Placing Vocation

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"I find that cultivating a sense of place as the exclusive and irreplaceable setting for following Jesus is even more difficult than persuading men and women of the truth of the message of Jesus." – Eugene Peterson[1]

American Christians often pray about questions of calling such as what work they will do, or who they will marry. But too often American Christians do not ask the question of *where* they will live out their callings, nor do they pay attention to *how* they live in the places to which God has called them. For many, questions of place do not intuitively connect to questions of vocation because they hold too limited a definition of vocation that equates it with career. A person's vocation, however, includes all of who that person is as well as everything that person does. Most fundamentally, vocation is Jesus's call to be his disciples, empowered by the Holy Spirit for the Father's glory.[2] Because one aspect of being human is being finite and therefore living only in one place at a time, disciples practice their vocations in particular places.[3] Places shape people, whether they are aware of it or not. In turn, people shape places. Too often, people neglect places, viewing them as commodities to be consumed rather than assuming their responsibility to shape places for good.[4]

I argue that Christian college faculty members, including at Wheaton College, must help students think about *where* they live and *how* they live there as an aspect of vocation. The paper draws insights the contemporary Christian literature on place, and, significantly, discusses the history of where American evangelicals have lived in the second half of the twentieth century and how they have lived there. This history can reveal as constructed what seems natural, and thus supposedly not worthy of much consideration: that American

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[1] Quoted in Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens, and Dwight J. Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2014), 75.

[2] Scott Waalkes, "Rethinking Work as Vocation: From Protestant Advice to Gospel Corrective," *Christian Scholar's Review* 44, no. 2 (Winter 2015): 137.

[3] See Craig Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 2-3-248.

[4] People also take other people's places. The settlers who came to the area that became Wheaton, for instance, eventually took the place of the American Indians living in the area. The City of Wheaton, however, does not officially remember that Erastus Gary, Jesse Wheaton, and Warren Wheaton claimed land that had previously been occupied (see "History of Wheaton, IL," https://www.wheaton.il.us/367/history-of-wheaton, accessed 28 April 2016).

neighborhoods are segregated along race and class lines. After considering the high costs of neighborhood homogeneity for Christians' primary vocation, being disciples by loving God and loving one's neighbors, I discuss the history of an alternative evangelical tradition concerning housing and integration using the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA), and offer other theological resources for thinking Christianly about place.

My hope is that pointing to the two historical narratives about housing in the twentieth century will help Christian faculty – and Christians more generally – think about *where* we live and *how* we live there as an aspect of vocation. My aims are to foster disenchantment with contemporary implicit narratives about (1) where people ought to live (often the nicest place one can afford with the most "desirable" neighbors), and (2) how people ought to live there (too often as consumers), and by making those narratives explicit, offer alternative ways of choosing and living in particular places.[5] This reorientation might not only help faculty and students respond to their primary calling to grow in the likeness of Christ in ways that are more fulfilling, it also might help free the body of Christ, as it manifests itself among American evangelicals, from the western cultural captivity that limits their ability to know God and do justice.[6] Attending to place, both by growing roots in a particular place and by thinking deeply about the structures perpetuated when one puts down roots, is central to Christians' vocation.

Placeless Theology

What is place? Those writing on place have struggled to define this concept. Is Chicago a place, or is that too big? Is Wheaton small enough to be a place? Scholars of place use some key markers to define this complicated idea. They suggest that a place is created by the interactions between humans (always plural) and their locations, in addition to relationships between people. As such, a place requires a particular location, or plot of land. A place is

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[5] Paul Wadell argues that we need to disenchant many of the happiness narratives with which our students come to us. They may have an understanding of happiness as "something that each of us is free to determine for ourselves; often it means little more than having what we want whenever we want it," or happiness may mean "pleasure." Paul Wadell, "An Itinerary of Hope: Called to a Magnanimous Way of Life," in *At This Time and In This Place*, ed. David Cunningham (New York: Oxford, 2015), 194.

[6] The western cultural captivity metaphor is from Soong-Chan Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2009).

historical; its cotemporary manifestations are shaped by the interactions of previous generations. A place is also cultural and social; it is held together by contemporary interactions that give meaning to particular places. People, then, both inherit and create the places in which they live. Scholars also differentiate place from space. While a place is unique, space is an abstract concept that is often pictured as universal. Particular places with meanings and stories have become spaces where ubiquitous McDonald's golden arches advertising a universal hamburger experience and Starbucks mermaids offering a consistent coffee taste on street corners.[7]

American society is one in which places have been replaced by space, which has led to a culture of homelessness.[8] Homelessness is often conceived as a problem plaguing the poor and marginalized who stay in shelters or live on the streets. Yet homelessness also includes the affluent who have few ties to a particular place, who do not have a place that can orient them to the world. According to the writer Wendell Berry, "our present leaders – people who have wealth and power – do not know what it means to take place seriously: to think it worthy, for its own sake, of love and careful work. They cannot take any place seriously because they must be ready at any moment, by the terms of power and wealth in the modern world, to destroy any place."[9] This destruction could be literal, or the severing of ties because one moves to indulge career aspirations.

Evangelical Christians have contributed to America's culture of homelessness by baptizing placelessness with explicit and implicit theologies.[10] In terms of explicit theology, evangelicals often downplay the significance of place in Christ's Kingdom, as compared to place's relevance in the Old Testament, with its emphasis on land. Jesus's discussion with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well in Sychar about the appropriate place to worship can be read to suggest that in Christ's kingdom, place does not matter because Jesus told the woman, "a

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[7] For a novelistic exploration of the tensions in America between place and space, see John Steinbeck, *Travels with Charley* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002).

[8] For a broad definition of homelessness, see Steven Bouma-Prediger and Brian J. Walsh, *Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008).

[9] Berry quoted in Ibid., 6.

[10] Explicit theologies are the doctrines a church adheres to formally, while implicit theologies can be determined by observing the practices of a church body. Nancy Ammerman et al., eds., *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998).

time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. . . the true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth."[11]

In terms of implicit theology, today many people drive out of their neighborhoods passing many churches along the way to attend the church of their choosing, which is in stark contrast to the early church. [12] They prioritize worshipping with people like themselves socially (other families with young children, or young professionals, or hipsters), want to listen to a particular pastor, or desire to worship with others who share their particular denominational, theological, or doctrinal positions. The homogenous unit principle of church growth, which became popular among evangelicals in the late twentieth century and emphasizes that groups that are alike one another will grow larger, faster, supports American evangelicals' tendency to drive to churches.[13] Mega churches, televised sermons and podcasts, though valuable, can further this amnesia surrounding place. The implicit theology revealed by these practices suggests a consumer mentality regarding church that (likely unintentionally) can prioritize comfort over rooting in a particular place.

The Bible clearly shows that God is concerned about the earth and that as his people we ought to care for, even serve, places as well. The New Testament story continues God's emphasis on the land described in the Old Testament. Jesus was the fulfillment of the law and, as God on earth, matched the Trinity's concern for the earth so clearly articulate in creation. Genesis 1 repeatedly reports that God saw his creation as good, and God's final redemption will be not only of humanity, but of all of creation. Creation will not be destroyed, but will be freed

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[11] Jn 4:21, 23 NIV.

[12] The authors of *The New Parish* argue that early churches were known as a church *in* a particular place, and practiced life communally, sharing their resources with each other as each had a need. With the establishment of Christendom under Constantine, the churches' relationship to shared life shifted, and localized power within churches shifted to a more centralized hierarchy. They say that the Protestant Reformation, despite its emphasis on the individual, furthered this development by increasing the connection between the state and the church, and Christians began to use language like the Church *of* England. During the missionary movement, the church became known as the church *for* unreached people groups, and, in the context of a complicated history, often emphasized the change that the other needed to make, and did not look for change within. Most recently, with the emphasis on making converts home by making church comfortable through the homophily principal of church growth, church became the church *with* a particular group of people who have similar characteristics. Church *with* characterizes many evangelical congregations today, and draws people out of their local communities, which can have some diversity, so they can be with others who are like them. Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*, 35–45.

[13] Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity*, 97–98.

from the fullness of sin that holds it in bondage. The New Jerusalem described by John in Revelation will be a real garden city that will come to earth, which the redeemed will inhabit in real, resurrected bodies. [14] Ultimately, Christ's body, the Church, must value the earth and the particular places members inhabit both because they came from God, and because God will redeem them.[15] God is not redeeming his people out of history and out of particular places, but in history and in particular places.

Practicing Place in the United States: The Construction of Segregated Neighborhoods

Many white American evangelicals not only fail to account for place, they think of where people live in the United States as shaped by free choice – a decision made voluntarily and unstructured by systemic forces.[16] Many considerations go into a person's decision about where to live, such as job locations, proximity to certain activities, church community, neighborhood of origin, quality of schools, community "feel," and where friends are living. These factors influencing a person's decision can be amoral, but they operate in a larger system marked by racial segregation. While segregation is not an inherent evil, both the forces behind it and its results may be sin in that they miss the mark of what God intends for his Church and society. Christians must recognize that the elements they consider when choosing where to live are part of structures riddled with sin, and that they are not absolved from responsibility for that sin because structural forces are at play that are not of their own making. To understand those structures requires knowing their history. Christian faculty must educate their students about this history, the way segregation is maintained, and the implications of segregation to help students think broadly and deeply about where they live.

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[14] See Leonard Hjalmarson, *No Home Like Place: A Christian Theology of Place*, 2nd ed. (Portland, OR: Urban Loft Publishers, 2015), 89–93; Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*, 156–63. Both authors draw from N.T. Wright.

[15] Christopher J. H. Wright, "'The Earth Is the Lord's': Biblical Foundations for Global Ethics and Mission," in *Keeping God's Earth: The Global Environment in Biblical Perspective*, ed. Noah J. Toly and Daniel I. Block (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 216–41.

[16] I focus on housing the history of housing dynamics in America, rather than other parts of the world, because of where Wheaton students live after they graduate. As of August, 2015, 96 percent of Wheaton alumni had United States mailing addresses (Lynne Morris, "Statistics Inquiry," April 22, 2016.).

American neighborhoods became segregated along class and race lines not because of individual choice and impersonal markets, as many white evangelicals traditionally argued, but because of white violence, governmental policies and broader structures of discrimination embedded in the market that benefitted white investors and catered to whites' racial preferences. As late as 1910, black Chicagoans, for instance, were actually more residentially integrated than Italians.[17] But when black Americans began leaving the South and moving to Northern cities in large numbers during the 1910s in what historians call the Great Migration, white northerners attempted to institute Jim Crow in their housing.[18] Over the next half century, white northerners developed a series of policies and institutions to promote segregation. These factors were all the more insidious because, although they were racially biased, they had the appearance of sound economics. The segregation and homogeneity that characterizes much of the nation's neighborhoods emerged from a particular history that was the result of many smaller decisions. While contemporary demographers have hope that segregation will decline in the coming decades, particularly in metropolitan areas that are expanding, we continue to live in a world shaped by those who came before us, and who made decisions (sometimes unknowingly, often for reasons they thought made perfect sense) to maintain distance between people of different backgrounds. [19]

White residents used violence and restrictive covenants, as well as discriminatory lending practices, to resist black neighbors. When black families moved into a white neighborhood, they were often greeted with arson and mobs of angry whites. The violence received national and international attention in 1951 in the Chicago suburb of Cicero, when

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[17] Allan H. Spear, *Black Chicago: The Making of a Negro Ghetto, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 15.

[18] For the Great Migration, see James R. Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners and the Great Migration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* (New York: Random House, 2010).

[19] Chicago works as a case study for the nation's broader history because of its significance as a destination for African Americans during the Great Migration. Current trends are shifting, somewhat, and neighborhoods are less segregated in the West and the South. According to the 2010 census, among cities with population changes between 2000 and 2010, Chicago's metropolitan area was the third most segregated region, behind Milwaukee and New York. Tucson, Las Vegas, and Colorado Springs are the only cities in this category that fall into the "less segregated" category. See Paola Scommegna, "Least Segregated U.S. Metros Concentrated in Fast-Growing South and West," *Population Reference Bureau*, September 2011, http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2011/us-residential-segregation.aspx.

only the National Guard could quell the mob that destroyed the apartment building a black family tried to move into. [20] Cicero, however, was a culmination of the violence which had plagued Chicago's neighborhoods from the 1920s. If one were to read Chicago's white newspapers prior to Cicero, one would see little evidence of this racial violence because the white press agreed to the city government's request to not cover cases of racial violence in an attempt to keep "outsiders" from amplifying it. The black press and manuscript collections, however, provide ample evidence. The city also attempted to limit the violence with its massive police force, which it could deploy from across the city to sites of racial violence. The suburb of Cicero, however, did not have such a large police force and required outside help, which led to the widespread press coverage.

Rare in Chicago prior to the 1920s, racially restrictive covenants forbid homeowners and landlords to sell and rent to minorities, most often African Americans. After the Supreme Court's declaration of the unconstitutionality of residential segregation ordinances and spurred on by an extensive Chicago Real Estate Board campaign that offered samples of restrictive covenants for property-owners to model, white Chicagoans covered the city in restrictive covenants. Often restrictive covenants failed to keep property out of black families' hands, and when the Supreme Court declared them unenforceable in the 1948 *Shelley v. Kramer* case, the dual housing market created by the government-influenced mortgage industry was the prime driver for segregation.

Two New Deal-created institutions, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) and the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) developed policies that helped sustain segregated housing. In an effort to make "safe" loans, the HOLC developed a series of secret maps that indicated the "productive life" of the housing it appraised. A green area indicated a safe loan because the neighborhood was homogenous, new, and would be in demand as a residence no matter the market, a blue area were still desirable, seen as stable, but had reached their peak, a yellow

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[20] Arnold Hirsch, "Massive Resistance in the Urban North: Trumbull Park, Chicago, 1953-1966," *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 2 (September 1995): 522–50; Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press, 1998). Whites' reasons for resisting black neighbors were complicated. For the religious nature of Catholics' resistance, see John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth Century Urban North* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

area was "definitely declining," and loans there would be more risky, while a red area indicated the riskiest loan because the neighborhood had already declined. Assuming that the natural state of neighborhoods was to decline, and that African Americans caused that to happen, HOLC officials gave areas with African Americans in them, no matter the housing stock's quality, a red designation. Notably, the HOLC did issue mortgage assistance in yellow and red areas, and the homeowners there were actually more likely to pay back those mortgages than those in green or blue districts. Nonetheless, by creating the maps, the HOLC built on a long tradition of racial assumptions in appraisals that universities had endorsed, and made its most significant contribution by systematizing discriminatory appraisal methods. The HOLC's real damage, then, was due to private banks' decisions to not make loans in red or yellow areas, and the FHA's adoption of the appraisal methods and likely the maps.

The FHA applied the HOLC's logic on a more vast level, and, unlike the HOLC, discriminated against African Americans and lower income people more generally in its lending practices. The FHA increased homeownership in the United States by making it cheaper to buy a new home than to rent, and its policies favored white suburbanization. Employees made maps indicating where African Americans lived and where they might live in the future, and then encouraged white residents to set up restrictive covenants. In short, the FHA essentially made segregation and discrimination in housing public policy. When the FHA refused to insure homes in declining industrial areas because of racial discriminatory policies, it caused homes to stand vacant for months, and contributed to even greater declines in home quality and values for those areas. It was only during the civil rights movement in the mid-1960s that activists made the connections between red-lining, disinvestment of housing money in urban communities, and those communities' subsequent decline. The HOLC and FHA had made it nearly impossible for African American families to obtain mortgages for suburban homes that were quickly changing the nation's landscape. [21]

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[21] Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1987), 199–218. For more on the mechanisms of racial segregation, see Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, Princeton Studies in American Politics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996); Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993). Some African Americans were able to move to the suburbs in the post-war period. From 1950 to 1960, the black population outside Chicago rose from

During the 1950s, Americans experienced a racialized suburban housing boom that countered the long tradition of Americans' move to cities. For the first time since the 1920s, Americans had the money to buy and builders had the resources to build new housing. Young couples and their children, often moving from cramped apartments they shared with their parents or, at times even box cars, were delighted to move into new suburban developments. Governmental policies fostered the suburban exodus from the cities. The federal government built the highway system as part of the United States' Cold War defense. The highway system, which was the largest public building project, also benefitted people moving from the city to the suburb. No longer did suburbs need to be along a train route for its residents to commute to the city for work; now suburbanites could drive.

The federal government also directly financed middle-class, white Americans' move to the suburbs, and thus their wealth accumulation through housing, which continues to be a major vehicle for increasing wealth. The G.I. Bill, or the Serviceman's Readjustment Act, created the Veterans Administration (VA). The VA offered veterans low-interest loans with no down payment and favored new construction. During the 1950s and 1960s, the FHA and VA financed nearly half of suburban mortgages.[22] Technically, black veterans could earn the same benefits as white veterans, but it was much harder for them to leverage those benefits to purchase a home in the suburbs. Because the FHA's and VA's policies shaped the mortgage industry's structure, few residential developers, even if they supported integrated housing, were willing to sell the new suburban houses to black families.[23] Nor could black veterans use

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44,000-78,000, but more than half the new black suburbanites moved into communities that already had segregated black populations like Evanston, Joliet, and North Chicago (James Dorsey, *Up South: Blacks in Chicago's Suburbs (1719-1983)* (Bristol, IN: Wyndham Hall Press, 1986), 59.) For more on black suburbanization, see William Cooley, "Moving on Out: Black Pioneering in Chicago," *Journal of Urban History* 36, no. 4 (2010): 485–506; Andrew Wiese, *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Andrew Wiese, "'The House I Live In': Race, Class and African American Suburban Dreams in the Postwar United States," in *The New Suburban History*, ed. Kevin Kruse and Thomas Sugrue (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 99–119; David M. P. Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Sarah Potter, "Family Ideals: The Diverse Meanings of Residential Space in Chicago during Post WWII Baby Boom," *Journal of Urban History* 39, no. 1 (January 2013): 59–78.

[22] Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*, 215.

[23] Morris Milgram Progress Development Corporation was one of the few development companies that built interracial housing. See Nicole Frison, "Checkerboard Neighborhood: Morris Milgram and Privately Developed Interracial Housing, Princeton, NJ," *Journ* 39, no. 3 (n.d.): 536–54. For liberal attempts to integrate the suburbs,

VA or FHA funds to buy homes in the city, because the government's policies favored new, white, suburban developments.

Yet black families continued to want to move to quieter, less crowded, and healthier neighborhoods. In Chicago, the "Black Belt," where the majority of black residents lived, was overcrowded, unsafe, and overpriced. White landlords illegally subdivided properties into "kitchenettes" in order to make more money, and let properties slide into disrepair despite efforts by black advocates to make landlords meet housing codes. Fires frequently burned apartments housing blacks, tuberculosis ran rampant, and mothers feared that rats would bite their children as they slept. The situation was all the more complicated by the fact that some of the "slumlords" were black, or were white people who genuinely wanted to maintain the apartments they owned, but found it cost-prohibitive. In 1966, Martin Luther King, Jr. discovered the complex causes of slums when he helped local residents in Chicago's black Lawndale neighborhood take over an apartment building that had no heat. The building's owner, a white man in his 80s who was financially struggling, did not fit the image of a greedy slumlord.[24] Nonetheless, black citizens' options were limited because whites' resistance and the dual housing market restricted most black residents' housing options to the already over-crowded black neighborhoods.

Cut out of the legitimate mortgage market, during the 1950s and 1960s, black families often turned to an exploitative secondary market to purchase new homes. They bought houses "on contract," in which they would receive a loan not from a bank, but from the person who sold them their property. Buying on contract meant that a black family would pay more for the house than a white family, and was in a vulnerable position. A white speculator would buy a property in a neighborhood and then sell it "on contract" to a black family for two to four times the cost. The terms of the contract would often state that if the black homeowner missed one

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see Tracy K'Meyer, "'Well, I'm Not Moving': Open Housing and White Activism in the Long Civil Rights Movement," *The Sixties* 2, no. 1 (2009): 1–24; James Wolfinger, "The American Dream - For All Americans: Race, Politics, and the Campaign to Desegregate Levittown," *Journal of Urban History* 38, no. 3 (2012): 430–51.

[24] James Ralph, *Northern Protest : Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 56–57. For the complicated and often heart-wrenching dynamics of whites who did not intend to be slumlords, see Beryl Satter, *Family Properties: Race, Real Estate, and the Exploitation of Black Urban America* (Metropolitan Books, 2009).

payment, the property's ownership would immediately revert to the owner of the contract.

Faced with the prospect of losing the house, paying two to four times the value of the home,

and working jobs that paid less because of employment discrimination, black families often

took in borders and put off repairs in order to make their mortgage payments. Some

succeeded in keeping their homes, but others failed and lost all the money they had invested in

the property, as well as their homes. The speculator would then turn around and sell the

property to another unsuspecting family. Speculators, however, were not the only ones

implicated in contract buying. They often resold the mortgages to a broader market, and many

of Chicago's civic, business, and social leaders – many who affirmed racial justice – owned stock

in what was known as contract paper.[25]

Perverting the Place of the Church: Evangelicals and Segregation

Clearly, the segregation that characterized American housing in the 1960s did not just

"happen" because of a neutral housing market and individual decisions. White evangelicals,

however, argued that housing was about individual preference. Their homogenous context,

theology that prioritized individual choice and their particular history likely contributed to their

inability to see the structural forces shaping America's racial geography.[26]

Like their mainline Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish counterparts, white evangelicals

"fled" American cities during the suburban migration. The phrase "white flight," commonly

used to describe whites' movement away from black neighbors in the city to the suburbs does

not accurately describe the complicated, and often varying, nature of what happened.[27]

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[25] Satter, *Family Properties*. Contract buying has again become a more common option since mortgages have been less available after the 2008 housing crash.

[26] For a discussion of white evangelicalism's theological toolkit, which limits white evangelicals' ability to see the structural nature of race in America today, see Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). Much of the research connecting geographic racial change explores Catholics, Jews, and white ethnic Protestants. See McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries : The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth Century Urban North*; G. H. Gamm, *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed* (Harvard Univ Pr, 1999). For mainline Protestants and evangelicals, see Etan Diamond, *Souls of the City: Religion and the Search for Community in Postwar America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003).

[27] Amanda Seligman, *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago's West Side* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). Seligman does not look at religion, but shows that while whites eventually left their neighborhoods with the advent of black neighbors, they did so only after extensive resistance.

Evangelicals had strong attachments to their neighborhoods and did not make the decision to move their churches from the city to the suburbs impulsively. The churches with more congregational autonomy made the move more easily than their counterparts that were part of a stronger denominational structure.[28] For one church, the decision to move their church from the city to the suburbs was facilitated by a shifting premillennialism from a conviction that they could "Christianize" the newly black and low-income culture that surrounded their church in the city, to a more defensive, counter-cultural and insular perspective.[29] This inward focus was common among white evangelical churches. Like whites more generally, the church communities evangelicals built in the suburbs were homogenous, reflecting both the demographics of their locations as well as their implicit theologies about what Christian life ought to look like. Many suburban evangelical churches prioritized building friendships within the church's walls, and fostered an insular culture that prioritized the nuclear family with little concern for serving the needy.[30] They often maintained a missional perspective, but focused primarily on missions abroad, rather than the concerns of their brothers and sisters who were just miles away, trapped in the city.

As white evangelicals built new suburban churches in the 1960s, civil rights activists worked for open housing legislation.[31] At the Illinois state level, black activists and white mainline Protestants, Catholics and Jews worked for support open housing laws that would

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[28] Mark Mulder, "Evangelical Church Polity and the Nuances of White Flight," *Journal of Urban History* 38, no. 16 (2012): 16–38.

[29] Darren Dochuk, "'Praying for a Wicked City': Congregation, Community and the Suburbanization of Fundamentalism," *Religion and American Culture* 13, no. 2 (2003): 167–203.

[30] Diamond, *Souls of the City: Religion and the Search for Community in Postwar America*.

[31] Open housing was a key issue in the 1966 Chicago Campaign that Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) conducted with local activists, despite a fair housing ordinance in Chicago that went into effect in 1963. For the 1966 Chicago movement, see Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line : The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986); Ralph, *Northern Protest : Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement*. White evangelical Christians were, for the most part, absent from civil rights movement activism or opposed to it. See Charles Marsh, *God's Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997); Curtis Evans, "White Evangelical Protestant Responses to the Civil Rights Movement," *Harvard Theological Review* 102, no. 2 (April 2009): 245–73; Rusty Hawkins, "Religion, Race, and Resistance: White Evangelicals and the Dilemma of Integration in South Carolina, 1950-1975" (Rice University, 2010); Carolyn Renee Dupont, *Mississippi Praying: Southern White Evangelicals and the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).

[31] See House Bill No. 755, 1963, in Folder 6, Housing June 1962-June 1963, Box 20, Daniel Cantwell Papers, Chicago History Museum.

have opened up white suburbs and white neighborhoods to black families by prohibiting

discrimination in housing according to race, creed, color, national origin, or ancestry, and

creating a Fair Housing Practices Commission.[32] Open-housing supporters argued that their

position matched Judeo-Christian values.[33] Their strategy relied on religious arguments, as they

hoped to "persuade the members of our churches and synagogues by word and deed and

example to live according to the great moral teachings of our faiths concerning human

brotherhood. Our task is to help our people to translate these principles into the specifics of . .

. housing."[34]

In the historical record, evangelicals appear as opponents to the legislation who

positioned their religious opposition within individual rights framework. The Illinois Association

of Real Estate Boards (IAREB), which was the staunchest organization opposing open housing,

coordinated religious opposition to the bill. Calling the proposed legislation "forced housing,"

they insisted, "we don't doubt the words of Him who said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as

thyself,' but we do doubt, gentlemen, that He meant to disturb our American heritage and

freedoms by picking these neighbors for us." In 1965, IAREB worked with Rev. Louis A. Maple, a

Des Plaines Baptist pastor, to contact ministers to oppose the bill.[35] IAREB reported that 98% of

Maple's colleagues opposed open housing legislation because they were "hypocritical" and

"unchristian in their hopeless negative outlook." The 266 pastors who signed the statement

opposed the "element of force embodied in so-called open occupancy legislation," because it

destroyed individual, civil and religious liberty.[36] For opponents, the bill would destroy

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[32] See House Bill No. 755, 1963, in Folder 6, Housing June 1962-June 1963, Box 20, Cantwell Papers.

[33] The phrase "Judeo-Christian" was created in the 1930s, and reflects Jews' and Catholics' increasing acceptance as fully American. See Mark Silk, "Notes on the Judeo-Christian Tradition in America," *American Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 65–85; Kevin Schultz, *Tri-Faith America: How Catholics and Jews Held Postwar America to Its Protestant Promise* (New York: Oxford, 2011).

[34] Rabbi Irving Rosenbaum, CCRR Minutes, first meeting (of members), May 16, 1963, Folder 1, Box 14, Cantwell Papers.

[35] As part of the Summit negotiations following the open housing demonstrations conducted by the Chicago Freedom Movement in 1966, the Chicago Real Estate Board agreed to cease its active opposition to state legislation on open housing. See Ralph, *Northern Protest : Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement*; Anderson and Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line : The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago*.

[36] News Release, 25 May 1965, in Folder 9, Box 14, Cantwell Papers. The pastors defined liberty differently from open housing supporters. For open housing proponents, liberty or freedom was restorative, and needed to be ensured by the government. Opponents to civil rights generally, and open housing specifically, saw governmental

individual liberty, which was the "distinguishing characteristic of Christianity." It would hinder

religious liberty because it destroyed the "right of voluntary association," and it would only be a

matter of time before "the liberal, ecumenical movement" would force religious organizations

to open their doors to anyone. It also prevented the individual Christian from "a free exercise

of his conscience and his religion" when determining to whom to sell his home. [37]

White evangelicals also challenged the idea that integration was fundamentally

Christian, and suggested that open housing legislation was a tool of the anti-Christ. The

statement castigated the "unlimited integration" that had become a "major tenet of the liberal

church," and argued that the liberal church's position was not historically Christian: "for 3,500

years, prior to this century, neither Judaism nor historical Christianity, has ever held that

integration of the White, Black, or Yellow races in social life was necessary to obey God or

comply with the teachings of the Bible."[38] These ministers agreed that racial prejudice was a

problem, but argued it should be solved by individual conversion, not legislation because

"Biblical Christianity sees the heart of the problem to be sin in the human heart, not the

environment." White evangelicals, further, connected the government's increasing incursion in

their everyday life, which had indeed grown most significantly through civil rights and Great

Society legislation, with the end times. Citing Revelation 13, the statement argued that the bill

would help "set the stage for the totalitarian government forecast in the Bible," and bring the

premillennial tribulation (which they did not want) more quickly. [39] From their perspective, the

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legislation not as ensuring freedom for everyone, but as encroaching on their liberty. They were part of a broader
movement that George Wallace's 1964 campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination encapsulated.
Wallace's campaign is often cited as a key moment in the rise of the political conservative response to the
liberalism of the 1960s. Wallace was a strong segregationist. See, for instance, George Wallace, "The Civil Rights
Movement: Fraud, Sham, Hoax," in *For the Record: A Documentary History of America*, ed. David Shi and Holly
Meyer, 5th ed., vol. 2 (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013). For more context, see William Martin, *With
God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York: Broadway, 1997).

[37] Chicagoland's Real Estate Advertiser, April 23, 1965, Folder 9, CCRR - Referendum on Open Occupancy, Box 14,
Cantwell Papers.

[38] This statement suggests that segregationist theology was alive and well in the North. For segregationist
theology in the South, see Marsh, *God's Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights*; Hawkins, "Religion, Race,
and Resistance: White Evangelicals and the Dilemma of Integration in South Carolina, 1950-1975"; Dupont,
Mississippi Praying: Southern White Evangelicals and the Civil Rights Movement; Jane Dailey, "Sex, Segregation,
and the Sacred," *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 1 (June 2004): 119–44.

[39] Chicagoland's Real Estate Advertiser, April 23, 1965, Folder 9, CCRR - Referendum on Open Occupancy, Box 14,
Cantwell Papers, Chicago History Museum.

federal government was forcing their hand by dictating that they must sell their homes to all financially qualified buyers. But, like most people in their context without knowledge about the history of housing, they failed to see that the very same government had dealt them their hand by financing the white suburbs.

In the end, the debate over open housing legislation in Illinois became a moot point when President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which included a fair housing provision. Minorities who could afford to often moved to the suburbs, leaving behind the poor in inner cities. Their decisions led to a new urban poverty, in which many people living in inner-city communities have either dropped out of the formal labor force, or are unemployed.[40] But while fair housing legally opened white neighborhoods to minorities, America continues to be marked by a racial and economic geography that is divided by neighborhood, and by city/suburb lines. The reasons for this continued segregation are myriad, but race continues to be a driving factor as whites' racial preferences are one of the most significant factors reinforcing segregation.

Social scientists have found that perceptions of neighborhoods continue to shape the process of where people would consider, or avoid, living.[41] Those perceptions are often based on racial preferences. Whites are the choosiest racial group, and while they report that they want to live in diverse neighborhoods, they search for housing in neighborhoods where current residents match their own race. Furthermore, their willingness to seriously consider a neighborhood as a place to live declined as the proportion of Latinos and/or African Americans increased, even with controls in place to account for quality of schools, crime, and home

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[40] William J. Wilson, *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*, 1st Vintage Books (New York: Vintage Books, 1997).

[41] Michael D.M. Bader and Maria Krysan, "Community Attraction and Avoidance in Chicago: What's Race Got to Do With It?," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 660 (July 2015); Elizabeth E. Bruch and Robert D. Mare, "Neighborhood Choice and Neighborhood Change," *American Journal of Sociology* 112, no. 3 (2006): 667–709. Other factors include proximity to work (Tadao Hoshino, "Estimation and Analysis of Preference Heterogeneity in Residential Choice Behaviour," *Urban Studies* 48, no. 2 (2011): 363–82; John M. Quigley, "Consumer Choice of Dwelling, Neighborhood and Public Services," *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 15, no. 1 (1985): 41–63; M. William Sermons and Frank S. Koppelman, "Representing the Differences between Female and Male Commute Behavior in Residential Location Choice Models," *Journal of Transport Geography* 9, no. 2 (2001): 101–10.) and quality of schools, which is a concern more for working class parents (Annette Lareau and Kimberly Goyette, *Choosing Homes, Choosing Schools* (Russell Sage Foundation, 2014).)

values.[42] Concerns about children play into Americans' housing decisions, and white parents especially show concern that their children not grow up in "bad" neighborhoods.[43] Blacks are most willing to live in racially diverse neighborhoods, but like whites and Latinos, tend to live in neighborhoods where residents match their own race.[44] Black residential segregation continues as well, because of anti-integrationist violence. It is all-to-common for white (usually) men to greet a black family moving into a white community with acts of terrorism and crime that include arson, cross-burning, assault, vandalism, and verbal harassment. With their home – culturally and legally considered a place of respite in American society – violated, many of these families leave the white communities and return to the safety of black neighborhoods.[45] The segregation along race and class lines begets further segregation. When looking for a house or apartment to rent or buy, people will often look in an area close to where they already live and know people. Since they inhabit a landscape structured by the legacy of race and class in America, their connections to communities that are different from their own are limited.[46]

Overall, white Americans claim they value diverse communities, but they prefer to be surrounded by people of their own race. Americans tend to rank whites as the most attractive neighbors and blacks as the least desirable, with Asians and Hispanics in the middle in terms of desirability. Americans socialize immigrants to this housing/racial preference hierarchy as well, as immigrants adopt the nation's predominant racial values.[47] Those Americans who can afford it prefer class and political homogeneity in their neighborhoods as well. The wealthy continue

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[42] Bader and Krysan, "Community Attraction and Avoidance in Chicago: What's Race Got to Do With It?," 272–75; Esther Havekes, Michael Bader, and Maria Krysan, "Realizing Racial and Ethnic Neighborhood Preferences? Exploring the Mismatches Between What People Want, Where They Search, and Where They Live," *Population Research and Policy Review* 35, no. 1 (2016): 101–26.

[43] Janet Morrison, "Understanding How Middle Class Values, Ethnicity, and Socioeconomic Status Contribute to Segregated Environments" (Ph.D., Texas A&M, 2006).

[44] Havekes, Bader, and Krysan, "Realizing Racial and Ethnic Neighborhood Preferences? Exploring the Mismatches Between What People Want, Where They Search, and Where They Live"; Maria Krysan and Reynolds Farley, "The Residential Preferences of Blacks: Do They Explain Persistent Segregation?," *Social Forces* 80, no. 3 (n.d.): 937–80.

[45] Jeannine Bell, *Hate Thy Neighbor : Move-in Violence and the Persistence of Racial Segregation in American Housing* (New York: New York University Press, 2013). For example, Americans can legally defend themselves if someone enters their home, the Third Amendment prohibits quartering soldiers in someone's home without consent, and, though there are exceptions, the Fourth Amendment prohibits searching a home without a warrant.

[46] Bader and Krysan, "Community Attraction and Avoidance in Chicago: What's Race Got to Do With It?," 276.

[47] Camille Zubrinsky Charles, *Won't You Be My Neighbor: Race, Class, and Residence in Los Angeles* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006).

to segregate themselves along class lines, and want to live in areas with higher home values. Increased income drives Americans' decisions to move as well.[48] Political affiliation of one's neighbors makes a difference, as people are happier living by those who are from the same political party.[49]

For the most part, white evangelical Christians – Wheaton College's traditional constituency – have been no different from the broader trend among whites. The majority have bought into the "American dream" and assumed that they should live in the most comfortable place they can afford. In 2010, the "typical" white American lived in a neighborhood that was seventy-five percent white, while the "typical" black American lived in a community that was only thirty-five percent white.[50] One study found that white evangelicals are mostly suburban residents, with 51.8 percent living in suburbs or exurbs, 18.4 percent living in urban areas, and 29.8 percent living in rural areas. By contrast, about 70 percent of black evangelicals and Hispanic evangelicals live in urban areas, compared to 18.5 percent of black evangelicals and 14 percent of Hispanic evangelicals living in suburban or exurban neighborhoods.[51] In short, evangelicals from different racial and ethnic backgrounds are unlikely to live by each other. The framework white evangelicals have used to determine where they live is one of individual choice and comfort, and rarely accounts for the structures perpetuating segregation, and how those structures are not morally neutral.[52] Questioning the normalcy, indeed the naturalness, of America's geographical segregation can help us consider the consequences of segregation for our vocation.

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[48] Bader and Krysan, "Community Attraction and Avoidance in Chicago: What's Race Got to Do With It?," 275–76; John Kennan and James Walker, "The Effect of Expected Income on Individual Migration Decisions," *Econometrica* 79, no. 1 (2011): 211–51.

[49] Iris Hui, "Who Is Your Preferred Neighbor? Partisan Residential Preferences and Neighborhood Satisfaction," *American Politics Research* 41, no. 6 (2013): 997–1021.

[50] Bell, *Hate Thy Neighbor : Move-in Violence and the Persistence of Racial Segregation in American Housing*, 2.

[51] John Green and Ann Greenberg, "America's Evangelicals," referenced in Mark T. Mulder and James K.A. Smith, "Subdivided by Faith? An Historical Account of Evangelicals and the City," *Christian Scholar's Review* 38, no. 4 (Summer 2009): 430–31. Evangelicals are also divided along class lines.

[52] For structural sin, see Stephen Charles Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

The High Costs of Segregation for the Church

A Limited View of God

If vocation is fundamentally a call to discipleship, to putting on Christ as we love our neighbors and love God, then the segregation that characterizes American society limits all Christians' ability to fully know God. Homogeneity in the local body of Christ too easily leads to cultural captivity. If a person is only surrounded by similar people, that person cannot see his or her blind spots. The Body of Christ needs all of its parts to function well, and because Christians have separated the toes from the fingers, the Body cannot work in the way that Christ intended. White evangelicals, for instance, have much to learn about God and his call on their lives from their black counterparts, and vice versa. If a contingent of Wheaton's graduates moved into communities that were different culturally from the ones in which they grew up, the church would be strengthened. They would learn about God from their neighbors who experience his provision in different contexts, and they would teach their neighbors about God from their own experiences.

I (a white evangelical from Chicago's northern suburbs) had this experience when living in a black, inner city neighborhood, and attending an interracial church in the community. The majority of our church's congregation hailed from the surrounding community and endured the hardships so common in communities with fewer material resources. Through their witness (and often the testimony of my neighbors who I did not go to church with, but who were Christians), I learned completely different lessons than I would have had I lived in a neighborhood that was "safe" and in which people could be independent because they had the financial means. I learned what it meant to trust God on a daily basis to provide for financial needs, and to share resources with my neighbors. In a neighborhood with higher violent crime rates, and a strong pull toward the street for the young men in particular, I learned what it meant to trust God for personal safety, and to literally walk in the power of the Holy Spirit as I traversed my neighborhood's streets. Our church was a part of the black church tradition, and very sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit during the service. I learned, therefore, that church was not about me and my schedule (in my background, church was one hour and a half, tops), but about the movement of God in the body. Because I was present in the community, I

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learned to see beauty in people and places most white evangelical Christians would miss, from the way a neighbor who used drugs faithfully tended the community garden across the street, to the deep loyalty extended families held for each other as aunts and grandmothers cared for their sisters' and daughters' children. By God's grace, and through the ministry of other Christians who were very different from me, I was able to grow in the likeness of Christ and see God in new ways.

I was also able to bring my gifts and knowledge of God into the neighborhood and our church, strengthening both and helping others grow in their calling as Christ-followers. For instance, my husband and I, both with seminary and education training, taught a new believers' class and were able to help new Christians see the broad strokes of Christ's kingdom. We had a home that we opened to teenagers raised in the church and led a small group on Friday nights. We brought our social capital into the community, and were able to bring specialists who volunteered their time into the neighborhood school where my husband taught. The exchange between people from the different cultures was mutual, and ultimately the church was strengthened and Christ used the diversity of the body of Christ to expand his kingdom in the community.[53] My experience of learning about what it means to be a Christ follower in a cross-cultural setting is uncommon, however.

By not being in fellowship with minority Christians, white evangelical Christians are held in cultural captivity. As Soong-Chan Rah argues, white evangelicals are – often unknowingly – bound by a culture of individualism, consumerism and materialism, and racism.[54] These bonds

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[53] Our church was Rock of Our Salvation Evangelical Free Church, which is connected to Circle Urban Ministries. To learn more about the church's foundational philosophy, see Glen Kehrein and Raleigh Washington, *Breaking Down Walls: A Model for Reconciliation in an Age of Racial Strife* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994).

[54] Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity*, chaps. 1–3. For evangelicals' historic contribution to racial inequality, see Dupont, *Mississippi Praying: Southern White Evangelicals and the Civil Rights Movement*; Edward Blum and Paul Harvey, *The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America* (Chapel Hills: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898* (Louisiana State University Press, 2005); Brantley Gasaway, "'Glimmers of Hope': Progressive Evangelicals and Racism, 1965-2000," in *Christians and the Color Line: Religion and Race after Divided by Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Hawkins, "Religion, Race, and Resistance: White Evangelicals and the Dilemma of Integration in South Carolina, 1950-1975"; Miles Mullen, "Neoevangelicalism and the Problem of Race in Postwar America," in *Christians and the Color Line: Race and Religion after Divided by Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). For contemporary analysis of evangelicals and race, see Emerson, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America*; J. Russell Hawkins and Phillip Luke Sinitiere, eds., *Christians and the Color Line: Race and Religion after Divided by*

are often invisible because they are embedded in American culture, and because they have become a part of the American church. But they prevent Christians' full flourishing, and set them on a path that leads not toward relationship with Christ, but toward isolation from God. Contrary to individualism, however, God calls his people to care for one another. He speaks to them individually, yes, but also corporately. Consumerism and materialism make people objects, and make an idol out of security, comfort, and more things, which denies human dignity. Racism, too, objectifies people rather than celebrating the *imago dei.* People of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, however, can be released from bondage through fellowship in the Body of Christ, in all its diversity.

Regular fellowship between rich and poor Christians, black and white Christians, or minority and majority Christians is rare. This pattern has been consistent throughout the history of the United States and is, I believe, pleasing to Satan and not to God.[55] Poorer Christians do not have the ability to move into the circles of their richer brothers and sisters. However richer Christians can move in both circles, if they are willing to humble themselves and learn from those they would normally assume leadership over. Wheaton's students, no matter their socioeconomic level, should be counted among the rich because of the networks to which they have access.

Crossing cultural boundaries challenges one of the most fundamental assumptions of American culture today: that we should be comfortable. We live in a society that allows us, even encourages us, to cater to our personal preferences. We can, for instance, stream our

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Faith (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). Individualism is a long tradition in white evangelicalism; or evangelicals' individualism as they shifted from Democrats to Republicans between the 1930s and 1960s, see Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt: Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: Norton, 2010). For social gospelers' failure to resist consumerism, see Susan Curtis, *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991). For Christian critiques of consumerism, see John F. Cavanaugh, *Following Christ in a Consumer Society*, 25th Anniversary (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006); Ronald J. Sider, *Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcomign Poverty in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999).

[55] While there are exceptions, too often, white Christians have sacralized their racial supremacy with their faith. For a limited sample of how race has functioned in American Christianity, see Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*; Emerson, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America*; Hawkins and Sinitiere, *Christians and the Color Line*; James B. Bennett, *Religion and the Rise of Jim Crow in New Orleans* (Princeton University Press, 2005); Harvey, *The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America*; Luke Harlow, *Religion, Race, and the Making of Confederate Kentucky, 1830–1880* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

own movies onto our own personal devices rather than having to agree with others about what to watch on a communal television. Most Americans' church preferences reflect this desire for comfort as well. More than nine out of ten religious congregations are racially homogeneous, which sociologists define as having 80% or more members of one racial/ethnic group. It is easier to worship with people who are like oneself then to have to sacrifice one's personal preferences and submit to a different style of leadership, music, or way of doing church. White Americans, in particular, have been able to dictate the terms of their comfort, and are able to express that in their mobility.[56] In many of the less than ten percent of American churches that are more racially diverse, minorities must cater to the preference of white members in order to keep white members in the congregation.[57]

But does God call us to comfort? Scripture is clear that our vocation is to take up our cross and follow Christ. The cross in Jesus's context was a symbol of death, and in taking up our cross, as with our baptism, we die to our control over our lives and our ideas of what is "good." Instead, using God's power that works within us, we follow Christ wherever he leads, as we are sanctified, becoming more like Christ. Part of taking up our cross may be learning, as Paul did, what it means to be content whether we have much or little.   As Soong-Chan Rah argues, part of white evangelicalism's cultural captivity is the lure of materialism and consumerism.[58] Downward mobility directly counters the assumption of comfort. Remaining rooted in a place, staying in a neighborhood when you could afford to move to a bigger house in a nicer neighborhood because of a promotion or raise, also runs counter to our culture's assumption of comfort as one of our highest goods.

For our students, who are part of a generation of emerging adults, the assumption of comfort in terms of where we live plays into the moral therapeutic deism that Christian Smith

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[56] Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity*, 149–52.

[57] Sociologists have broken multiracial churches down into two main categories in terms of how race functions. In racially transcendent churches, congregants and leadership emphasize an identity beyond race See Gerardo Marti, *A Mosaic of Believers: Diversity and Innovation in a Multiethnic Church* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005). In assimilationist churches, the white members dictate the worship norms, etc., and minorities must cede their cultural preferences in order to keep the white members. See Korie Edwards, *The Elusive Dream: The Power of Race in Interracial Churches* (New York: Oxford, 2008). In my experience at Rock of Our Salvation Church, there were elements of racial transcendence, but with very successful efforts to counter white hegemony, in contrast to Edwards's arguments.

[58] Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity*, 46–63.

has argued characterizes young people's faith today. While Wheaton students hopefully do not hold tightly to the moral therapeutic deism's bent gospel (a view which is reduced to the beliefs that God exists and watches over us, that God wants us to be nice to each other, that our main goal should to be happy and feel good about ourselves, that God is not really involved in our lives except when there's a problem, and that good people go to heaven when they die), they are part of a culture that assumes life should make them happy. [59] As an institution, we can help disrupt the narratives of moral therapeutic deism by offering a better way, the way of the cross. That path is intimately connected with place.

A Failure to Do Justice

The rich and the poor used to live in closer to one another, and it was easier for someone with economic means to rub shoulders with someone without. A visit to Martin Luther King Jr.'s childhood home in Atlanta reveals how different American housing is today than when King grew up in the 1930s and 1940s. King's family was respectable and, in the context of their community, middle class. But the young King could step out of his house and see homes that reflected varying levels of wealth in the community, some poorer and some richer. King's childhood experiences no doubt shaped the coalitions he helped foster across class lines during his leadership in the civil rights movement. After the economic boom of the 1950s that funded America's massive suburbanization, and the opening of suburbs to black Americans twenty years later, King's experience is far less common. [60]

When the rich live apart from the poor, it limits the rich's ability to see the poor and do justice. As social analyst Michael Harrington wrote in his 1962 *The Other America*, which tried to help affluent Americans see poverty, "the very development of the American city has removed poverty from the living, emotional experience of millions upon millions of middle-class Americans. Living out in the suburbs, it is easy to assume that ours is, indeed, an affluent society." [61] If Christians are blind to the poverty and suffering just a short drive away, they

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[59] Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[60] For middle-class African Americans' suburbanization's effect on inner cities, see Wilson, *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*.

[61] Michael Harrington, "The Other America," in *For the Record: A Documentary History of America*, 5th ed., vol. 2 (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 293.

perpetuate a way of life that is not pleasing to God. Scripture is clear: God rebukes his people when they do not care for the poor among them, and put their own comfort above that of their neighbor.[62]

The consequences of this structural sin for the poor are stark, and in America, those negative effects fall more heavily on minorities.[63] The research on the effects of economic segregation overwhelmingly suggests negative consequences; segregation is associated with inequality in American society, from cognitive growth to physical health. Full flourishing as humans is elusive for children raised in poverty. The structural context of their education and childhood, for instance, limits their ability to do well in school. With more frequent changes in housing and therefore schools, less access to reading materials, and being trapped in a segregated educational system that came about not because of personal choice and economic circumstance, children in poverty are hindered by a variety of factors external to their own agency.[64] The psychological research suggests that they often have lower cognitive and socioemotional abilities, that their brains actually develop differently from children raised in higher income areas. Their parents, for a variety of reasons, spend less time with them reading books, exposing them to learning opportunities, and having conversations. These children also experience more general stress, and wear and tear on their bodies. They are more likely to struggle in school, and have lower abilities to regulate their emotions and delay gratification, which affects their ability to rise above poverty as adults, and can lead to the perpetuation of the cycle of poverty.[65] Minorities also experience lower levels of physical health than whites in

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[62] Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*, chap. 4.

[63] S Macartney, A Bishaw, and K Fontenot, "Poverty Rates for Selected Detailed Race and Hispanic Groups by State and Place: 2007-2011," *U.S. Census Bureau*, 2013.

[64] Majida Mehana and Arthur Reynolds, "School Mobility and Achievement: A Meta-Analysis," *Children and Youth Services Review* 26, no. 1 (2004): 93–119; Susan B. Neuman and Donna Celano, "Access to Print in Low-Income and Middle-Income Communities: An Ecological Study of Four Neighborhoods," *Reading Research Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2001): 8–26; Richard Rothstein, "The Racial Achievement Gap, Segregated Schools, and Segregated Neighborhoods: A Constitutional Insult," *Race and Social Problems* 7, no. 1 (2014): 21–30; Robert J. Sampson, Patrick Sharkey, and Stephen W. Raudenbush, "Durable Effects of Concentrated Disadvantage on Verbal Ability among African-American Children," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 105, no. 3 (2008): 845–52.

[65] Catherine Ayoub et al., "Cognitive Skill Performance among Young Children Living in Poverty: Risk, Change, and the Promotive Effects of Early Head Start," *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2009): 289–305; Gary W. Evans and Jennifer Rosenbaum, "Self-Regulation and the Income-Achievement Gap," *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2008): 504–14; Martha J. Farah et al., "Childhood Poverty: Specific Associations with

America. Experiencing racism – or perceived racism – negatively affects their health, they are less likely to have access to quality medical care, more likely to face food insecurity, and less likely to have quality sleep, which is essential for a higher quality of life.[66] Certainly, personal choices also contribute to these negative effects, but the structures within which people make those choices are significant.[67]

While not the only factor contributing to this structural sin, evangelicals' embodiment of the upward mobility/comfort narrative about where they live has furthered structural sin, suffering, and cultural captivity. Because middle- and upper-class (often white) evangelicals *can* live in more well-off neighborhoods, they often do. But America's racial and ethnic demographics are shifting, and the nation – and the church in America – is increasingly diverse. Whites are barely a majority in America, and the greatest church growth is among immigrants whose diverse experiences of God, if shared, could strengthen one another as well as white evangelicals.[68] Yet white evangelicals, without even being fully aware of it, are held captive to a way of life that perpetuates structural divisions and inequality both in the body of Christ and in

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Neurocognitive Development," *Brain Research* 1110, no. 1 (2006): 166–74; Daniel A. Hackman and Martha J. Farah, "Socioeconomic Status and the Developing Brain," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 13, no. 2 (2009): 65–73; Amy Schulz et al., "Associations between Socioeconomic Status and Allostatic Load: Effects of Neighborhood Poverty and Tests of Mediating Pathways," *American Journal of Public Health* 102, no. 9 (2012): 1706–14.

[66] For health, see Kathryn Freeman Anderson, "Diagnosing Discrimination: Stress from Perceived Racism and the Mental and Physical Health Effects," *Sociological Inquiry* 83, no. 1 (2013): 55–81; Paula A. Braveman et al., "Socioeconomic Disparities in Health in the United States: What the Patterns Tell Us," *American Journal of Public Health* 100, no. S1 (2010): 186–96; Eric Anthony Grollman, "Multiple Forms of Perceived Discrimination and Health among Adolescents and Young Adults," *Journal of Health Science and Social Behavior* 53, no. 2 (2012): 199–214; Molly Knowles et al., "'Do You Wanna Breathe or Eat?': Parent Perspectives on Child Health Consequences of Food Insecurity, Trade-Offs, and Toxic Stress," *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 20, no. 1 (2016): 25–35; Mary Grace Umlauf et al., "The Effects of Age, Gender, Hopelessness, and Exposure to Violence on Sleep Disorder Symptoms and Daytime Sleepiness among Adolescents in Impoverished Neighborhoods," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 44, no. 2 (2015): 518–42. Historically in Chicago, for instance, hospitals historically discriminated against African Americans. Until the mid-1960s, the only hospitals a black citizen could be confident he or she would not be turned away from were Cook County and Provident. Limited hospital access– for reasons that are often not cited as racial – persists. On the South Side, where a substantial number of African Americans live, there is no trauma center. The University of Chicago, on the South Side, has not built one. Recently, however, after tremendous pressure the hospital has committed to creating one in the future.

[67] The neoconservative movement makes the personal responsibility argument strongly. For mainstream evangelicalism and neoconservative arguments about personal responsibility's relationship to continued racial inequality, see Antony Alumkal, "American Evangelicalism in the Post-Civil Rights Era: A Racial Formation Theory Analysis," *Sociology of Religion* 65, no. 3 (Autumn 2004): 195–213.

[68] Andy Crouch, "Ten Most Significant Cultural Trends of the Last Decade | Q Ideas," *Q,* accessed April 23, 2016; Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity.*

the broader community. As Steve Garber asks in his book about vocation, *Common Grace for the Common Good*, what will we do with what we know? He writes, "in our own different ways we are responsible, for love's sake, for the way the world is and ought to be. We are called to be common grace for the common good."[69]

A Countercultural Story Regarding Place and Vocation

Not all evangelicals have gone along with the culture in their assumptions about the best places to live, and there are alternative traditions available as models for how to connect where we live with vocation. Evangelical Christians such as John Perkins and others associated with the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA) have thought deeply about the consequences of where they live and how they live there for the marginalized. [70] John Perkins, who holds an honorary doctorate from Wheaton College, is widely known as the father of the CCDA's philosophy of Christian community development.

The CCDA was founded in 1989, and those associated with it share the same theological commitments as most evangelical Christians: they emphasize the saving grace of God the Father through Jesus's atoning death on the cross, the need for a personal relationship with Jesus, and the inerrancy of Scripture. But, in some ways more like 19th century evangelicals

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[69] Steve Garber, *Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2014), 18.

[70] There are several historical resources available besides the CCDA. Paying attention to the histories and processes of decisions that missionaries make about where they live would also be a helpful historical resource. Black evangelicalism is another resource that would be useful for the College in that it did not suffer from the Fundamentalist/Modernist divide, and the ensuing separation of the call to love God from the call to love one's neighbor. See, for instance, the chapter on Fannie Lou Hamer in Marsh, *God's Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights*. For the stream within white evangelicalism pushing back against the fragmentation of the gospel and showing broader social concern, see David Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Reconciling Evangelism and Social Concern* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2007); David R. Swartz, *Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism*, Reprint edition (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014). For a history of black and white Christians seeking to live together in community that emerged from civil rights activism, see Charles Marsh, *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice from the Civil Rights Movement to Today* (New York: Basic Books, 2007); Tracy Elaine K'Meyer, *Interracialism and Christian Community in the Postwar South: The Story of Koinonia Farm* (University of Virginia Press, 2000). My own work on Catholics in the Catholic social thought tradition would also be useful. See Karen Johnson, "Healing the Mystical Body: Catholic Attempts to Overcome the Racial Divide in the Depression and World War II," in *Christians and the Color Line: Race and Religion after Divided by Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Karen Johnson, "Beyond Parish Boundaries: Black Catholics and the Quest for Racial Justice," *Religion and American Culture* 25, no. 3 (Winter 2014); Karen Johnson, "Another Long Civil Rights Movement: How Catholic Interracialists Used the Resources of Their to Tear Down Racial Hierarchies," *American Catholic Studies* 126, no. 4 (Winter 2015): 1–27.

than their twentieth and twenty-first century contemporaries, they view an individual's transformation by the power of the Holy Spirit as the starting point for seeking the good of particular (and often impoverished) places.[71] Perkins's and the CCDA's theological reflections and practices offer countercultural arguments about place that have the potential to help Christians walk more faithfully in all aspects of their calling.[72]

Perkins's story of being Jesus's disciple is inseparable from where he lived. Perkins was born in Mississippi in 1930, and grew up under the oppression of the Jim Crow South. Like many African Americans, his brother fought in World War II. And, in a story that was all too common and illustrative of the ritualized violence that characterized race in the South, white Southerners murdered Perkins's brother while he was still in his military uniform. In 1947, Perkins joined the mass of black Southerners tired of the constant fear they faced moved away from the deep South. Perkins moved to California. He and his wife, Vera Mae, found economic success, started their family, and became Christians. Life for them was good. They knew, of course, along with other migrants, that although things were better racially, it was not the Promised Land they had envisioned. As Perkins put it in his autobiography, "I saw more clearly that the roots of many of the black man's problems in the ghetto were really the unsolved problems of the South I had left."[73]

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[71] The CCDA represents what I hope is a broader shift in American evangelicalism back to a more complete orthodoxy, which was fractured in the early twentieth century in "the great reversal." Evangelicals, including those at Wheaton College, lost part of the gospel, the Good News of Christ's reign, in the context of the fundamentalist/modernist divide and the particular historical contingencies surrounding evangelicalism's adoption of premillennialism. See, for instance, Moberg, *The Great Reversal*. For more on Perkins and the CCDA, see Timothy Essenburg, "Urban Community Development: An Examination of the Perkins Model," *Review of Social Economy* 58, no. 2 (June 2000): 197–223; Jeff Johnsen, "Case Study in Holistic Mission No.21: Mile High Ministries: Urban-Suburban Church Coalition," *Transformation* 13, no. 3 (September 1996): 22–26; Waldren Scott, "Wholistic Models of Evangelism and Social Concern No. 7: The Paterson Paradigm: Some Personal Reflections," *Transformation* 8, no. 4 (October 1991): 16–18, 22; Stephen Berk, "From Proclamation to Community: The Work of John Perkins," *Transformation* 6, no. 4 (1989): 1–7; Marsh, *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice from the Civil Rights Movement to Today*.

[72] Using the CCDA might strike some readers as extreme, along with my suggestion that rather than follow the implicit assumption about upward mobility in American society in terms of housing, we ought to consider downward mobility our default. In making this argument, I am not suggesting that God does not call Christians to live in "nice" neighborhoods. Christians ought to, however, make sure that the calling is from God, and not their own desire for comfort.

[73] In some ways, northern whites adopted southern customs when black citizens moved north. The Catholic Church, for instance, segregated its churches as the Catholic Church had done in the South. See Johnson, "Beyond Parish Boundaries: Black Catholics and the Quest for Racial Justice." Based on his later ministry when he returned to Mississippi, Perkins here may have been suggesting that black migrants needed to feel empowered, have the

Perkins came to believe that God was calling him and his family to leave their relative comfort in California and return to Mississippi. As Perkins remembered, he "couldn't escape a conviction growing up inside of me that God wanted me back in Mississippi, to identify with my people there, and to help them break up the cycle of despair – not by encouraging them to leave, but by showing them new life right where they were."[74] To move to Mississippi would mean giving up what seemed to be a good life – a church community, relative comfort in a large home, and greater safety – and instead, paying attention to the question of where they should live. Like many who follow this path, well-meaning friends discouraged John Perkins from moving. Vera Mae also did not want to move back to Mississippi, but she believed she needed to submit to what she perceived as God's call. Where the Perkins family lived was part of their vocation.

Relocation, Reconciliation, and Redistribution: Practices for Healing Christ's Broken Body in Particular Places

In Mississippi, John and Vera Mae Perkins developed a philosophy of mission that has come to characterize the CCDA that is based, after one's relationship with Christ, on where a person lives. Perkins uses the "3 R's" of relocation, reconciliation, and redistribution to describe the core of Christian community development, which anyone who wants to cultivate a place can practice.[75] For the CCDA, downward mobility – not living in the nicest place one can afford, but limiting oneself by aligning oneself with poor people– is a central tenet.

The first R, relocation, calls those who could choose not to, to live among those unable to move. Some people who follow this model may be "relocators," that is, they grew up

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educational tools to make their lives better, and prioritize nuclear families and what some call traditional family values (see Erik Miller, The Fields are Black Unto Harvest," Urban History Association, 2014. Miller focuses more on Perkins's perspective on family values and arguments for compassionate capitalism than location). Perkins's implicit suggestion fits the arguments of black sociologists like E. Franklin Frazier who considered black migrants to be uneducated masses. Isabel Wilkerson argues that migrants were actually more educated than their white counterparts, and that their lower economic status was due more to structural limitations than the migrants themselves (Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, 260.

[74] John Perkins, *Let Justice Roll Down: John Perkins Tells His Own Story* (Ventura, CA: G/L Publications, 1976), 79.

[75] More recently the CCDA has expanded its key ideas beyond the relocation, reconciliation and redistribution to include leadership development, listening to the community, basing development in the local church, being wholistic, which addresses all aspects of a person's life and is therefore vitally connected to the local church, and empowering of local people, rather than creating dependency.

outside a community but, seeing a need, move to a lower-income place. Others, like Perkins was in Mississippi, are "returners," people no longer trapped by the poverty who could afford to live somewhere else, but choose to return to the poor community in which they grew up. Still others are "remainers," those who could leave, but choose to stay.[76] The ideal of relocating, returning, or remaining counters the typical American notion of upward mobility, which can leave some of the most vulnerable behind in the new urban poverty. As white Wheaton alum Wayne Gordon has said, "relocation transforms 'you, them, and theirs' to 'we, us, and ours.'"[77] Relocation may look different in coming years, and it has limitations. Because of changing demographics and gentrification in cities, suburbs may become – and often already are – places where Christians can engage diversity, reconciliation and justice.[78] Relocation can also lead to gentrification, which can raise the taxes and price out lower-income people who already live in a community. The balance is fragile. As Robert Lupton has argued, impoverished communities actually need the gentry, who can help weave back together the fabric of community life. These problems of gentrification, however, should be solved in community, not used as a reason to avoid relocation all together.[79]

How Christians live in a place matters, CCDA proponents argue. Once together physically, Christians can foster reconciliation – the second R – of individuals to God, and of people to one another.[80] Reconciliation happens as Christians from different racial, economic, social and political backgrounds come together to solve the problems in their community jointly; the vision is not one of creating a holy huddle bounded by the walls of a physical church

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[76] Wayne Gordon, "The Eight Components of Christian Community Development," accessed April 11, 2016, http://www.nsc-church.org/CCDA%208%20Points.pdf; Bob Lupton and Peggy Lupton, "Relocation: Living in the Community," in *Restoring At Risk Communities: Doing It Together and Doing It Right*, ed. John Perkins (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995).

[77] Gordon, "The Eight Components of Christian Community Development," 2.

[78] Crouch, "Ten Most Significant Cultural Trends of the Last Decade | Q Ideas." Crouch points out that Americans are moving back to cities and revitalizing them. Contrary to expectations, however, more millennials are purchasing homes in the suburbs (Ellen James Martin, "Next Stop, Starter Home: Millenials Are Defying Expectations on Where and What They Buy," *Chicago Tribune*, April 17, 2016.)

[79] For gentrification and relocation, see Robert Lupton, *Theirs Is the Kingdom: Celebrating the Gospel in Urban Life* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2010). See also Essenburg's analysis of Lupton in Essenburg, "Urban Community Development: An Examination of the Perkins Model," 215–17.

[80] See Spencer Perkins and Chris Rice, *More Than Equals: Racial Healing for the Sake of the Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 1995); Spencer Perkins and Chris Rice, "Reconciliation: Loving God and Loving People," in *Restoring At-Risk Communities: Doing It Together and Doing It Right*, ed. John Perkins (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 1995).

building, but of joining God in his work in the community.[81]   The CCDA philosophy counters the

cultural captivity stemming from segregation and a preference for homogeneity that

characterizes the church in America. As people from different backgrounds are reconciled one

to another as they draw closer to God, they can learn different aspects of God's character from

one another's stories. They also obey Christ's command that his followers love one another,

which will be the way others know people are Jesus's disciples. As Francis Schaeffer reminded

us, "We are to love all true Christian brothers in a way that the world may observe. This means

showing love to our brothers in the midst of our differences . . . Love – and the unity it attests

to – is the mark Christ gave Christians to *wear* before the world. Only with this mark may the

world know that Christians are indeed Christians and that Jesus was sent by the Father."[82]

Living with one another, reconciling people to God, and people to one another as they

seek the good of places so long marginalized in American society, they will redistribute – the

third R – resources justly. Fundamentally, redistribution is about seeking the common good –

inside and outside the church - by seeking to do justice. As Gordon puts it, "redistribution

brings new skills, new relationships, and new resources and puts them to work to empower the

residents of a given community of need to bring about a healthy transformation."[83] It

empowers people by not only helping them make a living, but by accounting for the broader

structural forces that oppress and marginalize people, and can be a way to repent of, or actively

turn away from, the sin of not doing justice that has plagued white evangelicalism.[84]

For Perkins and the CCDA, the local church holds together the "three R's." Within the

church, the body of believers ought to love one another so well, that their love overflows into

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[81] For a call for church to be fostered *in* local communities, but which does not talk about relocation, see Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*.

[82] Francis Schaeffer, *The Mark of the Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1970), 35.

[83] Gordon, "The Eight Components of Christian Community Development," 4. See also Mary Nelson, "Redistribution: Empowering the Community," in *Restoring At-Risk Communities: Doing It Together and Doing It Right*, ed. John Perkins (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995).

[84] The black church in America has often been characterized by a movement toward justice. See, for instance, C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mayima, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Duke University Press, 1990); David L. Chappell, *A Stone of Hope: Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Judith Weisenfeld, *African American Women and Christian Activism : New York's Black YWCA, 1905-1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997); Marilyn W. Nickels, "Thomas Wyatt Turner and the Federated Colored Catholics," *US Catholic Historian* 7, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 215–32; Johnson, "Beyond Parish Boundaries: Black Catholics and the Quest for Racial Justice."

the community as they attend to the spiritual, economic, and educational welfare of all the families in their community, thus drawing others to Jesus. The local church is the engine of real equality, which values different backgrounds equally, rather than assuming that minorities ought to assimilate into majority culture, and shares power.[85]

The CCDA model also offers a different way of addressing poverty than has been typical in America. Liberals commonly rely on governmental institutions or organizations that are not part of the community to improve a place, but they less frequently will cite personal choice or initiative as a factor that can help people move beyond poverty. Conservatives, on the other hand, typically cite individual initiative as the problem, and less frequently account for structural factors limiting a person's prospects. The CCDA model, however, can account for both the broader structures as well as individual initiative. Change in a community is based on the relationships fostered by relocators, who are seeking to love their neighbors as themselves, but is not "charity" in the sense that those with means provide for those without. Instead, by helping local people take pride in their communities, long term change can take place.[86] People living together in a neighborhood know the needs of the community, and can use all the resources they have – individual, spiritual and structural – to foster positive improvements.[87]

At first glance, the CCDA model seems to suggest that everyone who is a "relocater" or a "returner" must be involved in local community development, which is the traditional CCDA model. But sociological research suggests otherwise. The presence of "high status" people in a community, those who hold professional or managerial jobs, can increase the quality of the community for everyone in a neighborhood. One study found that teenage pregnancy rates and educational attainment decreased not at a steady rate, proportionate to the number of high status people in a neighborhood, but in the pattern of an epidemic. That is, the change does not happen gradually, but in bursts like how an epidemic spreads because they are the product of social interactions in the neighborhood. For instance, one study found that in black neighborhoods, as the percentage of high status workers fell from 20.7% to 5.6%, the change in

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[85] For a summary of Perkins's vision, see Essenburg, "Urban Community Development: An Examination of the Perkins Model."

[86] Ibid., 208.

[87] Ibid., 210–13.

high school dropout rate was inconsequential, and the dropout probability increased from .111 to .120. But when the percentage of high status workers dropped to 3.5%, the estimated dropout probability increased to .192.   For males, the effect of a having fewer high status workers in their community is even more significant. When the percent of high status workers falls from 5.6% to 3.4%, their probability of dropping out of school rises from .146 to .345, which is highly significant. [88] The research suggests that if people improve the quality of a neighborhood, social problems like dropping out could be reduced.   Those who relocate to a poor community need not *work* there – that is, hold jobs in the community – in order to use their social capital to benefit others by living in a less well-off neighborhood. Wheaton College graduates, for instance, could live in a lower-income west side or south side neighborhood in Chicago, work in the Loop, and still contribute to bettering their neighborhood because they worship locally and seek its good in their day-to-day lives outside of work.

The philosophy and actions of John and Vera Mae Perkins, Wayne Gordon, and other CCDA affiliates offer a narrative that is so contrary to what most Americans assume about housing – where one ought to live and how one ought to live there – that their story can help disrupt students' assumptions that where one lives is not part of vocation. Proponents of the CCDA do not assume the comfort/upward mobility narrative that has characterized Americans' housing decisions. Rather, they offer a different model, a form of kenosis, or emptying of oneself, as the Son did when he became flesh, taking on the human nature with all its limitations, and dwelt among humanity.[89] Jesus Christ was God, but, as Paul tells us, "did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being." [90] Many Christians affiliated with the CCDA could afford to live in a nice place, but like Jesus, they give up the privileges their wealth, social position, and/or race offers them and dwell with those most others with privilege would consider to be less important. Too often, CCDA's model of living

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[88] Jonathan Crane, "The Epidemic Theory of Ghettos and Neighborhood Effects on Dropping Out and Teenage Childbearing," *American Journal of Sociology* 96, no. 5 (March 1991): 1226–59.

[89] Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989), 228–29.

[90] Phil. 2:6-7, NLT.

out the gospel through downward mobility is seen as strange and different, when it ought to be common among American evangelicals.

In addition to helping Christians think through the importance of *where* they live, the CCDA story – in conjunction with the theology of place literature – can also help them think through *how* they live in the places God calls them to, no matter if that place is an inner-city neighborhood, a holler in Appalachia, a working-class suburb, or the town of Wheaton. Not all students will be called to be relocaters or returners, living in poor communities when they graduate. But all Christians are called to a ministry of reconciliation, bringing people to God and people to one another. All Christians, too, are called to share generously with one another, so that each person has what they need. As Ronald Sider says, "The Bible is clear. If we get rich by oppressing the poor or if we have wealth and do not reach out generously to the needy, the Lord of history moves against us. God judges societies by what they do to the people at the bottom."[91] No matter where people live, how they live in particular places will not only help conform them to the image of Christ, but will extend Christ's kingdom as they love God and love their neighbors.

Rooting, Reducing, and Restraining: Additional Vocational Practices to Live Well in a Place[92]

The CCDA ideas of relocation, reconciliation, and redistribution are crucial to seeking the good of the places to which God calls his people. The literature on theologies of place suggests three additional "R's," rooting, reducing, and restraining, that intersect with the CCDA practices and that Christians can adopt to live well in a place. These six "R's" are intertwined, and practicing one discipline can strengthen the others.

Reducing oneself in this context means to make one's life smaller physically. It could involve decreasing the distance between where one lives, works, and worships. It also may

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[91] Sider, *Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcomign Poverty in America*, 58.

[92] For other resources that take place seriously besides those I cite below, see Eugene Peterson, *The Pastor: A Memoir* (New York: HarperOne, 2012); Eric O. Jacobsen, *Sidewalks in the Kingdom: New Urbanism and the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2003); Eric O. Jacobsen, *The Space Between: A Christian Engagement with the Built Environment* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012). Jacobsen's books are examples of New Urbanism. Critiques of this school of thought include that it gives too much weight to how physical spaces shape human interactions (See, for instance, Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*, 260–66.), and that it is primarily for the wealthy.

involve making one's general ambits smaller by shifting everyday habits to involve places local to our neighborhood, like shopping for groceries, going to the doctor, or taking children to the park. Intentionally decreasing the size of one's life footprint, can help one embrace their humanity and limits, and challenges a gnostic view of the world so common in American Christianity that detaches people from particular times and places.[93] To root, Christians must not only spend intentional time in a place, but choose to remain there. By remaining, they will create "homes," which are not just houses or neighborhoods but a set of relationships with people and the environment that can only develop over time.[94]

To cultivate these relationships, Christians must restrain themselves by slowing down physically.[95] The literature on the praxis of place suggests bicycling or walking in one's community instead of driving. When one does drive, some suggest limiting one's use of GPS for directions because the technology disconnects a person from his or her context as it mediates reality.[96] By using one's own energy to move one's body, however, one not only become more aware of one's physical surroundings (that slight hill is much more obvious on a bicycle than in a car), but is able to see, and perhaps participate, in the lives of others, whether they are suffering or joyful. "I" becomes "we." This relationship-building represents the second "R" of Christian Community Development: reconciliation. Reconciliation can grow in simple ways. For instance, the mid-century white Catholic leader Catherine de Hueck called the four block walk between her apartment and the storefront settlement house where she worked in black Harlem her "chit chat apostolate." She walked with love, trying to be aware of and concerned about those she encountered along the way. Because de Hueck walked, although she looked

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[93] Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*, 245. Sparks et. al. suggest that Adam's and Eve's sin was to attempt to bypass being human and transcend their particular context (Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*, 58. It may be easier to convince students of the importance of rootedness today than at other times in American history. Andy Crouch notes that Americans moved less frequently in the first decade of the twentieth century, and suggests that "the 21st-century dream seems to be to put down deeper roots. This quest for local, embodied, physical presence may well be driven by the omnipresence of the virtual and a dawning awareness of the thinness of disembodied life." Crouch, "Ten Most Significant Cultural Trends of the Last Decade | Q Ideas."

[94] Bouma-Prediger and Walsh, *Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement*, 127.

[95] Hjalmarson, *No Home Like Place: A Christian Theology of Place*, 211–26; Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*, 268–84. Slowing down also acknowledges our limitations as humans, and connects to the discipline of Sabbath-keeping.

[96] Ari Schulman, "GPS and the End of the Road," in *Why Place Matters: Geography, Identity, and Civic Life in Modern America*, ed. Wilfred McClay and Ted McAllister (New York: New Atlantis Books, 2014), 10–47.

different from her neighbors and had a different background, she became a fixture in the community and the hands and feet of Jesus to her neighbors.[97] Indeed, slowing down may represent an emptying of oneself, as Christ emptied himself, because mobility in American society is associated with power.

Rooting oneself in a place also requires knowing the place physically. Gardening offers one way to pay attention to the particularities of a place and slow down, different from bicycling, walking, and driving without a GPS. If people grow their own food and plant gardens, they come to know the particularities of the land and the insects, as well as create opportunities to visit with neighbors.[98] As they garden, they participate in another aspect of place-making: cultivating beauty and wholeness.

Reconciliation between people and God can happen anywhere. Living well in a particular place, therefore, requires recovering a more sacramental view of the world, and assuming that one will encounter God outside church walls. Beginning largely with the Enlightenment, Western Christians fostered secularization by creating a dualism between the sacred and the secular that negated the doctrine of creation.[99] Just as a robust understanding of work reminds Christians that all work, not only that done by missionaries and ministers, is sacred when offered up to the Lord, Christians must allow for the possibility that places can be holy. A place becomes sacred when a person or people encounter God, and also when people offer up a space or material object to God as a sacrifice.[100]

Building community, or fostering the reconciliation of one person to another, is at the heart of living well in a place, and it clearly requires intentionality. Because of Americans' focus on productivity, they often leave little margin in their lives for unexpected encounters with neighbors. When they do entertain themselves, it is often inside with the television in an air-conditioned space. Beyond the cultural limitations, the built environment may limit people's

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[97] Catherine de Hueck Doherty, *Fragments of My Life* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979), 157–59. See also Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity*, 147–48.

[98] Wendell Barry is a key resource for connecting to the land. See also Catherine de Hueck Doherty, *Apostolic Farming*, 2nd ed. (Combermere, Canada: Madonna House Publications, 2013); Barbara Kingsolver, Steven Hopp, and Camille Kingsolver, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 2007).

[99] Hjalmarson, *No Home Like Place: A Christian Theology of Place*, 43–45; Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*, 243–45.

[100] Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*, 246.

interactions with one another. Living in a suburban house with an attached garage can easily lead one to drive one's car into the garage and go directly into the house without seeing one's neighbors. An urban community with front porches where people might sit outside, however, offers different opportunities for engagement. American Christians must also move beyond their own comfort. Society today is increasingly polarized, and because of social media people can operate in opinion silos with people who share their views.[101] Living well with particular people in a particular place requires being with those with whom one disagrees.

A Christian can practice rooting, reducing, and restraining alone or with his or her family, but practicing these disciplines together with other members of the local church magnifies their significance. Like with the CCDA's model, the local church can be the center of living well together in a place. Local churches whose members root themselves in a community follow a parish-based model that claims responsibility not for people who come to the church, but for all those living in a place. Doing church locally can counter the consumerism so rampant in American Christianity, as well as the homogeneity of churches that cater to particular groups of people.[102] Members of a local church can seek the good of a place and its people, which means working toward ordering a community in ways that match God's character, his desire for Shalom.[103] This practice also fits with the CCDA's third R: redistribution. Seeking Shalom will often require people to rethink economic assumptions, and limit their acquisitive natures to prioritize neighbors in need.[104] It will likely mean turning away from one-size-fits-all techniques and paying attention to the specific strengths and needs of a place, and the Spirit's leading in how a church might bring Shalom.[105] Living with a parish mentality that seeks the flourishing of those in the parish, no matter their faith, can lead to people knowing Christ as they come to

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[101] Crouch, "Ten Most Significant Cultural Trends of the Last Decade | Q Ideas."

[102] Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*.

[103] See Hjalmarson, *No Home Like Place: A Christian Theology of Place*, 72–73. Hjalmarson and others draw from Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, 2nd ed. (Fortress Press, 2002). While Bruegemann's hermeneutic is not evangelical, *The Land*, is a foundational book for nearly all more recent books on the theology of place.

[104] Bouma-Prediger and Walsh, *Beyond Homelessness: Christian Faith in a Culture of Displacement*, 142.

[105] See Sparks, Soerens, and Friesen, *The New Parish: How Neighborhood Churches Are Transforming Mission, Discipleship and Community*, 59; Brian Brown, "The Rise of Localist Politics," in *Why Place Matters: Geography, Identity, and Civic Life in Modern America*, ed. McClay Wilfred and Ted McAllister (New York: New Atlantis Books, 2014), 171–79.

know their neighbors who live by the Spirit's power.[106] In this, Christians fulfill our vocation to love their neighbors as themselves.

Attending to Place at Wheaton

Vocation is not something college students will develop in the future. Rather, vocation is something faculty must help them practice in the present, diving deeply into questions of place. At Wheaton, faculty must help students see that rather than resisting rooting in Wheaton, because they will only be here for four years, they must practice attending to this place for this particular season of their lives. This will mean students embedding themselves in Wheaton, IL, both on campus and participating in a local church. It also will mean moving beyond Wheaton to different places, to experience more diversity.

Attending to place fits well with the Christian liberal arts. Faculty and students need all the disciplines to fully engage with this particular place in Wheaton, as well as to teach students how to live well in the place they are called once they graduate. History and the social sciences can explain how places came to be, and how they and the people within them relate. The arts can help cultivate beauty and think through how physical places shape people. The sciences can help teach us the natural components of this place, and instruct people how to steward it. Theology can help people comprehend the connections between God, people, and this place.

Teaching students to live well in particular places requires both book- and experiential-learning, because colleges educate whole people.[107] Faculty must help students learn to be present to those around them, which may involve paying close attention to how technology connects them to others, as well as how it separates them from others. Professors can pay attention to this particular place, Wheaton, IL, in their classrooms. In my field of American history, this might mean teaching local history (which can be a way to understand the

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[106] Hjalmarson calls parish a "third space" where people can come, but which has "is no spiritual test to come in, no intellectual position to which one must agree. At the center is a core of people who know Jesus and who live out the Gospel so that others may belong, and one day believe." Hjalmarson, *No Home Like Place: A Christian Theology of Place*, 124. For a broader discussion, see 113-152.

[107] It also requires the institution as a whole to model a robust theology and praxis of place. See Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today*, 288–93. Wheaton College already does some things, like source some food locally, facilitating a community garden, offering a passage program in the city.

particularities of a place, but also to explore larger trends).[108] Students might read primary and

secondary sources in a course reader or assigned books, but also tap into the community's

resources, which would include local archival manuscript sources, people who could offer oral

histories, ethnography, and the built environment.

As much as Wheaton faculty help their students learn to live well in this particular place,

Wheaton, IL, they must also help students to move beyond it. Experiencing God in poor and

minority communities, and learning *from* those in those communities, will help students fulfill

their vocation of loving God and loving neighbor. Faculty can help students do that in Wheaton

itself, with the immigrant communities here, for instance. Faculty can also tap into the

tremendous diversity in the region more broadly. As much as possible, professors should help

break down students' stereotypes about poor and racial/ethnic minority communities so they

will be freed experientially from the cultural captivity of the white evangelical church. This

might involve taking students to minority communities, perhaps through the connections the

College has with the CCDA, not as people who would serve, but as learners who seek to grow in

their knowledge of God and how the world works. This cross-cultural experience would help

Wheaton faculty begin to remedy students' lack of experiences with diversity.[109]

Ultimately, vocation is about living into the story of God's love in the world and joining him

in his redemption as we seek the common good.[110] Knowing the history of housing in the

United States can help Christians overcome the evil that can so easily hold God's people in

cultural captivity, and limit human flourishing. No matter where a believer lives, paying

attention to place can lead to a deeper love of God and of neighbor. If Christian institutions put

where Christians live and how they live there on the table as a component of vocation, these

institutions can help their students to ask big questions at the core of the Christian liberal arts,

like what is the good life and how do we live it?

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[108] Joseph Amato, "Local History: A Way to Place and Home," in *Why Place Matters: Geography, Identity, and Civic Life in Modern America*, ed. Wilfred McClay and Ted McAllister (New York: New Atlantis Books, 2014).
[109] RESL Report, Faculty Business Meeting, 19 April 2016.
[110] Douglas V. Henry, "Vocation and Story: Narrating Self and World," in *At This Time and In This Place*, ed. David Cunningham (New York: Oxford, 2016), 165–88.