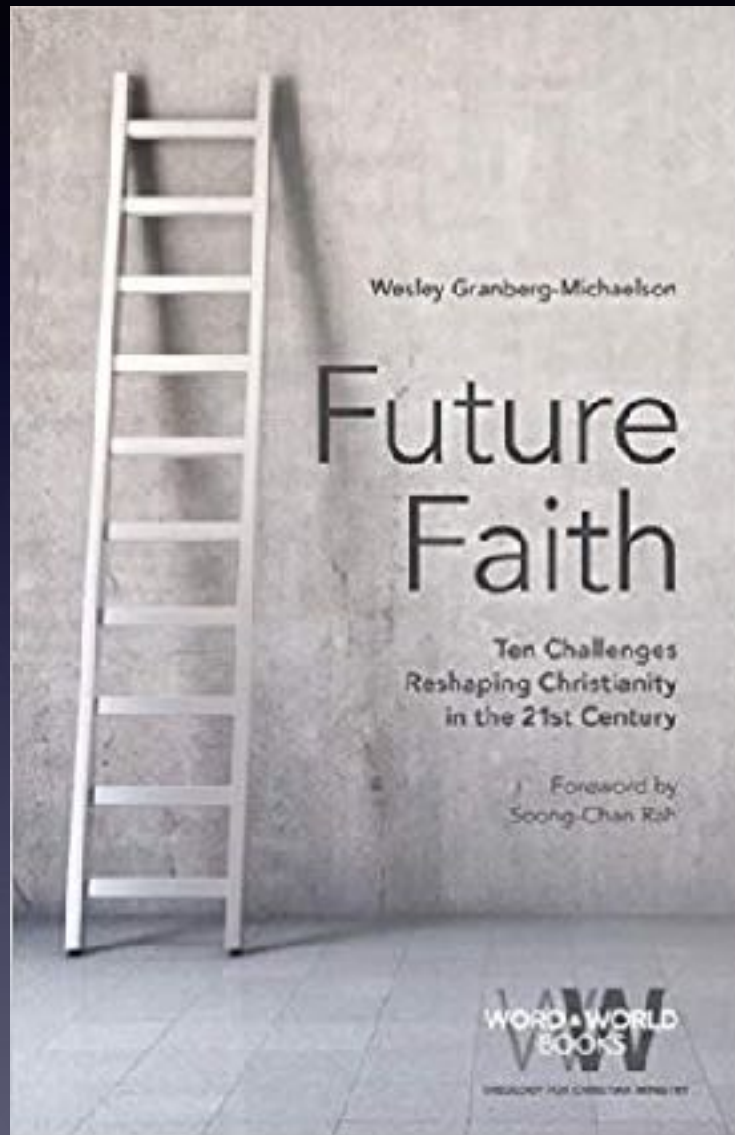


Future Faith



Holy Manners Bookstudy 44
ACTS - Winter 2020
St David's United Church, Calgary

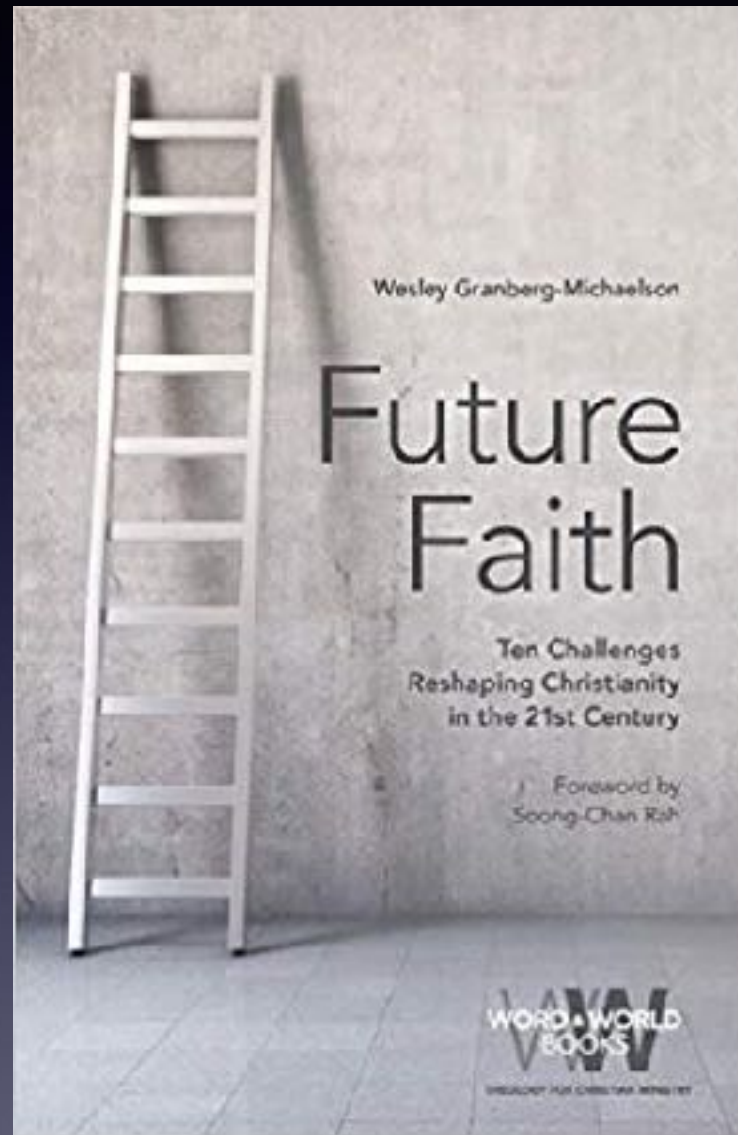
Session 4

Challenge 3:

Seeing through
Non-Western Eyes

Session # 4

- Housekeeping - Wayne
- Opening - Jack
- Ch 3 Development - Wayne
- Hospitality Break
- Supplements - Jock
- Perspective - Brenda
- Discussion - Brenda
- Closing - Brenda
- Appendices
 - Appx 1 - Mike Grammer's Notes
 - Appx 2 - Joan's Discussion Notes



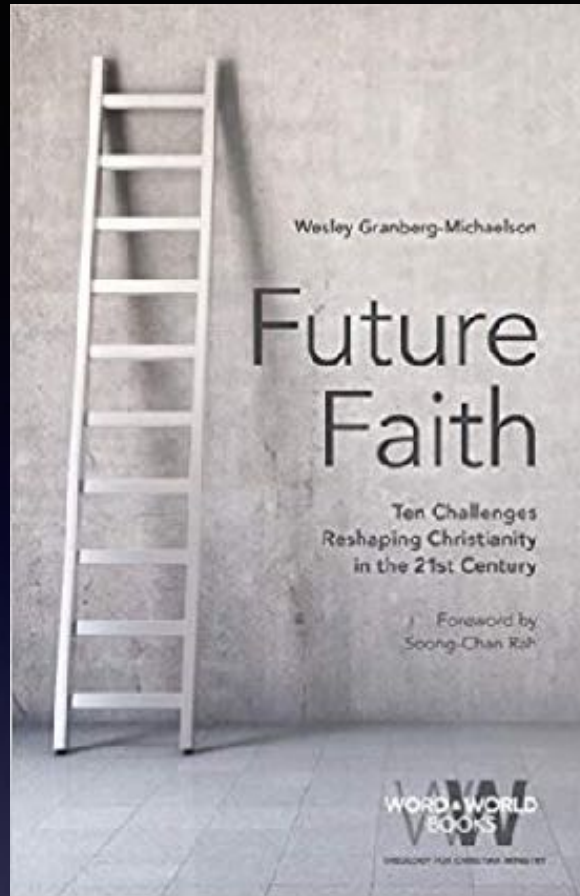
Housekeeping

Wayne



Opening

Jack



Chapter 4 "Seeing Through Non-Western Eyes"

First Remarks:

This is a rich but complex chapter. Some of the examples used do not speak directly to the Canadian experience. Wayne will add Canadian examples for greater relevance.

Chapter 4

"Seeing Through Non-Western Eyes"



I will briefly unpack the contributions of four guides and then help us with “lenses” that Michaelson refers to in his book to help us compare and contrast “eastern” and “western” ways of seeing.

- Copernicus
- Charles Taylor
- Rene Funoleau
- Richard Wagnese



1. **Copernicus** - to elaborate on the meaning of "paradigm shift"
2. **Charles Taylor** - is message in the book "The Secular Age"
Instead of viewing modern secularization as an 'adversary' he explains how we can shift our stance in order to live creatively with a world that rejects the old foundations for meaning.
3. **Rene Funoleau** - an Oblate Catholic priest who spent his life working with and learning from the Dene First Nation in Northern Alberta and the NWT.
4. **Richard Wagmese** – his book "Medicine Walk" was one we studied some years ago. It was the author's attempt to reframe and present a worldview from Indigenous perspective while functioning in a Canadian context.



Remember Our Major Theme of the Evening

Christianity is becoming a non-Western religion as it was during the first centuries of the Christian era.

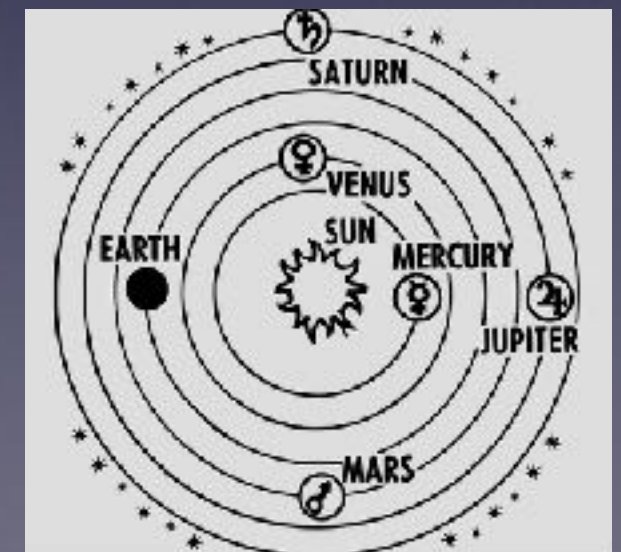
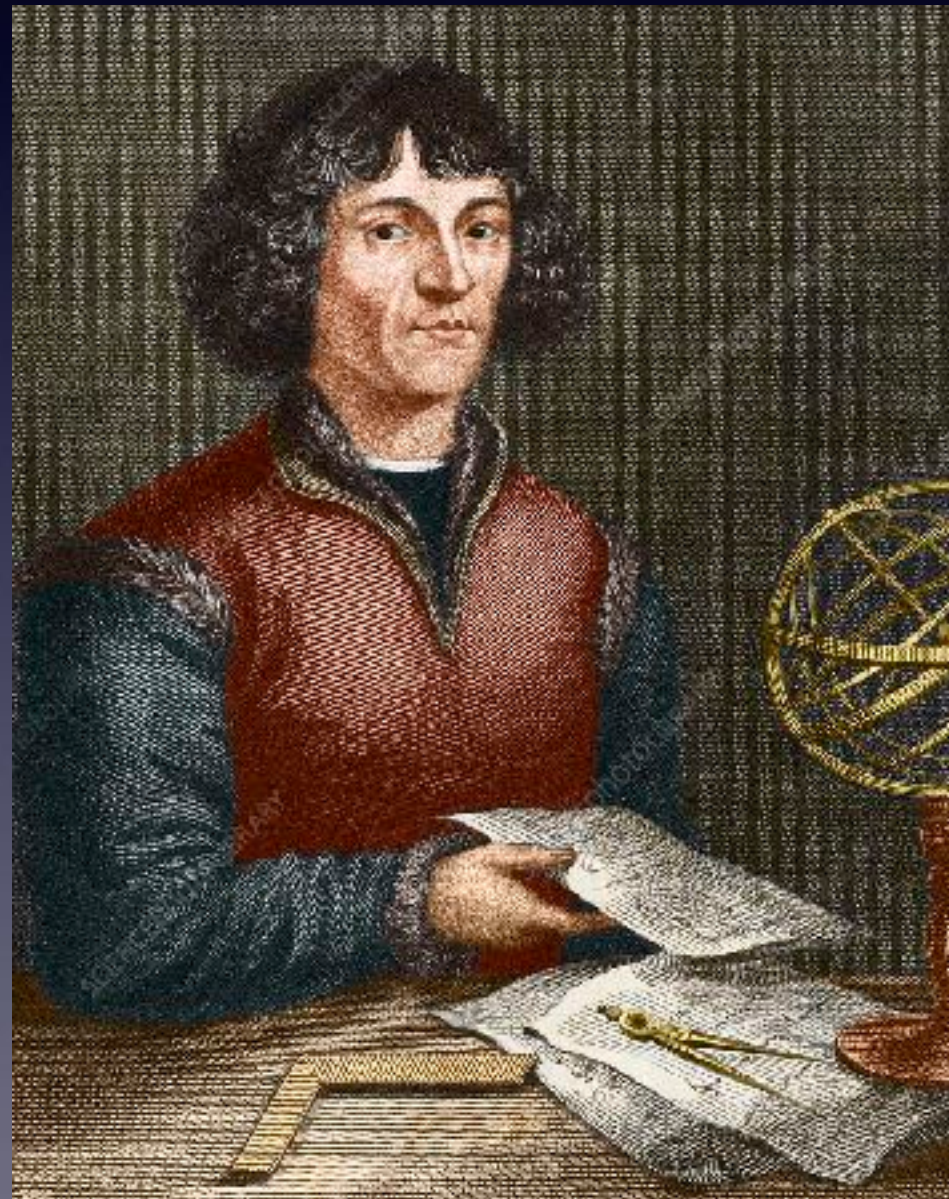
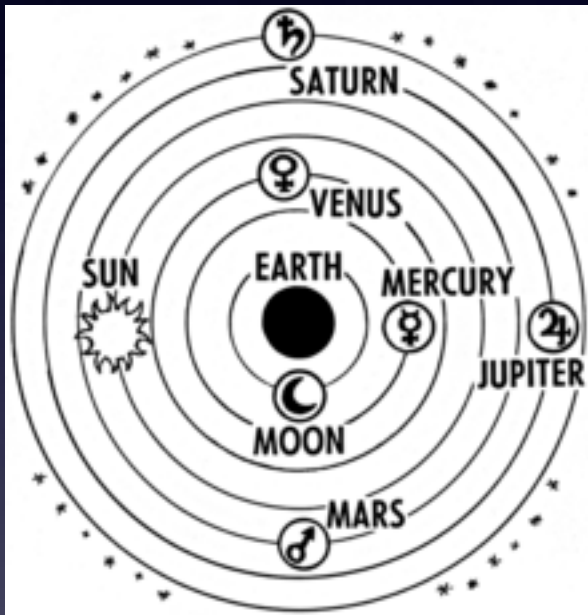
We need a new set of lenses to understand this reality and to learn how to function in a new world of faith.

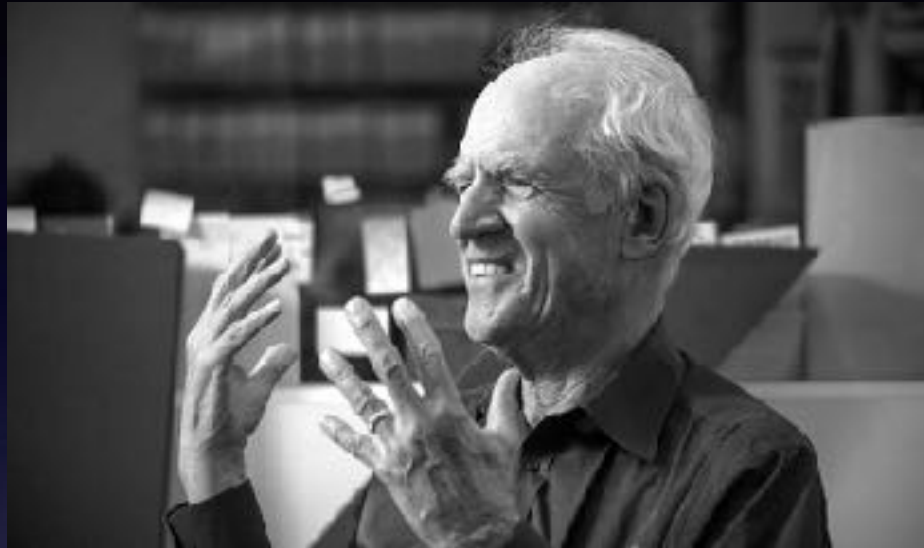
- discuss

Copernicus

Unpacking the meaning of "paradigm shift"

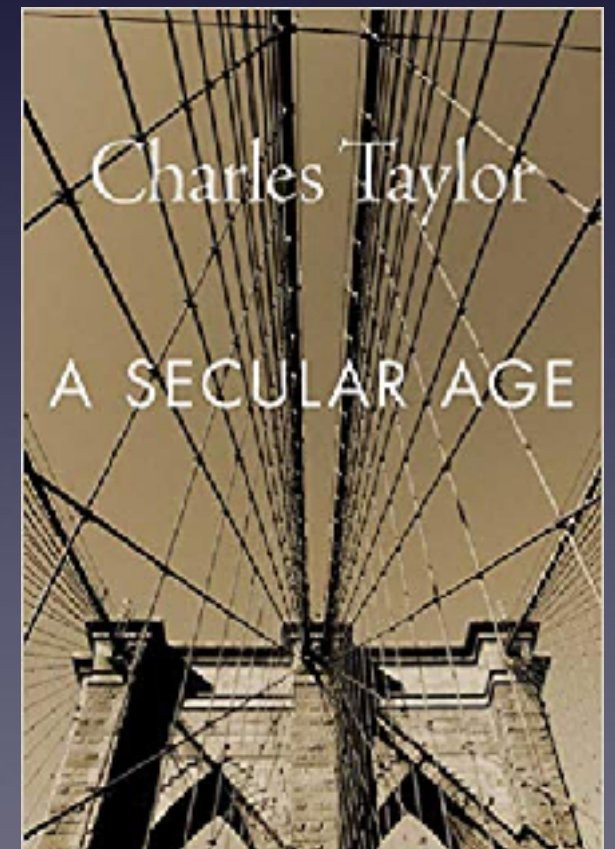
An example of a shift in approaching reality
from earlier Western history





Charles Taylor

“A Secular Age” – his magnum opus





Professor Charles Taylor

What kind of religion makes sense in a secular age?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAuHmRSxZY4>
5m excerpt of 8m25s

Charles Taylor

Post-Modernism



Contemporary “post-modernism” with its “hermeneutics of suspicion” is replacing earlier frameworks based on “rational certainty” (p. 46)

In other words, out of necessity, we humans are moving beyond an epoch grounded in “reason” espoused by the Enlightenment and modern science and are entering an epoch based on universal “experience”

What does this mean?

Charles Taylor

The Secular Age



Wayne briefly unpacks the thesis of - "The Secular Age"

"Secular" describes a state where moderns find meaning in life without a need for a 'transcendent' reality. "I" becomes the centre of my own meaning.

The result is that many claim to be - "the nones" – who do not trust or follow a religious belief system today, and yet seem open to new ways of seeing with a broad perspective.

Charles Taylor

The Secular Age

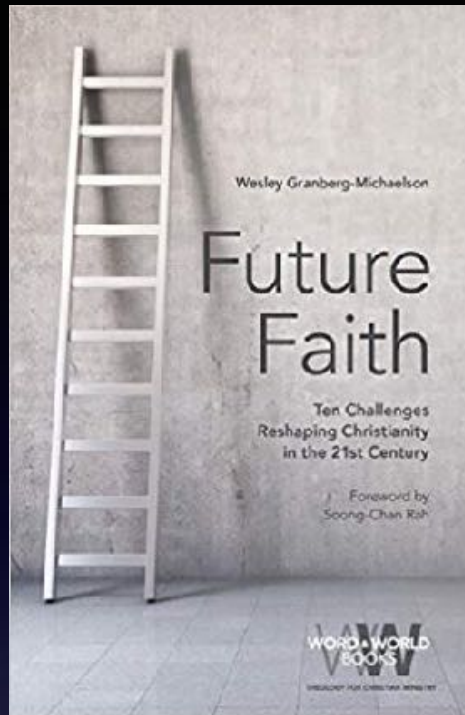


But - We are discovering that the absence of a “faith” dimension in people’s lives prompts them to realize that “something” is missing.

Taylor says that in such a societal set of circumstances –

“We need to discover new “habits of the mind” that will allow for enduring, diversifying expressions of religious life.

It is here that Wagamese and others like him help us to view the world from the “non-Western” perspectives of his Indigenous worldview.



Supplements

- Father René Fumoleau, a Catholic priest in Lutselk'e, NWT
- The Pilgrimage of Lac StAnne, God's Lake



**Please keep in mind, that this presentation is posted to sduc.ca.
This makes reading the finer details possible. As also the Appendices.**



Father Rene Fumoleau

was renowned as a story teller. Here is a short Christmas piece from him.

No Place at the Inn

My favorite Christmas story is from Father René Fumoleau, a Catholic priest in Lutselk'e, Northwest Territories (NWT), Canada. As a young man, Father Fumoleau was sent to a small Dene community in the NWT for his first assignment as priest for a local congregation there. One of the first things he decided he wanted to do was make the church more reflective of local Dene culture.

As part of this exercise he went to visit a local Dene artist. Fumoleau said to the painter, "I'd like to put a painting of the Nativity Scene into the church; but I'd like the painting to be done with references to Dene culture."

The painter nodded and so Fumoleau went on: "I was thinking we could paint the Nativity Scene as if it took place up here. Maybe having Joseph and Mary—instead of going into Bethlehem— paint them coming into a Dene village maybe by dog team? And they went from door to door being turned away until they come to the Dene equivalent of the manger, a barn, the building where Jesus is born. What do you think?"

The painter nodded noncommittally. So Fumoleau said, "Well it's summer time now, it's a long ways to go before Christmas. Think about it and I'll come back and check out on you later."

A few months later, in the autumn, Fumoleau went back to visit the painter. "How's the Nativity Scene going? Have you painted it?" The painter shook his head, and said, "No." Fumoleau said, "Well there's still some time. I'll check back later."

A few weeks before Christmas, he visited the painter again.

He asked, "How's it going? Have you made any progress in painting the Dene Nativity Scene?" The painter shook his head, and said, "No." Fumoleau said, "You're not going to paint one are you?" The painter said, "No." Fumoleau sighed and asked, "Why not?" And the Dene painter answered, "Because I can't paint it the way you ask Father. If Joseph and Mary came to a Dene village, the first door they knocked on would take them in."



Father Rene Fumoleau

Remembering A Meeting

Wayne Holar



These warm July days remind me of a very special northern summer I spent with Catholic Oblate priest René Fumoleau at a strategic time of transition and transformation in my life.

I had joined about two dozen other “southern” Canadians to participate in one of René’s Denendeh Seminar learning events almost 30 years ago. We saw a lot of the upper Mackenzie River (known locally as Deh Cho), lived on the land, met many Dene First Nation people and other northerners in and around Yellowknife and attended the Dene National Assembly (an annual gathering of the regional Aboriginal clans) held that year in Hay River.

Canada is a large country. It needs a broad spirituality to encompass its vast diversity. I began thinking in new ways that have intrigued me ever since and now would like to share some insights I began constructing for myself at that time. We need to grow in our ability to engage and learn from people that are different from ourselves, René would say. He used his own life experience as a case in point. Born in the city of Vendee, which is located in a region of southern Brittany and northern Loire, he spoke the local Celtic dialect until he learned French in public school. He graduated from seminary knowing few non-Catholics and, unaware of much about the geography or people of the western Arctic, joined the missionary Order of Mary Immaculate to bring the gospel to the “sauvages” of northern Canada. He settled in this place “at the end of the earth” because few other Europeans desired to live there.

It took him some years to realize that God had preceded him to a location not so desolate if you got to know it. He found that many of the people there had a closer relationship to the divine that he had ever encountered in Europe. The more he listened and learned from the Dene, the more he grew in his own understanding of what life was all about. Fumoleau taught that not only could one learn, but also lead from the margins. He shared truths that we had ignored or were distracted from in the more “civilized” regions of Canada. His writings about the treaties and of Dene ways proved very enlightening to folks all over the world. Only gradually have we Canadians started learning that the stone, which the builders rejected, could actually be the cornerstone (Ps. 118:22).

All of this provided me with one of the pivotal discoveries of my life. That is: the universal can be found in the particular. The more I came to know and appreciate people in local situations, the more likely I was to gain an understanding of what applied everywhere. I found this essential wisdom in a place neglected by most everyone. René Fumoleau, now approaching age 90, continues to live in Denendeh. He remains an ecumenical spiritual guide for many. I hope to send him a copy of this writing to remind him of important lessons he taught me.

<https://www.anglicanjournal.com/what-i-learned-from-fr-rene-fumoleau/>



Father Rene Fumoleau - 1926-2019

Excerpts from his Obituary

Rene Fumoleau, a well-known priest, photographer and storyteller with a long history in the North, has died. ... It was Fumoleau's birthday. He had just turned 93. ... 'I'm very happy, and I loved my life.'

Fumoleau was born in France. He was ordained as a Catholic priest in 1952 and came to the Northwest Territories in 1953 as an Oblate missionary. After resigning from the Oblates, he was made a priest in the Diocese of the Mackenzie, working with the Dene in Fort Good Hope and Deline over the next several decades, according to the NWT Archives.

He did research on Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 and was known as a social justice advocate for the Dene. His book, "As Long as this Land Shall Last," also researched Indigenous Métis rights, and Canada's dealings with the Métis.

"He took strong stands against the imposition of Euro-Western institutions on the Dene, and he did on a whole bunch of levels," said Scott. "From speaking about the politics of colonization, [to] the way he related to people as a priest. "He lived what he believed. He didn't just talk about it."

He was an avid photographer, with many of his pictures sold and published, as well as an author and filmmaker. However, Scott says that Fumoleau wouldn't want people focusing on his achievements as he is remembered.

"Whatever he was doing wasn't about him, it was about the Dene. Their rights to their homeland, and the tremendous respect he had for them being so gracious, and forgiving, and generous to all of us who have come north." ...

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/rene-fumoleau-obituary-1.5238116>

See a 5m interview with CBC North posted on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/CBCNWT/videos/881407825573122/?v=881407825573122>



The Pilgrimage at Lac Ste. Anne - Alberta
God's Lake 3:46

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=boP2-_iAuHg

BREAK





Time now. Please return.



Richard Wagamese

Wagamese told stories as a way to personal healing, and to help interpret the Indigenous (non-Western) worldview to readers in Canada and beyond.

Check out his most excellent 45m backstory and introspection of his book “Indian Horse”

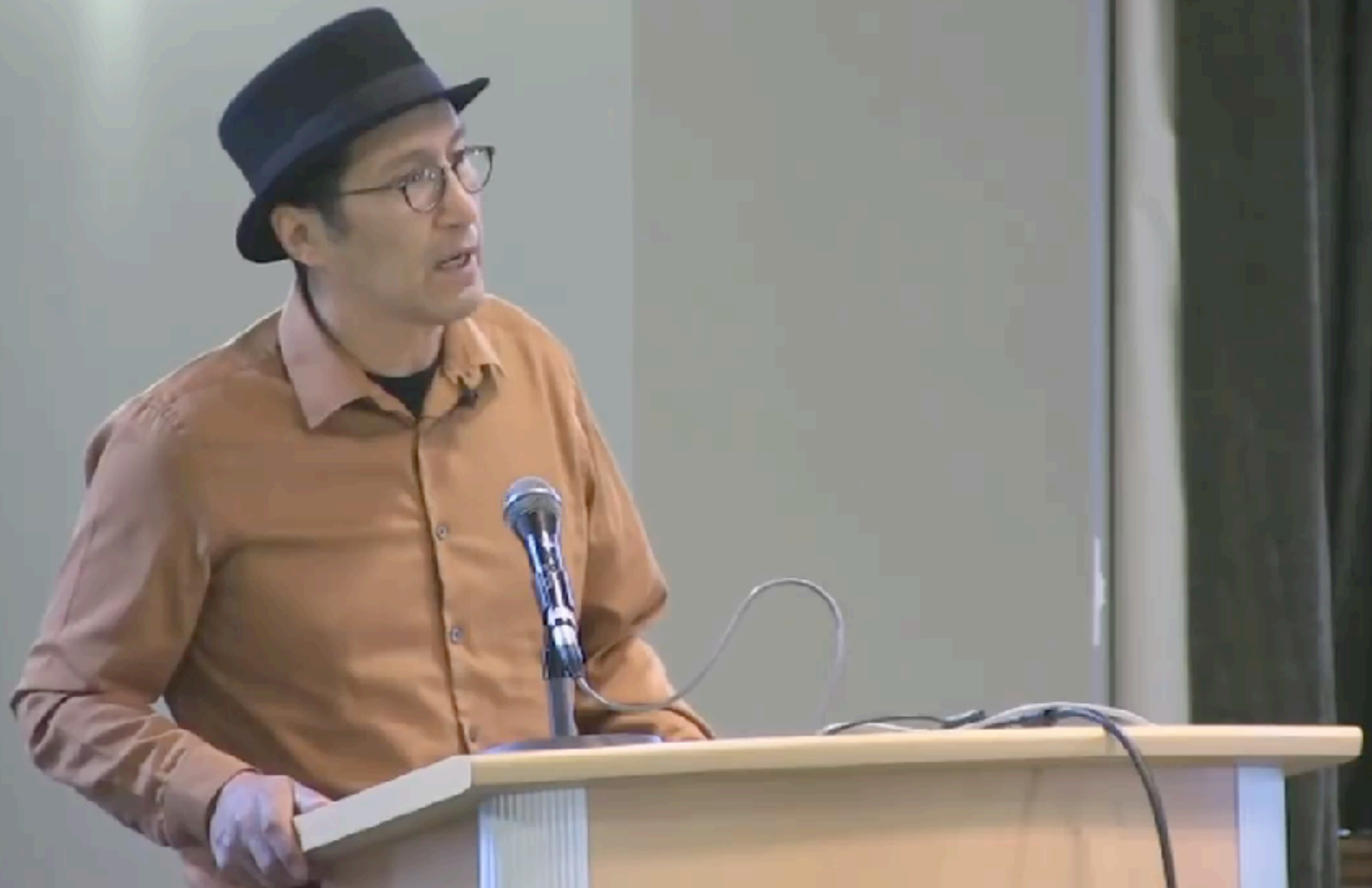
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6HmlK27dtA>



Richard Wagamese - Indian Horse

3m32s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SF-GERZfo2s>



Richard Wagamese - Indian Horse

Check out this most excellent 45m backstory of his book “Indian Horse” and introspections on our Canadian relations between cultures.

Here's a little taste. 2m19s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6HmIK27dtA>

A black and white portrait of Toni Morrison, an older woman with short, curly hair, wearing a pearl necklace and a dark jacket. She is looking slightly to the right with a gentle expression.

**"THIS IS
PRECISELY
THE TIME
WHEN ARTISTS
GO TO WORK.
THERE IS NO TIME
FOR DESPAIR, NO
PLACE FOR SELF-PITY,
NO NEED FOR SILENCE,
NO ROOM FOR FEAR. WE
SPEAK, WE WRITE, WE DO
LANGUAGE. THAT IS HOW
CIVILIZATIONS HEAL."
— TONI MORRISON**



#MANIFESTJUSTICE

I liked
this
quote. I
think it's
brave of
an artist
to use
their
talents to
make a
difference
in the
world.

Karen

Three Non-Western “Lenses” for Discussion:



1. The Individual and Community (p. 49-50)
2. Rational and Supernatural Approaches to Knowledge (p. 50)
3. The Material and Spiritual World (porous boundaries -- Thin Places)

- discuss

“We need a corrective lens for the sake of creating a new, resilient and clear vision within our own culture in this time of dramatically shifting paradigms for understanding the world”

“This is part of the promise of embracing the future of Christianity as a non-Western religion”.



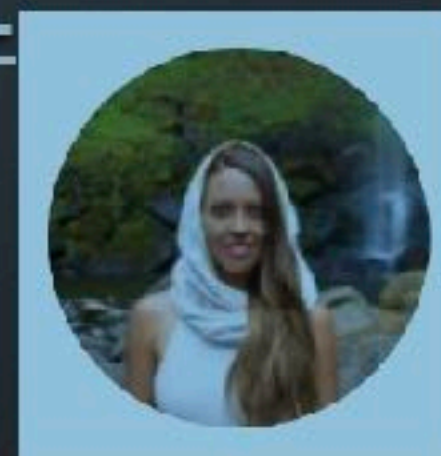
**Rev Deshna Ubeda
Charron Shine**

Repentance and Reparations



Brenda

- Rev. Dishna Charron is a name that St. David's can count as a contributor to our theology. She is one of the writers of "A Joyful Path" - our Children's Curriculum here at St. David's. As director of Progressive christianity.org (since 2006) she is a frequent contributor. The final essay of 2019, she titled, "Feeling Compassionate."
- <https://mailchi.mp/06954f13156d/feeling-compassionate?e=4e766a615d>



- Cherron suggests that as progressive Christians ‘Christian Reparation’ is a foundational necessity for we claim that we know that the way we behave towards one another is the fullest expression of what we believe and that we strive for peace and justice among all people.”
- “By reparations, we mean actions that bring about repair. We are not referring to financial reparations specifically, but rather to repentance and actions that move communities toward healing. Reparations can not happen without first acknowledging the harm caused by white Christianity in all its forms, and by repenting, asking for forgiveness, and resolving to do better together with bipoc (Black, Indigenous and People of Color).

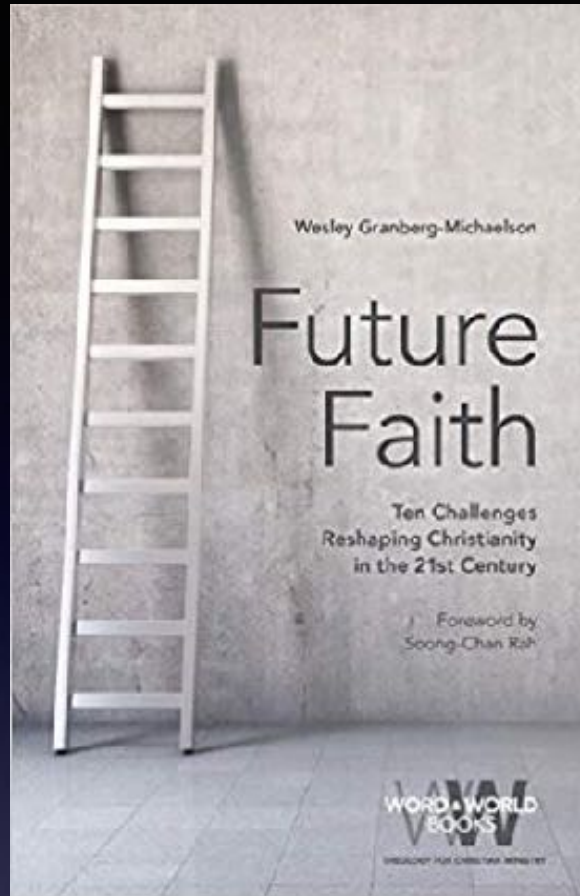
These Resolutions focus on 3 main roots of disharmony and injustice plaguing our world and Christianity:

1. Repentance for harmful actions, attitudes, and lifestyles as well as reparations for Indigenous peoples.
2. Repentance for harmful actions, attitudes, and lifestyles as well as reparations for People of Color.
3. Repentance for harmful actions, attitudes, and lifestyles as well as reparations for harm to Creation.

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3. Repentance for harmful actions, attitudes, and lifestyles as well as reparations for harm to Creation.



Discussion

Final Thoughts on Challenge 3:



Brenda

Next Readings

Session 5 - 3 Feb 2020

**Challenge 4:
Perceiving the World as Sacred**

Study Website

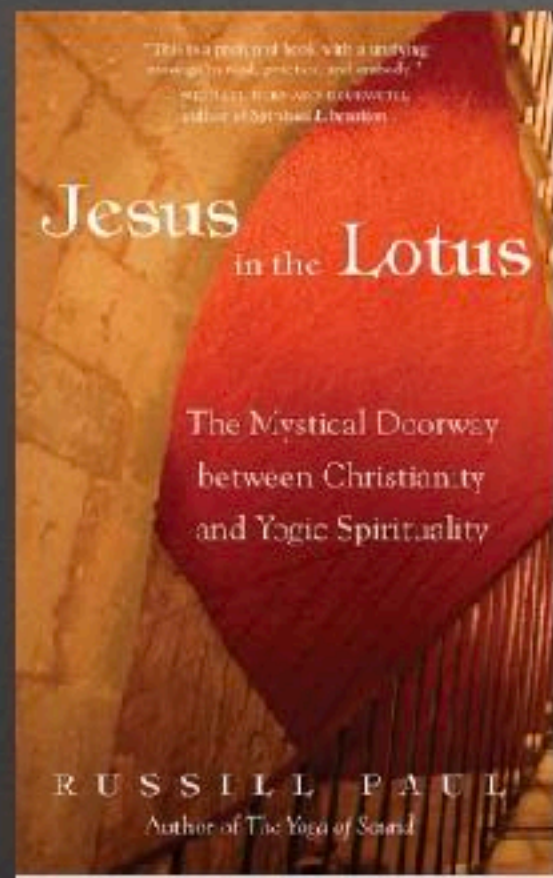
sduc.ca



Closing

Brenda

A Closing Reflection on 'Seeing through Non-Western Eyes'



Note: Paul was trained both as a monk and a yogi - coming from both traditions so he gives us that opportunity of "Seeing through Non-Western Eyes:

In 2010 I attended a Children's Yoga Instructors' Seminar in Edmonton. As I watched all the young moms practising a form of spirituality with which I did not share any expertise, in a meditative setting, I wondered about why these same moms were not joining our spiritual community in throngs. They demonstrated such caring and intensity. My daughter was one of the participants.

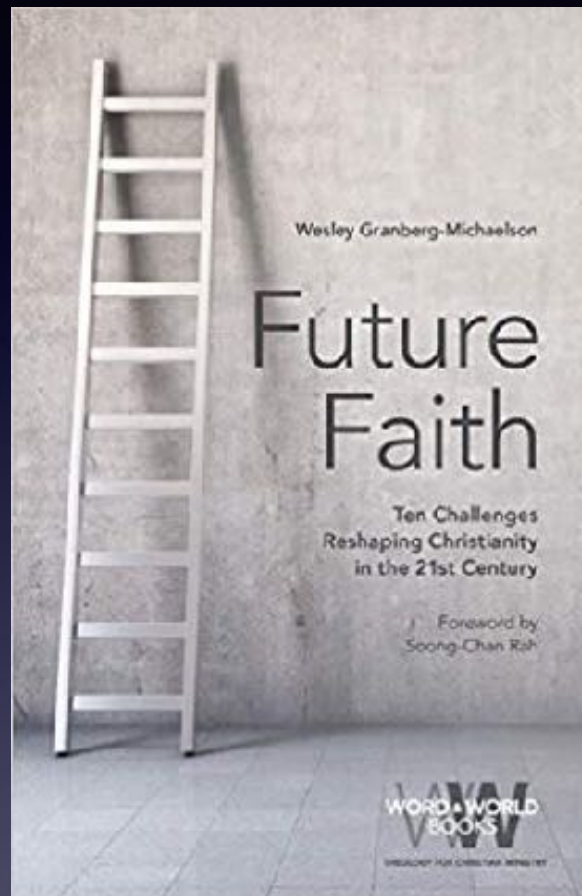
I set off to check Chapters in order to seek other inquisitive folks like myself who wondered about "Why?" were these women not learning about their own cultural roots in Christianity. I almost walked directly to this book and I share with you this excerpt as a closing for tonight's session.

Saint Paul preached that 'in Christ' there is neither Jew nor Gentile, yet every major spiritual tradition in the world has used division to deliver its message. Christianity has separated the world into the saved and the damned. Muslims have a similar concept, dividing the world into believers and nonbelievers. Jews divide humanity into the chosen and the rejected. Buddhists divide the world between the enlightened and the non-enlightened, and Hindus discriminate between those who are liberated and those caught in the web of illusory reality. Yet we are all held together in existence by the same principle of life, the same Divine source who is patiently loved and nurturing us, moment after moment. The common understanding that unites all traditions is that we can either exist in a fallen state, asleep and ignorant or wake up, become conscious and restore our connection to the great whole.

Jesus said, "Not everyone who says Lord, Lord, will come to me, but only those who do the will of my Father." Matthew 7:21 The ultimate goal of both the Hindu and Christian tradition is the discovery of the absolute consciousness that Jesus called Father and that in India is called Brahman.

Russill Paul would describe Jesus's 'Kingdom of God' as best understood as an ultimate state of consciousness.

Appendix



Discussion Notes - Joan Gray

Chapter Notes - Mike Grammar



Chapter Notes - 3 February 2020 - By Mike Grammer, Toronto

Challenge 3 - Seeing through Non-Western Eyes

- 48, bottom, used to Christian theology that interacts with Greek philosophy and Roman law. So, let's splash right into this. My religion and culture had a very different journey than Christianity. Christianity's—the Western derivation anyway-- survival was arguably (at least until now) only threatened in the first couple centuries of its existence---yes, there have been schisms and bitter battles (one doesn't forget the 30 years' war, or Armstrong's Fields of Blood)—but truly threatened for its global survival? Judaism has been fully coloured by the experience of the diaspora. If one is “scattered” instead of the scatterer----uprooted trees instead of planted saplings, then different things happen, I think. My view of Jewish history is that our people kept alive the only thing they could keep with them as they wandered and sublimated themselves into the societies in which they ended up---their writings, scriptures and teachings. Out of this, I think, came a reverence and almost a *wonder* for *learning*. Learning is different from preaching or listening. Learning became something many Jews cherished...looked forward to. And why? Because each person could measure themselves, and could find direction and purpose and even hope in a difficult life in this milieu. There could even be a pride involved in carrying on a religion--- where every person in many Jewish communities would have had the understanding that at any time, they could be the last carrier of the assembled wisdom. Except for maybe the time when the printing press was invented, I don't know that *learning* has been at the forefront of Christian practice. Can Christianity learn about itself and emerge from this chrysalis phase? At this very late stage? We shall see, perhaps.
- Page 50, I may have spoken before of how I sometimes characterize religion as the science of faith and science as the religion of knowledge—the point being that the two disciplines share many overlapping features in how they are conducted.
- 52, bottom, I like the term “police”
- 53, middle, he makes my point about not throwing out the bathwater with the baby



Chapter Notes - 3 February 2020 - By Mike Grammer, Toronto

Challenge 3 - Seeing through Non-Western Eyes

- 54, top, Deb will laugh at this. I was recently at a Robbie Burns dinner with my friends Lynn and Jon (Lynn is an active member of the Kitchener-Waterloo Scottish Country Dancing group). Lynn was asked to give the introduction. She confided to me that the reason for this is that she is the only one who could confidently pronounce “Ahnisnabe” and “Hodonashone”. The recognition of the original caretakers of our lands and the procedure of thanking them has taken hold in virtually every cultural event I have been to recently—at every symphony, at every Film Festival screening...and I think it is making its way into such places as business conferences as well. It is invariably met with respectful applause.
- 55, top, I respect him for sharing his “personal shame” with us
- 55, middle, some people may not know that “Toronto” is a derivation of Huron and/or Mohawk and really refers to Lake Simcoe (got moved down in maps) as the place “where there are trees in water”
- 58, bottom, the “conflict” is not restricted to North America. If you can manage to get through the violence, you should take a look at a film called the Birds of Passage---the best film I saw in 2018. It shows a Wayuu tribal clan and how traditions, no matter how strong, fought a losing battle against the drug trade in Colombia in the 60s and 70s. It is the best indigenous-themed movie I’ve ever seen, and I loved Dance Me Outside and I loved Rabbit-Proof Fence.
- 60, one of the things he seems to be getting at is that Western/Enlightenment Christianity imposed its views and teachings on its subjects and colonized people, where the current play in Africa, S. America, aboriginal here, etc. is that the precepts of Christianity are *absorbed* into the greater whole of their faith existence.
- 62, building on all that modernity in the Western culture has taught us about the world, while retrieving our intrinsic connection with the world. Them’s fine words to remember.
- 63, ah, but if you’re going to open a door, you have to turn the handle first. How many are ready or have the courage to do that?
-



Chapter Notes - 3 February 2020 - By Mike Grammer, Toronto

Challenge 3 - Seeing through Non-Western Eyes

- 1. He describes a movement away from a separated individual-world view that the enlightenment has espoused to a much more fluid and integrated take on religion and faith, where not everything has to have an explanation and where much is rooted in community
- 2. Yes, goodness knows I **should** be able to define it, since I use the word myself so much. I guess it's the identifier for a type of social (or socioeconomic) structure that you see yourself in or out of, or identify with or not. Yeah, some definition, eh? Identifying the prevailing paradigm in my faith community is even harder. I don't feel competent to represent more than one of the 4,000 or so congregants of my synagogue, much less the rest of conservative Judaism. But if I was on the rack and had to say something, "learn, listen, respect, revere, sing, discuss" are probably the 6 things at the core of my involvement with my religion.
- 3. I was struck by the native American lens because that lens is probably the one that has had the most (negative?) interaction with enlightenment-based Christianity.
- 4. I really liked his use of that term. Because he is stating there is a distinct shift taking place in what type of Christianity is going to be observed by the majority of its adherents. In this, he is using history (e.g. the Reformation) to say that the relevant signs and touchpoints are there for this to be identified as something that is going to happen
- 5. I am in rhythm with it—have been for a few years. Still on a pretty passive level, but my interest in aboriginal practices, beliefs and traditions has been slowly increasing over the last few years. One thing that would be fun someday would be to sit down in a small group and compare Jewish practices with aboriginal practices for the similarities and differences.
- 6. Not sure I have any specific thing coming out of this chapter---I found this one to be a lot of "reporting" and "relating" vs. idea generation, though with the couple of nuggets I've identified.
-

Discussion Notes By Joan Gray - 3 February 2020 - P1

St David's Book Study - Future Faith Ten Challenges Reshaping Christianity in the 21 st Century by Wesley Granberg-Michaelson

Housekeeping

Evening started with 2 good quotes from George Elliott and Winston Churchill about using big words to complicate the context. Such as Hermeneutics (interpreting the knowledge.) Author could have used the word interpretation instead of hermeneutics. Consensus - the chapter using too many big words.

Opening.

Jack opened with prayer and some questions for us? What does it mean to be a Christian now in 2020? How do you know? Am I willing to change to become a better Christian? What can I do to lead to more understanding of Christianity today? If you were to leave St David's, where would you go to worship? Biblical Dictionary at home defines Christian as A Follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. A quote from F. Scott Fitzgerald:

"The true test of a first-rate mind is the ability to hold two contradictory ideas at the same time." Also found another good quote, You don't gain wisdom without some wrinkles. No one is too old to learn, hope and renew.

Wayne's Examination of Paradigm Shift, from the book and from a more Canadian experience:

The Catholic priest Rene Funoleau from Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate who's mission to the Dene Nation in Northern Canada (NWT), and Richard Wagamese. Wayne explained the Oblate Order is not a teaching, studious order like the Jesuits. The two sometimes come into conflict with one another. The Oblates asked the Church, where is it tough to go? Many went to Canada's North and spent their lives there. on Rollheiser, Wayne's friend and writer out of BC, is an Oblate.

Comments

Theatre Calgary is showing a play called The Louder We Get. It is the story surrounding the 2002 court case in Ontario of a young man (17) who wanted to take his boyfriend to his prom at a Catholic School. It is very moving. The man now resides here in Calgary and had been interviewed just today or by CBC.

In times of great social change, the Arts can play a huge, huge role. Steve Chappelle (American comedian; not to everyone's taste) who quoted Toni Morrison:

Wayne mentions it is sometimes easy to blame the Catholic Church. Issue can be oversimplified. At one time we were all Catholics. In his own life he has gone through a paradigm shift. The difference between his generation's marriage values and norms, and his children's attitudes and norms.

It is said, a learned person can take a complex subject or thought and explain it simply.

Discussion Notes By Joan Gray - 3 February 2020 - P1

St David's Book Study - Future Faith Ten Challenges Reshaping Christianity in the 21 st Century by Wesley Granberg-Michaelson

Video on Lake St Anne - God's Lake (just Northwest of Edmonton).

Video - Richard Waganese - about movie based on his book, Indian Horse.

Three discussion themes from chapter:

1. Discussion on Community:

Comment - The last great coming together of Canada as a community was WW 2.

Comment - On a more micro level in Calgary, the flood of 2013 brought the city together as a community.

2. We did not discuss

3. The material and the spiritual world:

Brenda brought up the author of our own United Church Children's Sunday School curriculum.

Ken talked about the reconciliation process for the first nations and residential schools experience.

Comment - Her and husband ride a bike race between Cranbrook to Kimberly BC. There is a hotel in Cranbrook that they stay at that was a former residential school. It is situated on reserve land. The natives have renovated, and each year the property and facilities have shown great progress. It is called St. Eugene's Mission.

Another example is a Native American who became a chef and learnt with French cooking schools, etc. He Became very good. He came back to his roots and found his own people on the reserve eating bad, getting fat. He researched how the native of his area ate before the Europeans came, and started growing and cultivating foods that his people used to eat. Recently he put out a cookbook related to this and won a James Beard award.

These are 2 positive examples of the generation or so, twice removed from the direct experience of the residential schools and suppression of the native culture. This "new" generation has a renewed sense of self and spirit.

Closing by Brenda introduced us to a book by Russell Paul, called Jesus in the Lotus.