

Overflow

The Institute for the Theology of Culture: New Wine, New Wineskins

A Revolution of Love by Ronaldo Sison

One of the things that brought me to Multnomah Biblical Seminary was New Wine, New Wineskins. Visiting Multnomah during the Seminary's Spring 2007 Preview, I read about New Wine's conference, "Freeing the Captive: Removing the Offense to the Ex-offender." It made me reflect on myself as a prisoner who needed to be freed from my racial prejudice and bigotry. As a former Marxist in the Philippines, I fought against so-called American neo-colonialism, together with thousands of student activists. I believed then that this economic imperialism was the root of poverty, social injustice, and the inequitable distribution of wealth and income in our country. I espoused revolution against such imperialism. But

I failed to account for sin's imperialistic enslavement of my soul.

Long after I came to know Christ Jesus and follow him, I realized that I still carried with me the angst of prejudice and bigotry as I lived in a predominantly white culture. I have lived in Canada and the States for the past 12 years, and have recently become aware that my ministry involvement has been very insular and very limited to my own Filipino ethnicity.

Since interning with New Wine, New Wineskins-- where I am being mentored, nurtured and shepherded, I have experienced a greater comprehension and deeper knowledge of the love of the Triune God, as that love is poured out in our hearts

through Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). This greater awareness of his intoxicating, captivating love has caused me to confess my racial bigotry, and has led to the removal of the racial blinders from my eyes along with the walls and barriers of racial prejudice that I have erected. God is leading me to minister more meaningfully, as I relate the love of God and the power of the cross and the resurrection not only to my ethnic group but to the broader culture in which God has placed me. This is very transformational and strategic for me as I seek to teach, mentor, and disciple young men wherever God leads me after seminary: in the Philippines, in Southeast

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A Word From the Director by Paul Louis Metzger

Over the years, I find that security in Christ's love is rarely talked about in the development of Christian leaders, and it is rarely found among leaders. I am no exception. If we are to be people who compassionately impact the world for Christ, we need to sense that same compassionate love in our lives. For those who are forgiven much love much. As God continues to secure me in his love, I find that I am growing in my burden to see that the interns whom God has entrusted to my care grow in confidence that nothing

can separate them from the love of Christ. Only then will they be able to move forward in engaging redemptively a beautiful though broken world that often radically rejects God's word. Instead of trying to take back America from those who do not embrace a biblical worldview, we need to lay down our lives sacrificially for "our enemies," wedding Christ-centered compassion to our biblical conviction. At New Wine, New Wineskins, we are committed to going deeper in our involvement in Christ's life in the Spirit, as Christ pours out his love in

the world through the Spirit so that the world might respond to God's love and believe. ■



Dr. Paul Louis Metzger is Professor of Christian Theology and Theology of Culture at Multnomah Biblical Seminary and Director of The Institute for the Theology of Culture: New Wine, New Wineskins.

Upcoming Events

January 30-31

CTI Conference

Chico, CA

Dr. Metzger will serve as the keynote speaker at The Center for Transformation Studies conference, discussing "The Shack."

More details online at cftstudies.org.

February 13 & March 13

New Wine Forums

10:00-11:00 AM

Multnomah University

Stay tuned for details!

February 15

Cultural Engagement Series

10:45 AM

Dr. Metzger will be making a presentation at Good Shepherd Community Church.

Contact Pastor Dan Franklin at dan.franklin@goodshepherdcc.org

March 1-3

Dr. Metzger will speak with Dr. Perkins at the Drum Majors Conference at Calvin College in Grand Rapids.

April 25

"Created to Create"

New Wine Spring Conference

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Mosaic Church, Portland

Check new-wineskins.org for the latest Conference updates!

For more event information, please visit new-wineskins.org!

Asia, in Canada, or wherever else. I am passionate about being a channel of God's personal grace, of bearing witness to Jesus and his new wineskins work, as the Spirit of love is poured out. I am thankful for the theology of cultural engagement that flows from the triune God's heart where we move beyond the cloister and institutional walls and ethnocentrism and nationalism to love all people with the captivating love of God. Yes, I still believe in revolution, but now it is a revolution that occurs in the heart and not in clenched fists, a revolution that is of love and not of hatred. ■

Ronaldo Sison is a second year student enrolled in the Master of Divinity in Theological Studies Program at Multnomah Biblical Seminary. He can be reached at rsison@multnomah.edu



Hungry for dialogue? Check out consumingjesus.org!

Contact New Wine!

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The Institute for the Theology of Culture: New Wine, New Wineskins, directed by Dr. Paul Louis Metzger, is an official program of Multnomah Biblical Seminary and is dedicated to bearing witness to Christ in contemporary culture.

I remember the moment Christ revealed to me that my life isn't about me. I was praying on my floor and unexpectedly had this deep conviction that my life is about Christ, and that my entire existence and all my striving is to serve him and allow him to live in and through me. It was deeply exhilarating, but also deeply humbling. He showed me his centrality in all things, and that everything I do is to further his kingdom, not mine. If I succeed, then by the grace of God he has purposed it to further reveal the love and power of Christ. Yet my motivations are not always Christ-honoring, but are blasphemous and futile, leading to a self-collapsing empire of pride. All too often, my heart gravitates in this direction. I want recognition. I want my name to be dropped at social functions and a life that is admired by followers. I want success that points to me, not Christ.

At our recent New Wine, New Wineskins retreat, Dr. Metzger discussed the theme of entitlement in light of Martin Luther King Jr.'s life. In King's 1968 "Drum Major Instinct" speech, he speaks of our inherent desire to be "drum major(s)." All of us desire to "lead the parade," he says, to feel superior. The profound thing about his life though, is that he subverted this desire to lead the parade in the name of love, truth and justice. He submitted it to the Father's-not his- will. As he says, our innate desire to lead and for recognition is not in and of itself evil. What is evil is when we fail to understand why and how we are to lead, in whose name we are to lead, and for

whose kingdom.

King references Mark 10:35, where James and John requested to sit on Jesus' right and left side, once he is King of Israel. They wanted recognition. They felt entitled to share in his wealth. His response? To be great, give your life as a servant. And this is Jesus, a man who, as discussed further in MLK's speech, never added up to anything in the world's eyes. No possessions, never traveled anywhere impressive, had no college education, no published work, no awards, no family. I can only imagine what a dinner conversation would be like with him sitting amongst a host of doctors, professors and lawyers. He was killed out of mockery and deep unpopularity. Upon his last breath, onlookers only gambled for his clothes, and he was buried in a borrowed tomb.

I am deeply humbled when I think about our Lord's life. And I have the audacity to compare myself to others. To want more. But this is not the way our Lord lived. He humbled himself to the lowest ranks possible, and never did he say, "I may look shabby now, but you just wait. One day, I will conquer the world and you will be sorry." Jesus' response was and is a message of patience, of love, of grace, a message that always points to his Father. To the world, he was as significant as the man we pass on the street corner. Forgettable. Laughable. And this was and is our Lord who breaks down barriers of hate with love, and who in Him alone we are purified and reconciled to the Father for eternity.

What about MLK Jr.'s motivation? Power? Recognition? A killer eulogy? An impressive epitaph? His passion and imagination did not stop with him. He didn't want recognition to sleep better at night. Ironically, his recognition served to do the opposite: put his life and family in danger. He wanted freedom for all people and to ultimately do God's will--regardless of whether or not he reaped any of the benefits. This is what Jesus was explaining to his disciples. Do not do it for what you gain; do it because love is more powerful than status. It's sobering to realize that in so many ways I long for center stage and my own victory, and I allow this desire to shape my voice as a believer. I am humbled to realize that it is only Christ in me who can reconcile, who can love, and who can transform hearts and structures. I pray that the church can learn from King's life, and re-new her vow to serve the world in Christ's humility and further his kingdom, not her own. ■

Please respond to this article and join the discussion at consumingjesus.org.



Kelsi Johns is a student at Multnomah Biblical Seminary. She spends much of her time exploring the beautiful city of Portland and writing for New Wine and its affiliated blog, consumingjesus.org. She can be contacted at kjohns1@multnomah.edu.