationships that is the community's life.

The eight steps just outlined are immediately recognizable to those readers familiar with either the theory or the practice of restorative justice. Other readers are rightly concerned that I have skipped ahead to describing a *process* for justice without first defining what is meant by justice.

What kind of justice?

From the discussion so far it is clear that some attempt must be made to reconcile, or adjudicate between, the many competing versions of justice. Community stability dictates that justice cannot simultaneously be one thing and many things. The abusive person in the community centre cannot avoid facing the demands of justice, regardless of whether it is the rough justice of the streets, the judicial justice of the courts, the therapeutic justice of the social workers or the restorative justice of the Christian community. However, to be subjected serially or simultaneously to differing justice systems would be manifestly *unjust*. But does this mean that justice must be reduced to a single and comprehensive ideal before it can be done at all? If so, whose version of justice ought to prevail in such a situation?

In a dominant culture, the justice of those with status, wealth and education prevails. In a therapeutic culture, the justice of expressive and articulate victims prevails. In a street culture, the justice of those with physical strength and fearlessness prevails. In a judicial culture, the justice of reasoned logic and adversarial discourse prevails. Plainly, versions of justice are as diverse as human culture itself. What place, then, do Christian conceptions of justice occupy? Are they just another rival version of justice? Three conceptions of justice, identified by Yale theologian Miroslav Volf, assist in answering this question. The first is the universalist claim that there is only one justice. The second is the pluralist concession that justice

bears many names. The third is the practical acceptance that justice can only be understood and enacted within a specific interpretative tradition.[2] I will deal with the strengths and shortcomings of each conception before placing justice within the interpretative tradition of Christian theology and practice and dealing with the consequences of doing so.

Justice: the one, comprehensive ideal

Historically, there is no shortage of idealised accounts of justice. They can be traced back to the ancient world. While Plato pointed out in *The Republic* that Socrates was unwilling to define justice, Aristotle readily defined justice as "treating equals equally and unequals unequally, but in proportion to their relevant differences."[3] This approach has influenced most subsequent theories of justice.[4] Aristotle's distinction between corrective justice (based on arithmetic equality) and distributive justice (based on geometric equality), still informs most contemporary discussions. But we soon encounter the problem of recognising and resolving the tension between "conflicting demands of distributive and commutative justice."[5] The tension stems from the desire to persist with a single, integrated and comprehensive view of justice that applies to all people and for all time. It is a virtual "utopia located nowhere or a philosophical ideal applicable everywhere."[6] This presupposition is evident in all the major accounts of justice prior to and including John Rawls' magisterial work *A Theory of* Justice, published in 1971.[7] Thirty years after it first appeared, during which seismic shifts in the study of epistemology had taken place, Rawls recognized that he needed to deal with the increasingly pressing issue of pluralism. His deliberations were published as *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*.[8] Rawl's shift from a single conception of justice to competing and contrasting ideals of justice has preoccupied a generation of scholars and practitioners.[9] Thus, we need to ask: is justice necessarily situational and, perhaps, inevitably contingent?

2. Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 196–207.
3. Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, 122.
4. Passmore, "Civil Justice and Its Rivals," 25.
5. Kamenka, "What Is Justice?," 3–4.
6. Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, xiv.
7. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*.
8. Rawls, *Justice as Fairness.*
9. For example Ricoeur, *The Just*.

Justice: has many names in many contexts

The shift in Rawls' approach has led to the widespread recognition that any exploration of justice must acknowledge a plurality of notions and ideals. As a result, singular definitions of justice have become rival accounts. The American ethicist Karen Lebacqz has identified six approaches to justice that have influenced each other in a number of ways.[10] Rawls' project was not merely to provide an alternative view to Mill's utilitarianism. He wanted to replace it. Similarly, Princeton political philosopher Michael Walzer's *Spheres of Justice* sought to surplant Rawls' view by demonstrating that "justice is a human construction, and it is doubtful that it can be made in only one way."[11] Walzer's project is one of the more influential accounts of the essential plurality of justice. He notes that there is a big difference between plurality and relativism. Those advocating for the plurality of justice believe there can be freedom from the domination of the powerful.[12] Economic and social power can be properly contained within its own sphere of justice. The judicial justice of the police and the courts, the rough justice of the streets and the backrooms, and the restoring justice of the Christian community could be considered to be three of the many "spheres" (according to Walzer) of justice accommodated in public life. The French philosopher Paul Ricoeur poses a more basic question: "how do we find agreement and make judgments without resorting to violence?"[13] If justice itself bears many names, the act of judging becomes a contemporary "dilemma" identified by the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor simply because we do not have ways of judging between its "worlds."[14] The possibility of taking a stand in the name of justice is diminished by plurality and relativism. Ricoeur maintains the act of judging must "put an end to a virtually endless deliberation."[15] The "secular age" does not, however, provide sufficient grounds for judging. In fact, if Taylor is correct, non-religious grounds for thinking and acting actually distance us from injustice. Consequently, we do not have to judge.[16] The Australian philosopher John Passmore critiques

10 Lebacqz, *Six Theories of Justice.*

11. Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, 5.

12. Ibid., xiii. How this freedom is advanced remains a significant challenge.

13. Ricoeur, *The Just*, 81.

14. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 706 .

15. Ricoeur, *The Just*, 129.

16. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 684.

Western liberal democracy's "ability to distinguish" with the dire consequence that they are left with "nothing to fall back upon but egalitarianism" masquerading as justice.[17] In Australia, for instance, the quest for justice is commonly reduced to a *fair go* for all. The challenge for Christians is acute. If we no longer possess the "ability to name evil" then we have "taken a wrong turn in fighting it." According to Volf the pursuit of justice has taken "a turn deeply at odds with the inner logic of Christian faith."[18] This book articulates and advances the justice of the *restorative* Christ.

Justice: just practices and just communities

Are conceptions of justice necessarily adversarial? If justice is nothing other than a person getting their *just* desserts, an inevitable division between "winners" and "losers" is made. In adversarial justice the winners are rewarded with certain goods and the losers are deprived of them. In contrast to the previous two conceptions of justice, the British philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre developed a more nuanced understanding of the ways in which Western theories of justice emerge from traditions and practices.[19] He is adamant that justice is based not on rights, arguing instead that "the truth is plain: there are no such rights, and belief in them is one with belief in witches and in unicorns . . . natural or human rights . . . are fictions." For him, no one is born with rights. Rather, they are born into communities with traditions that make *natural* rights possible. MacIntyre's proposal suggests a useful and yet incomplete way of evaluating competing claims about justice. His approach nonetheless validates the peculiar practices of the Christian community as one, enduring and plausible tradition capable of defining and pursuing justice.

The English moral theologian Oliver O'Donovan rightly identifies the philosophical importance of a Christian "stance" with respect to questions of justice by arguing that "non-committal stances . . . create the illusion of settling questions justly, without needing to determine the truth of them."[20] His conception of justice as *judgment* will be significant for the discipline of *naming* described in chapter three. Two features are worth noting here. The first is his argument that justice is *right-order* which means that God's order

17. Passmore, "Civil Justice and Its Rivals," 47–48.
18. Volf, "Demons or Evildoers?," 27.
19. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality*, 391.
20. O'Donovan, *The Ways of Judgment*, 33.

and God's rights take precedence over human social ordering and human rights. A recent critic of O'Donovan's "justice-as-right-order" is Yale philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff who does not think that obligations precede rights. His alternate grounding for justice promotes a conception of "justice-as-rights" which, he argues, is more fundamental to the flourishing of human community.[21] The second feature of O'Donovan's work worthy of noting is his "stance" against a "secular" age of possessive individualism. His argument must, therefore, be understood in the context of five centuries of secularisation described in detail by Charles Taylor.

The approaches commended by Volf, MacIntyre, and O'Donovan do not amount to a single or comprehensive ideal that can be promoted under the banner of "God's justice" in the public sphere. Their value is in offering an account of justice that takes seriously the histories of Christian communities: those who have faithfully followed the *restorative* Christ. A theologically grounded concept of justice needs to consciously avoid endorsing the notion "that the justice of the dominant is the dominant justice."[22] It rejects accounts of justice relying upon coercive force employed by those possessing power. Such tactics are common in the slums and on the streets and in the backrooms and the boardrooms. They are used by the police and are upheld in the courts. None of this constitutes justice because, I would contend, justice renounces retaliation (chapter 2). It is crucial, therefore, that a vision of divine justice revealed in Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and practiced by Christians and their communities comprehensively rejects coercion and domination. I will argue that justice—expressed as *enemy-love*—constitutes the justice of the *restorative* Christ. The four central chapters of the book detail one dimension of his justice: justice with reconciliation; justice without retaliation; justice with repentance; and, justice with repair.

CORE SAMPLES FROM LUKE-ACTS

After surveying the literature, a comprehensive biblical theology of justice grounded in the life, death and resurrection of the *restorative* Christ is yet plainly to be developed. I want to remedy this omission by examining four key passages from the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. The Lucan material provides the basis for a genuinely biblical vision of the

21. Wolterstorff, *Justice: Rights and Wrongs*, 35.

22. Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 196.

restorative Christ. *First*, Luke-Acts not only comprises one-quarter of the New Testament, more significantly it encompasses the breadth of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, as well as the lives of Jesus' followers and those within the early Christian communities.[23] *Second*, as Luke-Acts originates from a single author, it is well suited to contemporary literary approaches to the interpretation of Scripture.[24] A variety of approaches to the interpretation of Luke-Acts are considered in the first chapter, all of which are employed to varying degrees in this book. The primary mode of interpretation will, however, be biblical-theological and practical.[25] *Third*, the Christological issues raised in Luke-Acts are illustrative of what the *restorative* Christ means for a discipleship of justice. *Fourth*, Luke's theological interests are no longer considered by theologians to be mutually exclusive of historical considerations. The passages from Luke-Acts acting as core samples include: Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32); Jesus' teaching on *enemy-love* (Luke 6:27–45); Jesus' death by and for his enemies (Luke 23:26–49); and, the risen Jesus' encounter with Saul (Ac. 9:1–31). Because my focus is on "enemy-love," a number of potentially significant passages have been deliberately excluded, namely: Jesus' inaugural sermon (Luke 4:16–30); Jesus' predictions about his death (e.g. Luke 9:21); Zacchaeus' reparations after encountering Jesus (Luke 19:1–10); Jesus' action in the Temple (Luke 19:28–47); and the risen Jesus' encounter with the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 28:13–53). These and other Lucan texts only serve to deepen the portrait of the *restorative* Christ. Jesus' inaugural sermon includes a reading from the scroll in the synagogue from Isaiah 61, concluding "today this word has been fulfilled in your hearing." Isaiah's prophecy and its fulfilment is a strong them in Luke's gospel. Luke's account is enriched, of course, by the reader's familiarity with significant portions of the Hebrew Scriptures such as the Psalms and Isaiah's prophecies. This claim is not controversial and is simply assumed at various points of the biblical material.[26] Understanding Luke's portrait of the *restorative* Christ, however, does not finally depend on this familiarity. The apostle Paul's writings contain a wealth of material that would add another angle of vision of

23. Marshall, "The Christology of Luke's Gospel and Acts," 122.

24. A recent survey of the approaches to interpreting Luke-Acts can be found in Green, *Methods for Luke*.

25. Dunn, *New Testament Theology*, 13.

26. Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts*, 31. Luke's use of Isaiah is widely attested and detailed arguments can be found in Mallen, *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke-Acts*. See also Moberly, "Isaiah and Jesus."

the *restorative* Christ. Here I rely on the trajectories apparent in Saul's initial encounter on the Damascus Road. Douglas Campbell has drawn attention to the kind of possibilities in a number of innovative proposals about Paul's "noncoercive and nonviolent" soteriology that depend on the apostle's own writing.[27]

Jesus is a Prophet of Justice in Luke (Luke 4:16ff)

Jesus was a prophet who cared deeply about injustice. In Luke's gospel Jesus told stories about loving neighbors and welcoming prodigals. In Luke's gospel Jesus was more than a prophet: he is the Savior, encountered through his saving death and resurrection, and he is the Lord to be followed in the life of discipleship. What does it mean for Luke to tell the story of Jesus as a prophet?

Jesus the prophet hosted meals between debtors and debt collectors (Luke 5:27–32)

Luke 5 recounts the calling of the first disciples—including Levi—and the large and diverse gathering at his house for a banquet. Jesus the prophet sharing meals between debtors and debt collectors. The social and economic scandal is that debtors and debt collectors are brought together around the meal table. It is easy to miss this kind of detail in Luke's stories: Jesus' prophetic action. Jesus wasn't just a prophet in word but he also was a prophet in deed. What words might have been spoken around that banquet table? Accusations? Threat? It is certain that harsh words were spoken but is it possible that mutual understanding also emerged? Was reconciliation an outcome of debtors and debt collectors actually meeting each other face to face? Jesus the prophet agreed with the prophet Isaiah that exclusion was deeply unjust and by his words—and through his practice of table fellowship—invited people previously excluded. Jesus concluded that it was not the healthy who needed a doctor but the sick. Jesus came not to call sinners to repentance not the already righteous. Jesus the prophet cares deeply about the injustice of exclusion.

27. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 89–95.

Jesus the prophet heals a man's withered hand on the Sabbath (Luke 6:6–11)

A little later Luke shows that Jesus went into the Synagogue and found a man with a withered hand. The synagogue rulers acted as guardians of people's access to God. In Luke 6 these rules were more concerned about regulating God than this man's hand being restored! In a number of places in Luke's gospel Jesus confronts this kind of abuse of religious power and political power. Jesus the prophet also cares about the injustice of abusive power.

Jesus the prophet is consistently practices nonviolence (Luke 13:34 and 19:41)

Jesus is interrogated by the disciples of John the Baptist: "are you the one to come or should we wait for another?" Jesus' answer is a direct quote from Isaiah 61: "go and tell John what you have seen and heard. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news preached to them." Jesus sees himself as fulfilling the ancient prophecies of all God's prophets and Isaiah in particular. In fulfilling these prophecies Jesus is consistently a man of peace, even the prince of peace. Jesus the prophet consistently practices nonviolence in his words and actions. Jesus cared deeply about the injustice of violence in this world.

Jesus the prophet confronting the exploitation of those with little resources by those with an abundance (Luke 21:1–4)

The fourth depiction of Jesus as a prophet in Luke's gospel is his concern for the poor and its roots in the greed of others. Jesus saw a poor widow giving everything she had. This story is often cited on stewardship Sundays to encourage people to give generously but this is only one half of Luke's story. The less comforting part—less encouraging for those with more ability to give—is Jesus' confrontation of those who "devour widows' houses" (Luke 20:47). The earlier part of the story critiques the greed of some that causes the widow's poverty! Jesus cares deeply about poverty and its causes, namely, greed and acquisition by others.

Luke's Jesus is cast principally as a prophet. Someone that cares about exclusion, cares about abusive power, cares about the injustice of violence, cares about poverty and greed. Luke presents to us the *restorative* Christ who continues to speak to these same issues in our world, in our communities, in our own lives. Jesus, through Luke, prophetically critiques contemporary exclusive practices; abuses of the power; violent words; greed and acquisitiveness! The *restorative* Christ shapes the kind of justice his disciples must care about.[28]

In Luke's gospel Jesus is both a prophet but more than a prophet. Jesus' death and resurrection is predicted a couple of times in Luke with Jesus setting his face to Jerusalem, Jesus knows that he would die. It is in Jesus' saving death and resurrection that Luke presents the most intimate and revealing account of the justice of the *restorative* Christ.

Each one of the four theologians whose work features in the pages that follow (Marshall, Yoder, Bonhoeffer and Volf) are biblical theologians who engage extensively and thoughtfully with the Scriptures. For example, Marshall is a New Testament specialist who has published in the disciplines of Biblical studies, law and justice, pioneering an interdisciplinary dialogue between them. Significant theorists in both law and restorative justice have recognised and affirmed Marshall's inter-disciplinary approach.[29] Furthermore, other New Testament scholars (such as Ched Myers) have followed Marshall in his inter-disciplinary endeavour.[30] Both Yoder and Bonhoeffer were skilled exegetes and their respective Christologies of the nonviolent Jesus and Jesus *for* others were grounded in the New Testament. Most recently, Volf has noticed and affirmed the trend within the broader discipline of systematic theology is to become more consciously biblical (and within biblical studies to be more consciously theological):

> In my judgment, the return of biblical scholars to the theological reading of the Scriptures, and the return of systematic theologians to sustained engagement with the scriptural texts—in a phrase, the return off both to theological readings of the Bible—is the most significant theological development in the last two decades.[31]

28. The original phrase and the fourfold concerns were inspired by Stassen, "The kind of justice Jesus cares about," 157ff.

29. Exemplified by contributions such as Marshall, "Terrorism, Religious Violence and Restorative Justice."

30. Myers and Enns, *Ambassadors of Reconciliation*, vol. I.

31. Volf, *Captive to the Word of God*, 14.

The converging trend in theological and biblical studies to engage in the study and reflection on the Scriptures has a growing body of literature attached to it: theological interpretation of Scripture![32] Volf's affirmation—a scholar who has reflected deeply on issues of justice and reconciliation—suggests that theological works on justice need to be more thoroughly engaged with Scripture. The bible core sample in each chapter seeks to answer this challenge with an extended engagement on Lucan passages for the justice of the restorative Christ. The *enemy-love* taught enacted and embodied by Jesus Christ—in his life, death and resurrection—provides the depth and clarity that justice needs to respond effectively to many forms of wrongdoing.

Despite the positive development of theologians returning to the Scriptures, there remains another issue this book seeks to address. More than a decade ago Saunders and Campbell identified the problem of academic interpretation that resonated with my own reading the Scriptures alongside homeless people suffering addictions and a range of mental health issues on the streets of inner city Sydney.[33] In time I would begin to add my own voice to those asking for the liberation of serious study of Scripture from the sometimes narrow confines of the academy.[34] Most recently my friend and mentor Ched Myers has edited a volume demonstrating the need for our contemporary storytellers—from artists to activists—to join in the task of making biblical theology more public.[35] It requires the deliberate straddling of "the seminary, the sanctuary, and the streets" because such reading "reshapes . . . what vantage point, and in whose interests we read and study the Bible."[36] Each of the following chapters include an introductory street view and the practical disciplines required to follow the restorative Christ as bookends to the biblical and theological reflection.

THE RESTORATIVE CHRIST: WHO IS JESUS CHRIST FOR US TODAY?

Shared convictions about Jesus draw together a disparate group of people with diverse views about justice. Some of Jesus' followers are passionate

32. For example Fowl, *Theological Interpretation of Scripture*.
33. Saunders and Campbell, *The Word on the Street*.
34. Broughton, "Reading the Bible through the Lens of the Street," 103–5.
35. Dykstra and Myers, *Liberating Biblical Study*.
36. Ibid., xxiii.

about justice and reconciliation. Others prefer a stricter, adversarial justice. There are some who are skeptical (or even hostile) towards any talk about justice in Christian discourse. Having certain convictions about Jesus Christ and holding a commitment to justice are not incompatible. God's unchanging desire for reconciliation and justice is constitutive of being a true disciple of Jesus and being a sincere member of the Christian community. I acknowledge that a shared commitment to justice also brings together people with conflicting views about Jesus Christ. There are people working for justice who are convinced followers of Jesus Christ. Others admire his life and teachings but are repulsed by the message and meaning of his death. Still others are sceptical about the relative importance of Jesus' words and work in the pursuit of justice. A small group are hostile to any Christian theology and Church influence in this area. My modest proposal—and I am trying not to overstate my argument—is conviction about Jesus Christ (his life, death, resurrection) has a decisive bearing on the vision of justice for any of these individuals and their communities. The restorative Christ is full of compassion, practices nonviolence, lives for others and embraces his enemies. Each one answers one aspect of Bonhoeffer's question, "who is Jesus Christ for us today?" The over-arching implication of following the restorative Christ is love for one's enemies.

The first chapter explores Christopher Marshall's *compassionate* Jesus through Luke 15:11–32. More than a decade ago Marshall established his approach with *Beyond Retribution* in which justice is rehabilitated as one of the Scripture's central themes. For Marshall, the promotion of justice is primarily understood as a *restorative* activity.[37] Particularly in the Australian context, Marshall's dual roles as biblical scholar and restorative justice practitioner should not be overlooked. Australia boasts some of the world's best restorative justice researchers.[38] Australia has also demonstrated early, best practice of restorative justice to the world.[39] Drawing together practice and principles has been a key concern for the restorative justice movement during the last decade.[40] With "one foot in the academy" and "one foot in the justice system," Marshall has been attentive to both principle and practice, which is demonstrated throughout his most recent work,

37. Marshall, *The Little Book of Biblical Justice*, 35–47.
38. Braithwaite, *Crime, Shame and Reintegration*.
39. O'Connell et al., *Conferencing Handbook*.
40. Zehr, "Evaluation and Restorative Justice Principles."

Compassionate Justice.[41] Marshall's conclusion to his earlier studies is the perfect introduction to his view of justice through an extended engagement with Luke 15:11–32: "according to the witness of the New Testament, the basic principle of the moral order is not the perfect balance of deed and desert but redeeming, merciful love."[42]

The second chapter examines John Howard Yoder's *nonviolent* Jesus through his teaching on *enemy-love* (Luke 6:27–45). He proposes a more imaginative way of Christian discipleship than retaliation, particularly for victims. Respect for the victim and their needs coupled with the crucial place of forgiveness are some of the more contentious issues in the theory and practice of contemporary restorative justice. Therapeutic analysis and tools have deepened our society's capacity to name wrongdoing. They have also empowered victims to tell their story in order to be heard by wrongdoers and sympathisers. While the public naming of wrongdoing has regrettably fed the media and political obsession with *shaming* wrongdoers, the witness of theological traditions has persuaded some victims that forgiveness is a necessary step toward healing and reconciliation. Tragically, faith-based approaches can and have been misused to pressure victims into offering forgiveness prematurely or, perhaps worse, to forgive superficially. The tension between naming a wrong and forgiving a wrongdoer suggests a justice that renounces retaliation. This justice is consistently taught and practiced by the *nonviolent* Jesus.

Dietrich Bonheoffer's Jesus *for* others corrects a recent misunderstanding of Jesus' death: Jesus died not only *by* his enemies but *for* his enemies. Luke's dramatic account of Jesus' death by and for his enemies (Luke 23:26–49) records Jesus' conversation with two wrongdoers and affirms the priority of self-donation, instead of self-interest, when Christian disciples are wrongdoers.[43] It commends justice with repentance. The following testimony, drawn from a person who remains in prison for their crimes, highlights the need for wrongdoers to take responsibility for their actions.

> At the start of the legal process on my arrest, denying guilt was a practical necessity as I was facing trial and in our system of law and criminal justice it is for the Crown to prove its case and everyone is entitled to a defence as a matter of law and fairness . . . However, when I returned to the documents of the bombing-murder

41. Marshall, "Reflections on the Spirit of Justice."
42. Marshall, *Beyond Retribution*, 259.
43. Umbreit and Armour, *Restorative Justice Dialogue*, 18–21.

> conviction in 1997 with the idea of a fresh evidence appeal, I found that a picture emerged that was not as rosy as the one that had grown in my mind in the ten years up to that point. Put simply I really did not like what I saw about myself in those documents . . . I knew that I had to move on from the person I was in the past and to do that I needed to act in a more responsible way and stop fighting the conviction, but it took sometime for me to admit that to myself, and even longer to admit it to others.[44]

This wrongdoer describes the change that took place as an "epiphany." Through this process the convicted man truthfully remembered his wrongdoing and truly repented by taking responsibility for it. Bonhoeffer's understanding of Jesus' death *for* others is essential for justice with true repentance and forgiveness.

The fourth chapter survey Miroslav Volf's image of an *embracing* Jesus based on Saul's Damascus road encounter with the risen Jesus' (Acts 9:1–31). It is a story of reconciliation between victim (Jesus) and wrongdoer (Saul). Reconciliation is based on the wrongdoer remembering their wrongdoing truthfully by accepting responsibility for it.[45] Reconciliation is also based on the testimony of the victim. There is respect for both the wrongdoer and the victim. For lasting reconciliation to be achieved the truth must be named with a desire to forgive. Such forgiveness invariably costs something for the victim. Wrongdoing must be named truthfully before it can be forgiven. Such naming is usually costly for wrongdoers. Reconciliation cannot be achieved, therefore, unless naming and forgiving are held together. But does the holding together of the naming and forgiving of wrongs offer a faithful interpretation of Saul's encounter with the risen Jesus? The role of Ananias—on behalf of the Christian community in Damascus—emphasizes the *embodied* nature of Christian discipleship. The *embracing* Jesus insists on justice with repair. Ignoring the need for repair and restitution is to ignore a critical obligation of justice-making in social relationships. Saul's Damascus Road encounter contains the vital elements of conversion, call and reconciliation. But it is more than each or any of these. To ignore the risen Jesus' instruction to Saul that he must continue on to Damascus where he will be told "what he must do" neglects a significant aspect of justice and leaves the observer with a diminished

44. Minogue, "Inside My Skull," 14–15.

45. Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness*, 47–52. Lorenzen, "Justice and Truth," 282–84.

reconciliation. This is what Bonhoeffer might have described as "cheap" reconciliation.

FOLLOWING THE RESTORATIVE CHRIST: JUSTICE WITHOUT RETALIATION BUT JUSTICE WITH RECONCILIATION, REPENTANCE AND REPAIR

Biblical justice, sometimes interpreted as *shalom*, has been a significant element in the emerging movement of restorative justice. Rarely do these adequately account for the great diversity within Scriptural perspectives on justice, however, that are inherent in the crucial distinction between the semantic domains of justice and righteousness. The restorative justice movement appears to prefer the Scriptural witness to צְדָקָה as relational and social justice ("delivering, community-restoring justice") while re-interpreting classic definitions of δικαιοσύνη ("righteousness, forensic justice") to suit its priorities. In his extensive survey of the semantic domains, Marshall gives the definition of δικαιοσύνη as "God's justice as a redemptive power that breaks into situations of oppression or need in order to put right what is wrong and restore relationships to their proper condition."[46] Notably, the formative studies in restorative justice literature were inspired by the Hebrew Scriptures, particularly the Prophets, which call for the actual practice of justice, and not merely the articulation of a concept of justice.[47] Oft-cited examples of such holistic appeals include "hold fast to justice" (Hosea 12:6), "establish justice" (Amos 5:15), "do justice" (Micah 6:8) and the prophet Isaiah's vision of the proper worship of God as the enacting of justice.[48] Theological contributions to restorative justice have depended lagely on Hebrew notions and, until the recent works of Marshall and, Myers and Enns, have offered little more than passing engagement with the Gospels and the Pauline letters.[49]

46. Marshall, *Beyond Retribution*, 93.

47. For example Van Ness and Strong, *Restoring Justice,* 8–9.

48. Isaiah 58:6, "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?"

49. See Marshall, *Compassionate Justice*. Myers and Enns, *Ambassadors of Reconciliation*.

The justice of the Restorative Christ

The focus of this book is the restorative *Christ*. Misunderstandings about restorative *justice* abound, particularly in Christian circles where some are concerned that *restorative* denies God's judgment. A better understanding of restorative justice is *where justice is delivered in the context of restored relationships: justice with reconciliation. This means justice without retaliation, just with repentance and justice with repair.* My definition does not, however, represent a clear consensus among leading restorative justice theorists and practitioners. There is, I might add, some common ground with the approach taken in *Restorative Christ* in relation to the following two principles: "first, justice requires that we work to heal victims, offenders and communities that have been injured by crime. Second, victims, offenders and communities should have the opportunity for active involvement in the justice process as early and as fully as possible."[50] Accordingly just outcomes are primarily relational. The intersecting concerns apparent in the definition of restorative justice offered by three of its leading proponents demonstrate the ways in which the principles outlined above have been worked into Howard Zehr's definition based on his experience as a practitioner; John Braithwaite's definition from within the Australian context; while Desmond Tutu speaks as a pastor-theologian:

> *Zehr*: Restorative justice is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible.[51]
>
> *Braithwaite*: Restorative justice is not simply a way of reforming the criminal justice system, it is a way of transforming the entire legal system, our family lives, our conduct in the workplace, our practice of politics. Its vision is of a holistic change in the way we do justice in the world.[52]
>
> *Tutu*: [in] restorative justice, the central concern is not retribution or punishment . . . in the spirit of *ubuntu*, the central concern is the healing of breaches, the redressing of imbalances, the restoration of broken relationships, a seeking to rehabilitate both the victim

50. Johnstone and Van Ness, "The Meaning of Restorative Justice," 5–23. See also Van Ness and Strong, *Restoring Justice*, 14.

51. Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*, 37.

52. Braithwaite, *Restorative Justice and Responsive Regulation*, 1.

> and the perpetrator, who should be given the opportunity to be reintegrated into the community he has injured by his offence.[53]

These definitions highlight some of the concerns already mentioned. They include working to put things right within a context of multiple stakeholders (justice with reconciliation); responding to wrongdoing in everyday contexts transcending legal frameworks and approaches (justice with repentance); and the pastor's perspective of Practical Theology (justice without retaliation; justice with repair). Each definition marks an approach to justice involving a community comprised of victims, wrongdoers and others in relational proximity. It may be contrasted with the distance and enmity between stakeholders in more adversarial approaches identified by Taylor, who describes three possible relational stances taken in the face of wrongdoing. First, "no-one is to blame." This is the slogan of those with a "disengaged stance to reality" that Taylor aligns with much of secular humanism. He refers to this as "the therapeutic outlook." Second, "the enemy is to blame." Taylor identifies this as "the practice of religious violence." This is the cry of the self-righteous who find their power to act by scapegoating the distant other. I will argue that Jesus' *enemy-love* directly confronts the injustice of blaming of the enemy on religious grounds. Third, "we are all to blame." This is the "restoration of a common ground . . . [that] opens a new footing of co-responsibility to the erstwhile enemy."[54] Taylor identifies the third relational stance with the approach taken by the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (1996–98) convened to deal with apartheid-era violence in South Africa. Taylor contends that it satisfies the dual requirements of justice and truth because it is able "to bring terrible deeds to light, but not necessarily in a context of retribution."[55] Taylor admits that "no one knows if this will ultimately work [because] a move like this goes against the utterly understandable desire for revenge by those who have suffered, as well as all the reflexes of self-righteousness."[56] His analysis of wrongdoing explains why neither the so-called "closure" offered by therapeutic process nor the "revenge" offered by religious righteousness is actually able to restore justice in contexts like post-apartheid South Africa. My principal aim is to demonstrate that the centre of Christian theology, namely Jesus' life, death and resurrection, informs and enables Taylor's third response to

53. Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness*, 54–55.
54. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 709–10.
55. Ibid., 710.
56. Ibid.

wrongdoing. My central argument depends on interpretive commitments as I read the biblical witness to Jesus Christ, as well as convictions about Christian practice as a *way of life* that is reflected in my approach to both.[57] Once more it was the street was the classroom where, with scant regard for either technique or process, I learned what it means follow the *restorative* Christ.

Jesus and justice: are they compatible ways of life?

Discipleship is faithfully following the way of Jesus Christ. Some Christians ground their discipleship in the practical, earthly life of Jesus who taught victims to love their enemies. Others in the suffering death of Jesus on behalf of wrongdoers. Still others understand it as the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit. Regrettably, many neglect the connection between Jesus' resurrection and discipleship although it is only through the *risen* Jesus that we are able to remember and follow Jesus at all.[58] How does imagining a new way of life, speaking about that way of life and putting it into practice inter-relate? Although the complex connections between human thinking, speaking and acting cannot be fully described here, I would argue that theology has not always recognized the critical dialogue that needs to be manifested between beliefs and practices.[59] I believe a correlation exists between Jesus' teaching and the imagination; between Jesus' death and the language of faith and discipleship; and, between Jesus' risen life and embodied action and Christian living.

The concluding section of each chapter will describe the marks of Christian discipleship and community that emerge from the preceding discussion of Luke's Jesus (his life of "enemy-love," suffering death for others and risen life of reconciliation). The practical disciplines of what the restorative Christ means for us today. Volf admonishes many Christian disciples for their "unwillingness to walk the narrow path. When someone has violated us or our community, we feel the urge for revenge and set aside the explicit command to love our enemies, to be benevolent and beneficent

57. Volf, *Captive to the Word of God*, 14, 39, 41–44.
58. Lorenzen, *Resurrection and Discipleship*, 245–46.
59. Volf, "Theology for a Way of Life," 126–27.

toward them."[60] Jesus *enemy-love* is the basis for the disciplines imagination, conversation and embodied action that conclude each chapter.[61]

I will conclude with a prophetic and, I trust, hopeful tone. The church can be a community where the disciplines of the restorative Christ—imagination, conversation and embodiment—are practiced, albeit imperfectly. neighborhoods). The discipleship practices are applied to the unfinished business of the Australian Anglican Church's relationship with Indigenous people in the hope that the justice of the restorative Christ prevails.

60. Volf, *A Public Faith*, 20.

61. Volf, *The End of Memory*, 148–51.