



The Outsiders, Part 1

Opening

What if our theology could get up from our armchairs and move into our world? That would be something worth paying attention to. This is The Armchair Anabaptist podcast.

<intro song> Lay your guns down, down on the floor. There ain't no good in those guns anymore. Take my hand and let me kiss your feet. Let our friendship be sweet. <end>

“Because Mennonites have usually found that the way to faithfulness is to separate from others and eventually if only I am here, then at least I'll agree with myself.”

“And I don't think that we can say we love someone and then shoot them. It doesn't make sense.”

“I always tell folks that, ‘Look at - if you're in a debate and winning the debate becomes more important than reflecting love towards the person you're debating, then do the Kingdom of God a great service and shut up.’”

“How do we encourage people to see nonviolence as something more than a position about war?”

“Because we're not just sitting around doing podcasts and theology, we're actually trying to live our lives as Christians.”

<song> This is a reckoning between you and me. The righting of all wrongs as we eat and as we drink. <end>

Introduction

Kevin Wiebe: You're listening to The Armchair Anabaptist. This is episode number seven, The Outsiders, Part One, I'm Kevin Wiebe.

Jesse Penner: And I'm Jesse Penner and we are your hosts.

We recognize that as we think about the peace position and the Anabaptist theological position of peace, we occupy a very specific niche within the larger worldview about this, both within the Christian faith and then within the larger religious context, looking at faiths across the world.

So the question becomes, how do we sort of 'own' our corner and interact with those who think differently than us? We've asked this in a few different ways already over the podcast, but here we're looking specifically at Christians who do not agree with traditional Mennonite positions of nonviolence. We've been looking at how we view these things, but how do other faith traditions view Jesus' teaching about loving our enemies?

KW: The title for the episode is called *The Outsiders*, which is a little bit tongue in cheek because Low German Mennonites have historically had a tendency to be a little bit isolated geographically and socially and had a bit of an unhealthy suspicion of anyone from the outside, any other cultures and have even had blanket terms for anyone else that was not from our own internal community, and so we're calling it the outsiders as we're looking at some of those "outside" perspectives on the peace position.

We're going to be talking to Dr. Greg Boyd, to Dr. Carol Penner. We're going to be hearing from Pastor Cameron McKenzie, from Dr. Terry Hiebert, and we're also going to be talking to Stephanie, Travis, Jennifer, and Deborah from the Many Rooms Church Community, which is a network of house churches in Winnipeg's North End.

We're going to start off here with Cameron McKenzie, who is the lead pastor at Fort Garry EMC, and we asked him this, how do other faith traditions view Jesus's teaching about loving our enemies?

Pastor Cameron McKenzie: That's a good question because there was probably a time when you could have said quite handily that *most* other Christian traditions don't agree with the Mennonite tradition on non-resistance, peacemaking. I think our role has undergone a shift and that the gap between Anabaptist understandings of non-resistance and that which is sort of percolating up in other church contexts, has shrunk considerably.

I think that's partly due to the fact that the history of the 20th century has just given us a whole new canvas against which to think about war and violence for one thing. But I also think that the secular revolution in society has tried to pursue this idea of morality without God, morality without religion, and as a whole our secular society is resistant to the idea of war.

Look at what's happening in Ukraine right now. There's a lot of help and support being given to them, but there is a real reticence to do what might have been quite normal back in 1950 or the 1940s and that is step in and turn this into a larger conflict.

We just think that war is... more generally we think war is wrong. However, other Christian traditions certainly think about nonviolence and particularly Jesus' teaching about loving our enemies. I think at the core of that is the difference in how the church thinks about sort of the collective geopolitical kinds of questions and what it means to be

an individual follower of Jesus. When it comes down to the love of enemies, there are two different kind of conversations going on.

I don't know that there's any church tradition that would hold on an individual, interpersonal relationship that there is any other real calling for the Christian than to love the enemy, and I know in a future episode there's going to be a conversation about what whether we actually have enemies, and I think put simply, yes we do have enemies. We have people who disagree with us. We have people who perhaps throw up hurdles to the plans that we have, people who are on a different ideological position when it comes to politics or economy or whatever.

And so there's degrees of enemy from those kind of very facile - we're playing soccer together and you're on the wrong team, well, you're my enemy, to the really sort of big geopolitical, here's a whole system that's fighting our system and is willing to do great violence and harm to us in order to impose their system kind of enemy.

The rule that all churches hold to is that loving your enemy on the interpersonal level is an absolute prerequisite for the Christian, even though it gets complicated, doesn't it? Jon Bonk writing on the issue of nonviolence, and I don't have the name of his book right up front, but he actually defined non-resistance and Anabaptist peacemaking as a complete eschewing, turning our backs on lethal violence. To me, that's a real critical piece in here.

When I think about the call to nonviolence, and I think with the complexity of the issues, the lethality of violence becomes a real key question. The old stereotype cliché well, if somebody attacked your wife, would you not defend her, well, of course I would. Would I try to prevent someone from harming my children or your children? Of course I would. Would I use a certain amount of coercive force to do that, I definitely would.

In fact I would think that's a loving thing to do because not only am I protecting a person that I'm responsible for, but I am actually keeping someone from doing something that will be more damaging to them if they do it. I think you can argue the lovingness of that action.

Am I prepared to use lethal violence against another by God's help? No, I'm not. So at the interpersonal level I think all churches would agree with that, all traditions would. It gets more complex when it gets bigger, so one of the other traditions, and perhaps we could say it's the big tradition, is Roman Catholicism. If the church has kind of a majority voice, it's the voice of the Catholic Church and they do this actually in their catechism. They divide out the individual relationship versus the question of war as a corporate collective kind of relationship.

And so you know, they clearly denounce all murder, all anger, all hatred; the desire for revenge or vengeance they actually list as a mortal sin, that Christians simply don't have

the right to participate in vengeance. And peace goes beyond the absence of war. The idea here is to create on earth a picture of what Christ has accomplished in his death and resurrection. So the church is here to present and create and live into an image of what Christ is actually has accomplished in the redemption of the world.

He adds he's killed hostility. He's destroyed it. He's reconciled us to God. The church is to present itself almost as a sacrament of unity. So I think in all of that the Roman Church's tradition is very much that we're striving for not only love within the church but love outside of the church.

Then it comes to the question of war particularly the Roman Catholic Catechism is clear that we work by all means for the avoidance of war. This is what we do. There's a permanent validity to moral law that even an armed conflict - and it does recognize that the state collectively has to sometimes exercise coercive force for the good of the state, for the good of the people, for the good of the geopolitical situation, but even in that the absolute validity of moral law is never surrendered.

So combatants and non-combatants alike are always held to the 'thou shalt not murder.' You should love your enemy, do good to those... Those kinds of moral law things are still operational as far as the church is concerned. Certainly, non-combatants, wounded, prisoners, et cetera all have to be treated humanely. This is spelled out.

The accumulation of arms is forbidden. There's a real moral question and the Catholic catechism questions quite stringently whether or not the idea that the accumulation of arms acts as a deterrent has any moral validity whatsoever, and so argues in the exact opposite direction - to not do that. And that of course, ends by reminding us of the words of Jesus, and in that sense ends on the same page as Anabaptists, "blessed are the peacemakers."

Somehow the church is called to be an instrument of peace, but it does so with a much more explicit acknowledgement that because we live within the kingdoms of the world Christians are going to be called to participate, and are welcome to participate, within the context of their confession, within the context of their faith, in all those activities of the state.

Which means Christians will find themselves in the military and police forces. They'll find themselves engaged in armed conflicts. But to love your enemy, to do good to those who persecute you, to practice the Church's moral teaching on violence, the Christian needs to always recognize that no matter what they're doing out there the moral law of the church is absolutely vital and valid and has to be observed.

That's one way that one Christian tradition in particular responds to the question of nonviolence.

KW: Dr. Carol Penner is a professor and the Director of Theological Studies at Conrad Grebel University College. This is what she had to say when we asked about how other faith traditions view Jesus's teaching about loving our enemies.

Dr. Carol Penner: I think many traditions would see them as just not practical. Yes, in an ideal world we would all be that way, but in the real world we do have enemies and we have to use force occasionally and I would say most Anabaptists probably believe that too. That we may give lip service to nonviolence, but we are not nonviolent people. That we may not want to go to war, for example, but there are lots of other ways we are violent in our lives.

For example, Mennonites are not less abusive to their children, they beat their wives just as much, and so are we really a nonviolent people? I'm not convinced that that has really percolated into who we are. In fact, even if you want to use the standard of, we won't kill people, we won't go to war. It was, I think my memory of statistics is not good but I would say that the majority of Mennonites, by a slim majority, chose conscientious objection, but around 47% chose to go to war.

My dad was one of those people. He decided to enlist in the Second World War and he went off to training camp. Even though he was raised as a good Mennonite and he was not unusual in the Mennonite community to do that. So we haven't been tested on our nonviolence stand with conscientious objection for a long time, and I'm not sure where we would come out, so I feel very reluctant to say Mennonites have a High Road here, both in terms of war and in terms of how we treat each other.

KW: Dr. Penner mentioned her dad enlisting in the military. So I asked if she would mind elaborating a little bit on how that experience impacted her family.

CP: My grandmother was very upset when my dad enlisted in the war. She didn't want him to do that. But I think there was a lot of peer pressure that if you were a young man and you were strong and healthy, you would be seen as a coward if you decided not to enlist. And so with all his school friends, he enlisted in the army and luckily for him, he was at the age where he enlisted in I think 1944 and so he just went for training and the war ended before he got into combat. I think had he been a year younger, how might his whole life had taken a different turn, would he have survived the war. Would he have been scarred by the traumatic experiences he had? He died when I was 16, so I never had the chance as an adult to question him, but I'm curious whether, looking back, he would have done the same thing again later. In hindsight, you look back at what happened and you might make the same decision or you might make different decisions. But I don't think he had a very good experience in training camp. I know that.

I'll make a few more comments about my dad, is that he was also a violent person, like he abused my mother, physically abused my mother and so what does conscientious

objection mean? I think it should mean that I am nonviolent. I will not use violence on anyone not in a war with a gun and not in my family with my hands like I will not be violent and how do we encourage people to see nonviolence as something more than a position about war?

JP: Pastor Cameron McKenzie also has a personal connection to this question. He grew up in the Salvation Army, came to a peace position later in life. He talks about his relationship with his great-grandpa who served in the war.

How do we disagree with people and still respect and love them? I think his answer illustrates a lot here.

CM: See I grew up in the Salvation Army, and the Salvation Army of course has a long history of participation in military. I mean its Victorian England roots are very, very much rooted in empire and colony, and there's lots of things there to unpack.

But my great-grandfather was a chaplain with the Anzacs at Gallipoli in World War One. Carries no weapons or anything like that and was there to care for the well-being of the souls of the men that were there.

His job was to hump the stretcher across the field and bring people home. He won the Military Cross from the Australian government because he went out and gathered in the midst of the battle of the personal possessions of hundreds of fallen Australians and rode home to their parents, none of which was a combatant role.

I don't think he had any question about the fact that the Australians needed to be there doing what they were doing against the aggression of the Germans and the Turks, but his role involve no weapons. It involved no fighting. It involved caring for the spiritual well-being of the people in front of him and I think that's something that even now I still want to honor in him.

We would have disagreed wildly on some aspects of our view of what it means to be a follower of Jesus around this question but I want to actually hold up and honour a man that went into the heated battle carrying his Bible and did things like, at the battle of Lone Pine, going out at night and cutting steps into the embankment under fire so that at least this the soldiers could get from point A to point B more easily.

So I want to honour that sense of who he was and calling. And I would never want to look at him and say "he was a bad Christian because he made that choice." What do you do with the fact that there are genuine authentic followers of Jesus who take a different position on this? Do I say they were wrong and am I right?

And I've had that question probably in all my work at Providence that that's a question that came to me more often than not. People say, "so you think I'm wrong?"

I would say, “well, the short answer is yes.” I mean it is the short answer, I wouldn't believe what I believe if I'm not somewhat convinced that this is a legitimate, authentic reading of the Jesus tradition and the Gospels and Scripture, and even the church's early history.

But something that I've come to really appreciate over time, is that it's OK to be convinced of the soundness of an idea and leave room for the fact that somebody else is reading the same tradition differently than you. So it's not about being right versus wrong.

It's about having the integrity to live into what you think the text says while leaving room for your sister or your brother in the faith to read it differently and then creating the conversation. Creating the dialogue that grows out of that.

I often think of the picture of a tapestry like this, this great big huge cloth thing, and if you look at lots of tapestries, you know you could pick five, six, seven colours that dominate the tapestry. But you've got all these little threads of other colours but often those little threads are creating definition around all those other big colours. And if you didn't have those little threads, something really important in that tapestry or the same thing with like thin lines in a painting, that's something of the clarity of the painting, the force of the painting would disappear if you took away all those small defining lines that might be in completely different colours than the rest of the painting.

I think when we read the Scripture tradition and on this question as an Anabaptist I think that I'm reading the scriptures correctly, I think I'm reading with integrity. I think I'm reading them in harmony with a very strong tradition within the church, but I recognize it's not the only one, but I think that if this tradition were not there being taught, being lived out being a part of the dialogue, the entire picture that the church is presenting to the world of what God is doing in Jesus would become less clear, it would lose some significant clarity and focus.

And so that's how I think about my difference from other people. Instead of thinking about their difference from me, I think about my difference and it's not so much that what's wrong with them and what's right about me, but what does this position add to this other thing, because there's a lot of people there who read the Bible faithfully. They read the Christian tradition, they read it prayerfully, they read it with great integrity and they come to a different place than I come to.

And so it's not about they're wrong, and I'm right, but rather what is this position that we hold adding to the picture that makes the whole picture of the church much more authentic and much clearer?

KW: As someone who didn't always believe in the peace position and at times in my life, ridiculed it, listening to some of these responses now I'm kind of unsure as to where to

start. I mean it would be tempting to just go into a discussion now about the differences between the peace position and others, or *just war* theory, or even to pick it apart a little bit or to straw man that or well I mean that we shouldn't straw man a different theory, that's not a healthy practice in the first place, but I think the thing that I find the most profound about some of these responses is especially Cameron's relationship with his great-grandfather.

This is a really interesting thing because while Cameron has a different theological position than his great-grandfather, he also has a great deal of respect for him and lives in this kind of tension of thinking “well, I would have made a different decision had I been in that situation,” but also respecting his great-grandfather for how he lived out his faith to the best of his ability, wholeheartedly following the convictions that his great-grandfather had. That's the best all of us can do, is to live out the convictions that we have. And while Cameron had different convictions than his great-grandfather, his great-grandfather followed his convictions to the letter, or at least in that matter, right? He joined as a chaplain in the war and did some pretty amazing things. And there's some videos online about the work that he did that's quite incredible, and Cameron demonstrates this really generous spirit in this that I find to be quite inspiring as we talk about this.

This is something that us Mennonites have not always been very good at is how we treat outsiders. We don't always have the most generous spirit towards those on the outside, and that's what I find so inspiring about Cameron's story.

JP: Yeah, he spoke well of it and he articulated it well, and I think it's one of these larger themes that is running underneath this podcast and I'm sure will continue to surface through this season and future seasons is how do we disagree well with people. So starting off talking about peace is a really appropriate thing for us, and talking about this question of how do we work with people who think differently than us? That's way bigger than just a question about whether we go to war or not, or how we deal with people who think differently about Jesus's call to peace. That is a question that we desperately need to answer in almost every area of our lives right now. To hear these personal stories from Dr. Carol Penner and Pastor Cameron McKenzie about the fact that again, this is not just some straw man, these are people that they had relationships with. These are people that were in their lives that believed and thought differently than they do, and grapple with how to respect and to love, and to gently disagree and to work through those things within relationship is so significant.

We also talked with Dr. Terry Hiebert, who's president of Steinbach Bible College. This is what he had to say about other faith traditions and how they view Jesus' teaching about loving our enemies.

Dr. Terry Hiebert: Other traditions, and in other religions that emphasize you, know nonviolence and so on. And yes, there are. Hinduism has non-violent aspects. Jainism actually is built very strongly on that. Buddhism has non-violent aspects as well. There are traditions within Islam and there are Muslims who say that the Koran does teach non-violence just like Christians will say that the Bible teaches non-violence. Yet in the Bible, we also have these Old Testament examples of violence and so people point to the violent history of Christianity as well.

I think all religious traditions do have a sense of nonviolence there. So how do we firmly hold to our faith convictions and especially those that do believe that maybe Christianity or other religions have justification for violence.

I have done some thinking and reading about the relationship between, for example, in Christian circles... Honestly, the majority of Christians would believe in some form of just war theory, the belief that there are some justifiable reasons for going to war, and usually, there's seven or 10 or 12 different reasons why. In no case are those reason, and for most people they wouldn't say, "oh, we're doing this because that makes the world good, or that makes the world a holy war." or some kind of a, you know this is a fully... war is going to bless and cleanse and so on. No. War is evil. War is bad and people die.

What *just war* theory or Christians in the *just war* theory are doing, I think, is to basically put limits on the amount of evil that happens in the war.

I've also seen some comparisons between *just war* theory and pacifism, and at the bottom line really is that just those theory and pacifism has had a lot in common. Between the two, they both want there to be a last resort. It's just that pacifism believes the last resort is further down the road than *just war* theorists do.

But every aspect of *just war* theory, if you look at the legitimate authority and some of these other things, non-combatant immunity and all those kinds of things, they are good ideas can happen at work, but often those things don't happen or there are exceptions to those. So it's basically an attempt, and it's not necessarily a biblical attempt, it's simply an attempt by Christians, mostly in the fourth and fifth centuries to limit the amount of evil that happens in the war, but not to eliminate the war altogether.

Whereas pacifism would want to say, can we start from a peace position and find the most creative ways that we can to avoid war or to produce the best results through the least violent means possible. It's like if I have a gun, will I think of the gun as a last resort or what I think of the gun as a resort that may actually cut out a lot of creative alternatives.

So I think the common ground is right there, but I think the difference happens to be that with pacifism you start from our position of, in a sense, weakness and dependent humility and dependence on God and say if I don't choose this evil means of action, then

what will God do with us and how can we become creative? I've read some secular nonviolent writers that are developing workshops and doing a lot of writing on exactly that, finding peaceful means and creative means to solve conflict.

JP: I connected with Many Rooms Church Community and sat down at the dining room table with several members of that church - Stephanie, Travis, Jennifer and Deborah, to process some of these questions. You'll hear pieces of that conversation today. Here we have Travis's voice first, as he introduces Deborah. She grew up a Jehovah's Witness and coming out of that had some insight into how they think about this issue.

Travis: So Deborah, you might actually be able to speak to this from a different religion.

Deborah: The Jehovah's Witnesses also think of it as peaceful. They do not go to war, they technically don't do any kind of violence either, so I kind of grew up in that and I've always been more towards peaceful relationships and loving relationships then.

Some believe that they have to go to war because it's their duty or whatever. I understand that, but I've never believed in war and I've never believed that physical violence can actually achieve anything.

JP: Stephanie added to this talking about her own experience.

Stephanie: I grew up in Australia and there I'd never heard of the idea of pacifism, it was considered to be a virtue to be patriotic. As a Christian too you would... patriotism seemed to be very congruent with Christianity. I was very shocked to move to Rosenort and find out that Christians actually thought they shouldn't fight in the wars.

I would win the fights because they weren't used to having to fight about it, but eventually I realized they were right, that Jesus did not model this kind of "doing anything for your country," but that's what I sensed from my American family who's also not pacifist but very Christian.

You look at the Old Testament and you see how God definitely used wars and he blessed his people and gave them victory in battle and if you just apply the Old Testament to your current situation and assume that because you're a Christian, you now are God's people and if your country is Christian in some way, you are God's people. That's what I've sensed is the view is that loving your enemies means your personal enemies, but when it's an enemy of the country because your country is God's then you can fight and kill people because God's allowed to kill his enemies.

That's sort of what I gathered.

JP: Travis continued the conversation, wrestling with how someone could take Jesus's teaching about peace seriously and still go to war.

Travis: Well, it's interesting. I would assume that you have to compartmentalize your thinking to say, "OK, it's OK to go to war," like you're putting aside your Christianity and you're not following Jesus's teachings and you're going to do something patriotic or political for your country, rather than for the Kingdom, right? So it's the earthly Kingdom versus the Heavenly Kingdom. There's a lot of people I think who actually put them all those together and as we're talking about this, like saying in the Old Testament God backed an army, and so, why doesn't God just back us? So it's perfectly fine to have *just war* theories or different ideas that are actually God blessed to engage in violence towards our fellow humans.

Growing up I would have thought that you would have to really separate yourself from Christ to have that type of thinking, but I think there's all kinds. I guess there's a whole spectrum of what people think but I grew up in something in an environment where I was taught from day one to be nonviolent.

JP: Deborah recognized the same thing that Dr. Carol Penner recognized earlier in the episode, that just because a group of people hold to a peace position, it doesn't always translate into their everyday lives. She talked about how she's processed this in her own life.

Deborah: Well that was different with the JW's because they didn't quite stick to their peacefulness when it came to children and other things, but it's happened in many religions too. But I always had a feeling that it was better to love people than to hurt them. So war was definitely out of the question even after I left.

Being loving towards your neighbour takes effort. It takes heartfelt effort, and it takes working on it and everybody kind of has to work together.

KW: Dr. Greg Boyd is the pastor at Woodland Hills Church in St. Paul, MN and he's the author of numerous books, including *The Crucifixion of the Warrior God*. This is what he had to say about our question about what other faith traditions believe about Jesus' teaching about loving our enemies.

Dr. Greg Boyd: There's been two major ways of dealing with, of interpreting Jesus' teaching on nonviolence that skirt or to avoid coming to a complete pacifist conclusion.

The first one is that often theologians or Bible interpreters have said that Jesus' teachings are meant to apply to our personal relationships, but not to national enemies and life-threatening enemies and things like that. It has to do with our just our personal everyday relationships.

The trouble with that view, if I can go ahead and put in my perspective on these other views of other interpretations of Matthew 5:43-45, is Jesus doesn't qualify his teaching in any way. He doesn't say love your personal enemies. In fact, when Jesus says to love your

enemies he's talking to a first-century Jewish Palestinian audience, mostly peasants, maybe exclusively peasants. And you say the word enemy in that context, and the first thing everybody's gonna think of are the Romans because the Romans are occupying their land. These dirty gentiles are lording it over us, and this is not only miserable for us, but it's an insult to our God because our God's the true God, so we should be reigning over them, and that's kind of the thinking on it.

The Pax Romana, the peace of Rome, was kept through terror and the Romans were experts at this. If there's an insurrection happening, and there was frequently with the Jews, people would push back on the Roman tyranny, they would just send their soldiers into the town, wake up some random people and crucify them on the hill. It was their way of saying this is what happens when you mess with us.

So the Romans were the one group that all Jews loved to hate, or almost all Jews. There were some who worked with them. But Jesus says, "No. You got to love your enemies" and that's going to include the worst kind of enemies you can have which are the ones that that kill innocent people. And so if the Romans aren't an exception to Jesus teachings, I don't think there are any exceptions to Jesus' teachings. So, the personal interpretation I don't think works very well.

The second way, and these go hand in hand often, is a *just war* approach and the idea is that yeah we should love our enemies, but obviously - this is how the logic goes - obviously, when your life's being threatened, and when your nation's under attack God understands, expects us to pick up arms and to defend ourselves.

And this is where we come up with the *just war* thinking. It starts with Augustine and then takes off speed from there. Basically it says that yeah, we should love our enemies unless we're justified in not loving our enemies. We should do good to our enemies unless we're justified in killing them.

But see, here's the thing. Nobody fights wars they think are unjust. Putin right now thinks he's on the side of justice. It's twisted, but in his framework he thinks he's doing the just thing. So *just war* theory, in my opinion, also says, let's continue to do what we're doing. So love your enemies unless we want to go to war like we've always been doing and we need to kill to defend ourselves like we've always been doing.

Then once you adopt that *just war* thinking, then loving your enemies...

Well, here's the thing. We always seem justified hating our enemies. That's why they're called enemies. It always seems justified doing that and so nothing at all changes and this is the beauty and the radicality of the call of God in our life.

Can we be people who actually love their enemies and do good to their enemies? The worst kind of enemies, even when it means that they get killed? Why? Because that's what God did for us.

Paul says in Ephesians 5:1-2, "live in love as Christ loved us and gave his life for us." That just sums up the whole call of discipleship right there. We are to live in this love. Now that means that we don't do it sometimes and not others. We're to love like the rain falls, like the sun shines, Jesus says. We are to love indiscriminately because the Father loves indiscriminately. That means by definition that our call to love does not depend at all on the worthiness of the person or the merits of the person in front of us. To love like the rain falls, like the sun shines, it doesn't matter whether they're righteous or wicked, whether they're just or unjust, our call is to be like the Father in loving them.

The *just war* theory, in my opinion when Christians embraced that, that was like the most decisive step, and Christians now becoming just a Christianized version of what the world already has and the church becomes sort of just the institution that blesses what the state was already doing and we become the high priests of the army and all the rest, and none of it looks like Calvary. Yeah, the whole call is to look like Calvary, to have a cruciform life and that means that we're supposed to be carrying the cross. Jesus said, "pick up your cross and follow me," but you can't both be carrying the cross, in my opinion, and also carrying the sword, they're antithetical.

If you live by the sword, you'll die by the sword. That's why Jesus rebukes Peter when he tries to use the sword, even though Peter was justified doing it, the arrest of Jesus was completely unjust. He's the one innocent person in history and yet now he's being arrested. So it's totally unjust. And yet Jesus rebukes him when Peter uses the sword in the name of that justice. Our call is to carry the cross, not the sword.

JP: One of the things that struck me about this episode, maybe even more than any that we've done so far, although it's been true all along, is the huge variety of responses we received and the huge variety of backgrounds of our panellists. We have pastors and we have theologians and academics, and we have people like Dr. Boyd, who are published authors and sort of well-known figures in this world. And then we have a group of people from a small house church in north Winnipeg sitting around a dining room table chatting about these things too and kind of their lived experience. And all of these perspectives coming together in one.

I'm grateful to be a part of this. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to sort of bring this together in this way because I think that putting these things next to each other really brings out some of the deep truths around some of these really difficult concepts.

KW: One of the things that has really kind of come out is no matter which tradition we're talking about, whether we're looking at Jesus' teaching about loving our enemies through

the lens of pacifism, whether we're talking about it as in terms of the *just war* theory, or whether we're looking at it in terms of, well, this applies to our interpersonal relationships but not geopolitical situations.

At the very least Christians agree Jesus' teaching about loving our enemies does apply to every Christian, to our interpersonal relationships, and that is something that Christianity as a whole does not always do very well, and Anabaptists sometimes don't do very well either and that's also something that came up in this episode as well. That sometimes while we do these like really big things, like the conscientious objectors as has also been discussed, we don't actually have that different rates of domestic violence than the rest of the world, and that is something that is a tragedy, truly. And we could do much better at some of those sorts of things.

JP: Yeah, as we talk about this and as we dig into these things, I think it's our hope, and it's something we say at the end of the episodes every week, but it really is a true thing. As we engage with these topics this isn't just something that gets talked about in the context of a podcast, that gets listened to on your commute to work or wherever you're engaging with this, but that this is something that as we deal with these things and look at what Jesus has to say about peace and look at this sort of absolutely the baseline or the sort of the bare minimum for this in terms of how we interact with our interpersonal relationships, our family and our friends and our communities, that this becomes something that actually works into our spirits and our hearts and our actions as we seek to be people who live out the life that Jesus is calling us to.

KW: I think our feature song today is something that's actually remarkably powerful, as we think about this because we cannot live out this kind of love, this kind of enemy love without first experiencing the love of God. The Bible says we love because he first loved us and this song is called Who I Am by Dane Joneshill. In the song he kind of personifies the love of God as meeting us in our places of darkness, and there's a line in there that says "I can't understand why love would hang around wanting me not after love has seen who I am." This is Who I Am by Dane Joneshill.

Who I Am, Dane Joneshill

I am the son
Who stood in the yard
Spit on his father's gift
Cause I had worked hard

And all that I wanted
Is what I had earned
I didn't know
You letting go is what I deserve

So I cursed you by name
As we stood in the dark
By the lines on your face
I thought I'd gone too far

But you reached out your hand
And you begged me to stay
Your voice like a knife
Cutting as I pushed you away

I know who I am.
Who I am is hatred and anger
And I, I've seen who you are
Your love

And I can't understand
Why love
Would hang around wanting me
Not after love has seen who I am

I am the woman
With the body for sale
You were the lover
Who won't go away

Every night you came knocking
With a rose in your hand
Eyes full of belief
I lied through my teeth to not let you in

And the men came and left
With only one thing in mind
There you would stand
Flower in hand most every night

It's the one thing you came with
Lord I wanted no part
My body I give
If I'm to live I must keep my heart

I know who I am
Who I am is wounded and broken and shamed
I've seen who you are
Your love

And I can't understand
Why love
Would hang around wanting me
Not after love has seen who I am

Closing

The Armchair Anabaptist is a Theodidaktos podcast and Theodidaktos is a publication of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference.

You could check us out online at www.thearmchairanabaptist.ca and find us on iTunes, Spotify and wherever podcasts are found.

A special thanks to our guests who have joined us today. Dr. Greg Boyd, Dr. Carol Penner and Pastor Cameron McKenzie, Dr. Terry Hiebert and Travis, Stephanie, Jennifer, and Deborah from the Many Rooms Church Community of Winnipeg.

Our intro song is First Communion by Dane Joneshill and our feature song today was the song Who I Am by Dane Joneshill.

Our executive producer is Erica Fehr, our producer and audio engineer is Kevin Wiebe, and our administrative assistant and wizard of all things web related is Ruth Block.

I'm Kevin Wiebe and I'm Jesse Penner and we have been your hosts for The Armchair Anabaptist.

We certainly hope that what you have heard today will do more than stay is merely food for thought, but that it can help inspire each of us to get up out of the comfort of our armchairs and translate into living more like Jesus.

Join us next time as we continue our journey looking at the life of peace for The Outsiders Part 2 where we explore the second half of this discussion about how faith traditions other than us anabaptists wrestle with these teachings of Jesus about peace and how we and anabaptists ought to relate to them. That's next time on The Armchair Anabaptist.

**Edited for clarity.*