

TOGETHER AT GOD'S TABLE: HOW PRACTICING HOSPITALITY SHAPES OUR IMAGINATION

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## Abstract

*In the missional conversation, there has been a lot of talk about the need for a new imagination in the church but less attention to how imagination is actually formed and how we might get there. This paper will examine the bodily formation of imagination and will suggest that Jesus was on to something vital when he sent his disciples two by two to be hosted by Samaritans. He was inviting them into the habits and routines of a stranger and stripping them of all cultural capital. At a time when skepticism of the church is massive and well grounded, Luke 10 offers an urgently needed doorway from anxiety to engagement. Re-visioning the agency of God and re-discovering an authentic encounter between the Gospel and our culture may require a radical dislocation from the comforts of home.*

*'The imagination empowers us to act.'* - Graham Ward [1]



Questions multiplied in my head as the four of us approached the door of the mosque. Would I join in the time of prayer? What would Jesus think of that? Would I kneel down if everyone else did? Was I headed toward idolatry or on mission with Jesus? My heart began to race. What had seemed simple a few months ago when the Imam invited my wife to attend a service here, suddenly seemed quite complicated. I struggled to hold onto the question that was really at the center for the four of us, 'What is God up to in our neighborhood?'

Stepping through the doorway, we entered a foyer buzzing with life and laughter. A greeter let us know that the room for women was upstairs and that the main sanctuary was straight ahead. My wife and a friend took the stairway, while John [2] and I joined the stream of bearded men walking toward the sanctuary. Suddenly, a man yelled out, 'John, no way! What are you doing here?' He threw his arms around my friend. After quick introductions he asked, 'Have you eaten?' I was disoriented by the question. We were here for the prayer service. 'No,' John replied simply. 'Come with me,' the man said, 'You'll be bored with the prayers anyway.'

He swept us down a side hall, through a door on the left, and into a large cafeteria with filled with a cacophony of voices and languages and the incredible smells of meat grilling in spices. In no time we

were seated at a rectangular table. 'Chicken or lamb?' A man asked me. 'Lamb.' I replied. Before I had time to get my bearings, several men joined us carrying plates and drinks for the whole group. One plate had a nearly ridiculous pile of lamb mounded on top of the couscous. The man set it in front of me, asked me what kind of soda I wanted, and said, 'Let's eat!' This was not the prayer service I was expecting.

As the men around the table introduced themselves, I learned that my lunchmates were all from Syria, and the conversation quickly moved to recent political events in Syria. John had introduced me as his pastor, and a man looked intently at me and asked, 'You are a pastor, right?' 'Yes' I said, unsure where this was going. 'I have a question for you. What is Jesus doing about justice in Syria?' 'What do you mean?' I was caught off guard by the question on more levels than I could quickly name. 'The Imam is talking about justice in Syria today. You should be able to tell us what Jesus will do about this. We want to know.'

Later, I would begin to understand the eschatology in this mosque community that would make my new friend's question possible. In the moment, I paused, took a bite of lamb, and prayed furiously as I chewed. The next hour was filled with a conversation I will remember for the rest of my life. After lunch, we laughed and talked about soccer as we went to rejoin the women. My new friends presented me with a beautiful copy of the Quran, and they let me know that it was very important not to allow it to be on the floor. Then they asked if I like baklava. 'I love baklava!' I replied, which was an understatement. Immediately, they handed me a huge green box with Arabic writing and a picture of a plate of honey-drizzled pastry on the front. 'This is good baklava.' They said. I had no reason to doubt them. 'Hospitality is very important for Muslims,' a man said. 'We always give gifts to a new friend.'

This article will examine the formation of our imagination for hospitality. To begin with, I will examine how it is that we imagine hospitality. Then I will analyze the formation of that imagination. How is it shaped? How might it be reshaped? In doing so, I hope to provide a thicker account of missional imagination. I will argue that as we perform hospitality, our habitual routines give rise to our imagination for home, host, and stranger. In other words, our imagination for the other is generated out of the embodied routines that constitute our daily lives.

### **Imagining Hospitality**

I begin with a proposal for mapping cultural transformation that I am calling the *Hospitality Imaginary*. The Hospitality Imaginary is the subset of any cultural imaginary in which the practice of hospitality is imagined. This framework will allow analysis of how a cultural group understands themselves with respect to the stranger. The fundamental elements of the Hospitality Imaginary are the home, the host, and the stranger.

From the outset, hospitality implies a home, a dwelling. It is the place where one welcomes another, where space is generously opened up. Brian Treanor writes, 'Hospitality is a virtue of place . . . Hospitality always happens in a place; it consists in giving place to another and, as such, occurs as part

of a relationship between an emplaced person and a displaced person.' [3] Within a cultural imaginary, the home will be the dwelling of the host. It may be a physical home, or it may be more generally a space of dwelling. An important feature of the home is that the home is the place where the host has power. Life is much easier when we feel at home. The language of the home is the language of the host. The host is the cultural architect of the home. Throughout my visit to the mosque, I had the disorientation of entering another's home for the first time.

As we imagine hospitality, the host is the master of the home. The host is one who welcomes. To speak of the host is to speak of the one who welcomes. To offer hospitality is to embrace the one who is unknown. It is to make space in our life for another. More importantly, the gracious host is a host who listens. As Karmen MacKendrick says, 'The first hospitality is nothing other than listening. Listening, though with all of our senses, is at the heart of the sacramental.' The host will greet the stranger, and the host will give attention to the unfamiliar one who has entered into the home. Without such listening, there cannot be hospitality.

The third figure in the Hospitality Imaginary is the stranger. The stranger is the outsider who is invited into the home. Hospitality involves intentionally meeting another in language. In fact, this is the first challenge of hospitality. How are we to address the one we greet? Jacques Derrida writes,

*This is where the question of hospitality begins: must we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language, in all the sense of this term, in all its possible extensions, before being able and so as to be able to welcome into our country?* [4]

Welcoming the stranger means learning another's language. To welcome the stranger is to enter a vulnerable and unknown space. To listen to the other is to learn unfamiliar stories told in an unfamiliar language.

### **The Captivity of Our Imagination**

Churches today have become captive to a thoroughly ecclesiocentric imagination for hospitality. Driven by the ever-present goal of growth, ecclesiologies across the spectrum of denominations imagine hospitality as a program through which the church can grow. The goal of goals is to get the stranger into the house, that is to say, the church.

In the Hospitality Imaginary of today's churches, the home imagined is the home of the host rather than the home of the stranger. Home is the space characterized by the beliefs, values, and practices of the local community of disciples. The practice of hospitality is evaluated by the results it produces. Namely, has the church grown? Hospitality then is not so much a practice as a strategy. It could even be called a means of production.

In general, the church community, or the pastor, is imagined as the host. Christians imagine themselves doing the welcoming. In this imagination, Christians are the ones with the cultural

power. The stranger is invited in, but the stranger is not conceived of as a potential host. The stranger to the faith is the one who receives the welcome. The role of the host is imagined to be proclaiming the gospel, while the hoped for role of the stranger is to listen and receive the gospel. Outsiders are imagined more as objects in need than as human subjects with real agency. When Christians say, 'We are a welcoming community.' The basic meaning is that they believe they are a welcoming church. They do not mean that the neighborhood synagogue is welcoming.

### **Toward a Missional Imagination**

Hospitality begins with God. In a fundamental sense, God is our host. The great tragedy of our captivity to an ecclesiocentric imagination is the loss of ability to discern the agency of God. Lesslie Newbigin writes, 'Mission is not first of all an action of ours. It is an action of God, the triune God—of God the Father who is ceaselessly at work in all creation and in the hearts and minds of all human beings whether they acknowledge him or not.' [5] God has first of all welcomed us, inviting us as strangers into to the life of the Triune God.

Therefore, missional imagination for hospitality is characterized by reciprocity. Alan Roxburgh writes, 'Hospitality is a reciprocal relationship, a two-way street in which the host is changed and transformed in the relationship. Hospitality in the Biblical texts is always about the reality and possibility of meeting the presence of God in the stranger.' [6] Only in reciprocal relationships can missional life really occur. Indeed, one of the marks of a missional congregation is that they will anticipate reciprocity.

In a missional imagination, both the host and the stranger have homes. There is a reciprocal imagination for dwelling. The host may welcome the stranger into their home, or the host may receive the hospitality of the stranger. In Luke 10, Jesus tells his disciples to anticipate hospitality in the places that they go. When they find it, he instructs them to 'Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide' (Luke 10:7) The home imagined here is the home of the stranger, where the disciples may expect unfamiliar food and different household customs. The home is not only a place to extend generosity, but it is also a place to receive generosity.

In similar fashion, the role of host is also reciprocal in a missional imagination. On the one hand, the host will be prepared to welcome the stranger, whoever that may be. The host will embrace the stranger whether they be an outcast, an exile, or a professional. In other words, the host will embrace the stranger with no eye to personal benefit.

More provocatively, the host will also be prepared to become the stranger. Many of the biblical portraits of hospitality contain role reversals where suddenly the stranger becomes the host. This is most especially true when Jesus visits the party, as he does at the Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11) or when he visits Zaccheus' home (Luke 19:1-10).

In a missional imagination, the stranger is always a subject with whom the host enjoys reciprocal generosity. The stranger is not only to be welcomed but also to be listened to and attended to. The stranger is not a pupil to teach, but a friend to learn from. Making an observation with great relevance for the Church today, John Howard Yoder writes, 'Jeremiah does not tell his refugee brothers and sisters to try to teach the Babylonians Hebrew'[7] The stranger is imagined as one to share life with, and there will not be an agenda to make the stranger into something or someone else. A missional imagination will recognize that the stranger has the key to our own identity.

The same pattern is present in Peter's encounter with Cornelius in Acts 10. This passage is not so much about the conversion of Peter as it is about the conversion of Peter and the church. It also serves to remind us that God's Spirit is at work ahead of God's people. The church that understands this will be the church that expects the Spirit to be present in the neighborhood. For many of us, this will mean reimagining the stranger all together.

Missional engagement means building relationships with people in our neighborhoods and workplaces. It means welcoming strangers. The Hospitality Imaginary allows for reflection on how relationships with the other are being imagined. We now turn the question of how a new imagination might be formed in our churches.

### **The Formation of Imagination**

*'The way to the imagination is through the body.'* - James K. A. Smith [8]

Our imagination for hospitality is shaped in and through the habitual routines of daily life. The way of living hospitality which I experienced at the mosque was not the result of a vision and values statement on the wall, it grew out of the daily routines of my hosts. I will draw on frameworks from Pierre Bourdieu, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Charles Taylor in order to describe this formation process.[9]

### **Habitus and Hospitality**

In the context of his fieldwork in Algeria, Pierre Bourdieu began to pay attention to the rituals among the Kabyle people.[10] Observing the routine behaviors that constituted their rituals, Bourdieu developed a theory of the logic of practice. The concept of habitus is central to this work. Bourdieu writes,

*The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them.*[11]

Habitus are those embodied structures that orient us toward the world. On the one hand, habitus are 'structured structures.' They are formed through interaction with the environment around us. On the other hand, they are 'structuring structures. They generate the practices that make up our daily lives. Habitus structures our inclinations. It predisposes us to construct meaning in certain ways rather than others.[12]

Habitus functions like, in Bourdieu's expression, 'a feel for the game.' He writes,

*The habitus is this kind of practical sense for what is to be done in a given situation—what is called in sport a 'feel' for the game, that is, the art of anticipating the future of the game, which is inscribed in the present state of play.[13]*

Our practices then, are the result of a habituated sense of what happens in a given cultural game. Anticipation, then, is a key marker of habitus. The habitus generates our sense of what will come next in a given circumstance. Because I had no feel for the game, I walked into the mosque full of nervous questions rather than expecting great conversations.

Habitus is formed through a long process of social interaction. Bourdieu can describe human existence as 'the social made body.' [14] People are deeply formed by the social structures within which they live, and this takes time. Because habitus is the embodiment of history, narratives could be described as the DNA of habitus. The narratives of a community give shape to the disposition of the members toward the world. Habitus is the practical sense which our bodies acquire as they are immersed in narratives.[15] Entering a habitus cannot be rushed.

Our imagination of home, host, and stranger are deeply embedded within our habitus. Picking up Bourdieu's language, home is a place where we have a feel for the game. Home is not a matter of being able to articulate cultural norms. Rather, home is where our bodies know what to anticipate. Home is comfortable precisely because the game is 'inscribed' on our being. This means that we cannot switch homes quickly. If we are going to enter a new imagination for home, it will mean new daily routines in which our bodies are slowly habituated to the new environment.

Likewise, we learn to host in and through habitual interactions with a host. This means that new imagination for hospitality will not be formed through a new teaching or tactic. We must act our way into a new imagination.

With respect to habitus, strangers are those who do not share the habitus of the home. The stranger is not oriented to the narratives of the family or community. As a result, they lack the anticipation that constitutes the feel for the game. To be a stranger is to be anxious precisely because the stranger is not sure what will come next in the home. Perhaps one reason Christians cling to the role of host is to avoid the stressful uncertainty of environments where we genuinely lack a feel for the game.

## Hospitality and Embodied Perception

Breaking down the traditional dichotomies between mind and body, subject and object, Maurice Merleau-Ponty gives an account of humans as embodied actors who navigate through the world with an intentionality that precedes rational knowledge.[16] It is this knowing through the body that Merleau-Ponty calls perception.[17] He writes, 'We perceive the world with our bodies . . . The body is the subject of perception.' [18] Merleau-Ponty breaks down the reductionist picture in which knowledge is simply a matter of a subject rationally understanding an object. His framework of perception describes the embedded and embodied ways in which we construe the world.[19] James K.A. Smith explains, 'So the body carries a kind of acquired, habituated knowledge or know-how that is irreducible and inarticulable, and yet fundamentally orienting for our being-in-the-world.' [20] Knowledge, then, resides in the performance of life.

For Merleau-Ponty, perception is always intentional. It is orienting in the sense that it directs us toward the world. He writes, 'Consciousness is being toward the thing through the intermediary of the body' [21] As a result, to be aware and awake is to be directed into the world. He gives the example of learning to use a cane. To become habituated, a person must try it out and repeat it, learning which objects are within reach of the cane. Through the learning process, the space around the learner becomes inscribed into their bodily existence.[22]

Like Bourdieu's habitus, Merleau-Ponty's account of perception means that knowledge is shaped through our bodies rather than merely accepted propositionally in our minds. He writes, 'Acquiring habit as the reworking and renewal of the bodily schema presents significant difficulties for classical philosophies, which are always inclined to conceive of synthesis as intellectual synthesis.' [23] Perception is formed as our bodily interface with the world is reworked through the performance of new routines. My perception of Muslims in our neighborhood has begun to shift not as the result of literature I have read, but rather as the result of laughing with them as we shared stories over food.

Authentic learning involves how our bodies act. Bringing Merleau-Ponty's framework into conversation with discipleship, James K.A. Smith describes the work of Christian formation as 'sanctifying perception.' [24] As we take on the practices of Christian life, our bodily engagement is reshaped which in turn reconstitutes the ways in which we act. Furthermore, our practices are rooted in how we imagine our world. Smith writes, 'Sanctifying perception requires restor(y)ing the imagination.' [25] Our perception is transformed as our bodies are recruited by a normative story into a new imagination.[26]

How we understand home, host, and stranger are all matters of perception. We perceive them with our bodies. The home is not just a rational construct or an objective reality that we understand. Our knowledge of the home is both embodied and intentional. We perceive the home by moving through it and by living in it. To know the home is to intend the home. Our interaction with the space and the physical elements of the home is preceded by intentionality.

To enter the kitchen is not just to move into a room with new dimensions, it is to enter a social space with possibilities for cooking, finding food, or washing. In fact, to move through the physical space of a home is to engage the values and the deep narratives of the home. Likewise, the one playing the role of host relates to both home and stranger through embodied and intentional perception. To greet the stranger as a host is to intend to welcome them into a new space.

### **Hospitality in a Secular Age**

Charles Taylor's framework for secularity further contributes to mapping the formation of missional imagination. For Taylor, we live in a secular age in the sense that belief is always understood as an option. He writes,

*The shift to secularity in this sense consists, among other things, of a move from a society where belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest to embrace.*<sup>[27]</sup>

A common feature of social imaginaries in this secular age is awareness of other possibilities. The original dualism between Christian faith and a humanist alternative had led to what he calls the "nova effect." The secular age is characterized by 'an ever-widening variety of moral/spiritual options, across the span of the thinkable, and perhaps even beyond.'<sup>[28]</sup>

As a result of the many options, social imaginaries are formed in the context of what Taylor calls 'cross pressures.'<sup>[29]</sup> The presence of cross pressure has an important implication for the formation of imagination in the context of secularity. Namely, our social imagination exists in a context of continual challenge. Taylor explains, 'Modern secularity therefore must be understood as this field of increasingly multiform contestation, in which every position is rendered uneasy and questionable because it can be challenged from many angles.'<sup>[30]</sup> As a result of the nova effect, our own beliefs are in a perpetual state of argument with culturally viable alternatives.

Following Taylor, our Hospitality Imaginary develops in an environment of cross pressure. Therefore, our imagination of home, host, and stranger is never uncontested. Our friends and neighbors have different imaginations for home. Media is constantly offering us a variety of pictures of the good life, often with contradictory implications.<sup>[31]</sup> Likewise, the role of the host is not governed by widely shared norms. Formation is not in one direction only. In one home, good hosting means cooking halal meat. Next door, the family has broken apart and no one owns the role of host. On the television, the home is commodified as an imaginary space for the purpose of marketing. Narratives of the home are vulnerable in this secular age.

### **Implications for Missional Leadership**

**First, practices are the laboratory of new imagination.** If James K. A. Smith is correct that the way to the imagination is through the body, if it is true that we act our way into new imagination, then leaders will want to attend to signs of new language and new perceptions percolating up within missional practices, especially the practice of reciprocal hospitality. We should not expect the many books, programs, strategies, and podcasts about incarnational living and missional multiplication to produce genuinely fresh imagination. When Jesus sends his followers out in Luke 10, he tells them to settle down, to remain in the home where they are welcomed. (Luke 10:7) Charging them to eat and drink with their new hosts, Jesus is aiming precisely at their daily routines. In Bourdieu's language, Jesus is calling his followers to be formed in a new habitus. By sitting in the place where we lack practical sense, the door is open to new imagination, an imagination that will emerge as our bodies are recruited by new routines.

Furthermore, Jesus is inviting us into a new perception of the other. By taking nothing with them, Jesus is short-circuiting his follower's default perception of Samaritans and other strangers. They will experience not only new food, but they will take different places at the table, eat for different lengths of time, and hear new stories. By living in dependence on the generosity of their new hosts, their perception will be quite literally re-formed.

**Second, missional imagination will emerge slowly.** The frameworks of Bourdieu and Merleau-Ponty shed light on why missional transformation is challenging, particularly for a group formed in a different imagination. Because habitus and perception are formed by repeated exposure to the routines of daily life, it is not prone to sudden transformation. Acquiring a new habitus requires time spent dwelling with the other. For churches with a long history of imagining themselves as the host, missional transformation entails dislocation from that ecclesiocentric habitus. This means spending time being hosted until that becomes the habitual way of life.

Likewise, if a church has a long experience of perceiving itself as a host perceives a stranger, it will require a slow process of transformation before it perceives the other as anything else. Perception is not reshaped by a three-point strategy or a new concept. As our bodies get used to the routines of the strangers home, we learn to perform them. Through learning the habits, practices, and values of the other, our own perspective opens up to growth.<sup>[32]</sup> If, as the stranger, we intend the host as an object to be saved, we short-circuit the possibility of missional transformation. By dwelling in the home of the stranger, we learn to intend the stranger as our host.

**Third, we should expect missional imagination to remain fragile.** Even as imagination takes shape, it becomes increasingly fragile. It is prone to breaking open in multiple directions. Taylor writes,

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*The salient feature of Western societies is not so much a decline of religious faith and practice,*

*though there has been lots of that . . . but rather a mutual fragilization of different religious positions, as well as of the outlooks both of belief and unbelief... the whole culture experiences cross pressures.*[\[33\]](#)

The cross pressures brought to bear by different systems of both belief and unbelief leave everyone with tenuous imagination.

The values of one home may not only be different from the next home, it may be at odds with it. To begin to enter the habitus of one neighbor may mean becoming further estranged from another neighbor.[\[34\]](#) Different members of a church may be learning very different cultures as they enter the neighborhood, even if it is the same neighborhood. This is obvious in cases where the neighborhood is multiethnic. However, Taylor's analysis draws attention to the plurality of beliefs and unbeliefs that proliferate through and across ethnic boundaries. As we engage the neighborhood as home in a new way, other imaginations for home and host will push back on the new imagination. We are all citizens of the nova.

***Fourth, missional imagination is dependent upon our neighbors.*** Our imagination for neighbor and neighborhood is shaped by habitual performance. Daily and routine experiences of home, host and stranger build the language house in which we live.[\[35\]](#) As a result, the church is actually dependent on the neighborhood for access to new imagination.

In *Philosophical Investigations*, Ludwig Wittgenstein writes, 'A picture held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably.'[\[36\]](#) Perhaps the picture that has held the church in North America captive is the picture of the church as the home. The church has spent too long staring in the mirror looking at itself. We have become mired in church centered questions and church oriented solutions. This imagination lacks the space for seeing our neighborhood as a potential home where God might meet us all as host. By dwelling deeply in the neighborhood, we will learn new performative routines in which we ourselves are no longer the center of the picture. As our bodies get a feel for the stranger's role, we may yet be able to picture the table where Father, Son, and Spirit invite us all to fellowship. We might yet recover a God centered vision generating God centered questions. Leaving the mosque with Quran and baklava in hand, we stopped to hug new friends. During the embrace I thought to myself, 'I'm not sure what it is, but God is up to something in our neighborhood.'

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[\[1\]](#)Graham Ward, *Cultural Transformation and Religious Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 136.

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[2]I have changed John's name for the sake of privacy.

[3]Brian Treanor, "Putting Hospitality in Its Place," in *Phenomenologies of the Stranger, Between Hostility and Hospitality*, ed. Richard Kearney and Kascha Semonovitch (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 50.

[4]Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality, Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 15.

[5]Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 134-135.

[6]Alan Roxburgh, *Practicing Hospitality: A Study Guide* (Vancouver: Roxburgh Missional Network, 2010), 5.

[7]John H. Yoder, *For the Nations, Essays Evangelical and Public* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1997), 71.

[8]James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom, How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 125.

[9]The first two sections, on Bourdieu and Merleau-Ponty, are indebted to James K. A. Smith's recent work. Smith's project is to make plain the bodily basis for liturgical formation. In *Imagining the Kingdom*, he suggests that Bourdieu and Merleau-Ponty can help us understand imagination, and then he applies that to our lives as worshippers. I am adapting his logic for the practice of hospitality.

[10]Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 2-3.

[11]*Ibid.*, 53.

[12]*Ibid.*, 81.

[13]Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason*, trans. Gisele Sapiro and Randal Johnson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 25.

[14]Pierre Bourdieu and Loic J.D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 127.

[15]Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 95.

[16]*Ibid.*, 44.

[17]*Ibid.*, 41.

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[18]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 213.

[19]Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 42-43.

[20]Ibid., 45.

[21]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 140.

[22]Ibid., 144.

[23]Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 143.

[24]Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 151.

[25]Ibid., 160.

[26]Ibid., 161.

[27]Ibid., 3.

[28]Ibid., 299.

[29]Ibid. 595.

[30]Charles Taylor, "Afterword," in *Varieties of Secularism in a Secular Age*, ed. Michael Warner, Jonathan Vanantwerpen, and Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 306.

[31]Take for example the recent Taco Bell commercial shown during the Super Bowl. The spot begins with a rest home with a number of elderly people. Music begins playing, and they leave the rest home and go to a rave style party. The shot comes to a close with the senior citizens eating Taco Bell tacos. Here, the home is institutionalized. Old age threatens to become a place of disconnection and isolation. The good life is recovered through casual sex, drinking and prank pulling. Meanwhile, the real host of the neighborhood is Taco Bell.

[32]Mark Lau Branson and Juan F. Martinez, *Churches, Cultures, and Leadership, A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 174-175.

[33]Ibid., 595.

[34]As I will demonstrate shortly, our interaction with Muslim neighbors drew my attention to this facet of Taylor's analysis. To begin to experience the habits of the Muslim home, very much including their rich tradition of hospitality, is to put oneself in contest and opposition to neighbors who wish the

Muslims would go away. By accepting welcome from one neighbor, we run the risk of losing welcome at another neighbor's home.

[35] Alan Roxburgh, *Missional, Joining God in the Neighborhood* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011) 61.

[36] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), 48.



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