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# The Visible Church in a Visual Culture

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## From the Editor

The contents of this issue are largely oriented towards the life of Christians and the church in the contemporary world. Most of the articles were given as papers at a conference in March 2004 on ministry and postmodernism, sponsored by the Sider Institute for Anabaptist, Pietist, and Wesleyan Studies.

In the first article, one of the two papers in the Schrag Lectures associated with the conference, Susan L. Biesecker-Mast illustrates in some detail how visual images saturate our society. Many of these images have strongly negative values, which Christians should actively critique. The author, however, also shows that images—both past and present—may be used by Christians and the church to “transform us into disciples of Christ” in this postmodern age.

In “Ministry after Modernity,” Gerald Biesecker-Mast invites us to engage in cultural criticism. He asks us to recognize that the good news entrusted to the church is an alternative to life in the everyday world, a life that we too often accept as normative. The author helpfully shows us ways in which, in our modern era, we can live and present this alternative way. He uses the Reformation, and the Anabaptist movement within the Reformation, as a context for ministry in our own time.

For many evangelical Christians, postmodernism is seen as another new threat. In a fascinating personal testimony, Crystal Downing reveals that far from destroying her faith, postmodernism saved it. She summarizes her experience in a sentence towards the end of the article in these words: “The truth for the Christian is not an empirically verifiable proposition; it is a Person whom we believe, a person who gave his life that we might live.”

Sharon Barley finds in Brethren in Christ life, particularly as identified by the late church historian Owen Alderfer, principles that are radically counter-cultural. She shows that the Brethren in Christ have existed paradoxically with both tension and loving, mutual relationships. She concludes that the "voice of mutuality" is an effective ministry in a postmodern world.

These conference papers are followed in this issue by a biography of Joel and Faithe Carlson. The author, Wilma Musser, relates the life of a couple dedicated to urban ministries, an area of church life in which the Brethren in Christ have usually not been strong. The Carlsons' dedication sustained them through economic hardship, and through several periods of mental depression that Joel Carlson suffered during his ministry. Lessons for ministry abound in this article.

This issue carries media and book reviews that are customary features of this journal. As editor, I give thanks to the reviewers in this and the many earlier issues for their help in calling to our attention valuable resources for ourselves and the church.

Finally, we include the annual list of members of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society which sponsors this journal. The list shows that we have around 600 members, many of whom have given the kind of extra financial assistance that makes possible the work of the Society. To all we say thanks and express the wish for their continued membership and support.

E. Morris Sider

# The Visible Church in a Visible Culture

*By Susan L. Biesecker-Mast\**

## Living in Visual Culture

We live in a visual culture. To say that is to say, in the most obvious sense, that we live in a culture that is saturated by images. They are everywhere. We see them in the expected places: on our television and computer screens, in newspapers and magazines, on billboards, in our scrapbooks and photo albums, in picture frames and coffee table books. Increasingly, we see them in unexpected places. They show up on the floors of grocery stores, the backs of ATM receipts, the sides of tractor trailers and school buses, and even on the otherwise bare stomachs of college football cheerleaders.

In addition to appearing everywhere, images are available all the time and in ever increasing numbers. It's worth remembering that just three decades ago, a major city like Chicago had access only to four television channels that, believe it or not, went off the air every night at midnight. Today, cable companies and satellite television services offer hundreds of channels. Each channel sends out a constant stream of images from around the world twenty-four hours a day. In addition, the World Wide Web gives us access to literally countless sites offering everything from multi-angle

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photographs of consumer products, to satellite images of the planet, to virtual tours of college campuses, to web cam video of someone's daily life, to pornography.

But to say that we live in a visual culture is not only to say that we live in a culture that is saturated by images. It is also to say that in our culture, the image is central. The image gives us access to our world. For most of us, we know our world to the extent that we see it on TV. The image shapes our choices. For most of us, we buy products and even select politicians based on their packaging or on the way in which they are presented to us largely through images. The image is key to our pleasure. For most of us, when it's time to relax or have fun, we play a computer game, pop in a DVD, surf the web, or flip through the channels. The image is how we know who we are. For most of us, who we are is shaped by how our image compares to the images presented to us through our commercial culture. Thus, images are not simply ubiquitous. Increasingly, they are a central mode through which we live our very lives.

### Seeing May Not Be Believing, But It Is Reality

It is a strange thing to live in this twenty-first century visual culture because the very technologies that have given us so many images have also made them utterly untrustworthy. Images are available to us anytime, anywhere, and in vast quantities primarily because of digital technologies that make the production and dissemination of images easy and cheap. Just about anyone in our culture can take a digital picture, copy it, and send it around the globe. In addition to making images cheap and easy to produce and reproduce, digital technology has also made it possible for us to alter any image that can be scanned into a computer. Whereas once it was the case that a photograph could be trusted as a record of whatever happened to appear before the lens of a camera, now this is no longer so.<sup>1</sup> Any feature or aspect of an image may be changed and, as its viewers, we are none the wiser. Thus, we live in a



culture saturated by and largely lived through the image, yet we all know that we cannot trust the image.

For many of us, the untrustworthiness of the image is a problem. It makes us uneasy. The ground upon which we thought we were standing has shifted or, perhaps, given way altogether. Without a secure referent to which the image is pointing, we don't know where we stand. Indeed, what is my relationship to myself, my neighbor, my President, my world if I cannot trust the images in magazines, newspapers, or the nightly news?

For others of us, however, the fact that the image has no absolute grounding in reality is not a problem. Indeed, it is not even unwelcome. For these folks, the fact that images do not reflect reality is actually a good thing since it is the alterability of images that makes them so enjoyable. If they could not be computer generated, altered, edited, and enhanced, they could not be as beautiful, grotesque, fantastic, and exciting as they have come to be. So the break that images have made from reality is for many of us good news. It's what makes life at the beginning of the twenty-first century so much fun.

Perhaps more importantly, though, there is another piece of good news in this break between the image and reality. And that is that if the image is not tied to some reality (if, indeed, it can easily be changed), and if the image is nevertheless constitutive of our lives (in the sense that it shapes our knowledge of the world, how we engage in politics, how we make our purchasing decisions, even how we know ourselves), then perhaps our reality is just as easily changeable. Put another way, if the image is our reality and can easily be altered, then so too, presumably, can our lives be transformed. Indeed, isn't this precisely the promise of televisual interactivity? Transformation at the touch of a button.

## The Transformation of Image-Identity in Visual Culture

Consider the case of identity. According to our visual culture, who we are is a question of style. Our identity consists in the constellation of images that we project in the context of all the other constellations of images that surround us. For example, if we are sporting a navy suit, white shirt, and red tie, then we are probably a member of corporate culture. We're probably also Republican, white, middle-aged or more, and certainly male. If we're wearing khaki pants, a turtle neck, a cotton pull-over sweater and Easy Sprit walking shoes and we're driving a Honda Odyssey, we are surely also middle-aged but female and we've got at least two kids who play soccer. If we're wearing what looks like odd selections from a thrift store that clash and if our disheveled hair (that indicates we just woke up from a late morning nap) is being held in place (to the extent that it is) by a trucker hat, then we are definitely a twenty-something hipster. But if we are wearing an oversized flannel shirt, an old t-shirt, and baggy designer jeans, then we are clearly just out of it. We signify as individuals of a certain identity in this visual culture depending on the visible signs we use to present ourselves. In this sense at least, we are our image.

I have already noted that new technologies have made the alteration of photographic images easy. Not surprisingly, given the centrality of the image, other technologies have made it possible (and sometimes even very easy) to change our identity-images. We can change the shape, color, and texture of our hair with irons, dyes, and other chemicals. We can alter the form and texture of our bodies through diet, exercise, liposuction, and synthetic implants. We can transform the contours of our lips with collagen and erase the lines from our brow with Botox. We can pierce our ears, noses, belly buttons, tongues, eyebrows, or chins. We can turn our skin into a canvas for exotic symbols with tattoos. As Nicholas Mirzoeff, a scholar who has written extensively on visual culture, argues: "Once considered the clear frontier between internal subjective experience and external objective

reality, the body now appears to be a fluid and hybrid borderland between the two, as subject to change as any other cultural artifact."<sup>2</sup> If who we are is what we convey through the many signs that constitute our image, then it stands to reason that in a high tech visual culture such as ours, we can be anyone we want to be. Thus, new forms of technology that make it possible for us to do everything from alter a photograph to reconfigure our faces are not just about transformation at the touch of a button but about the freedom to transcend obstacles previously thought insurmountable in order to become anyone at all.

### Visual Culture Is Surveillance Culture

Our visual culture is not only a culture of technologically mediated images and image-identities, it is also a culture of cameras that make sure that those images get in front of our eyes. Think of all the different sorts of cameras in our culture. We've got disposable cameras, 35 mm cameras, video cameras, digital cameras, television cameras, digital video cameras, closed-circuit cameras, web cameras, and the list goes on. Think of all the places where we see cameras. Most commonly, perhaps, we see them on people who are visiting the zoo or some historical monument, at a holiday gathering or a graduation ceremony. Increasingly, though, we see them elsewhere. They are perched both outside and inside of entrances to malls. They pan store parking lots. They're posted at traffic lights to photograph the license plates of cars that run red lights. They are strategically positioned in convenience stores, banks, and dressing rooms. They're integrated into ATM machines. They're suspended from ceilings in Walmart stores. They orbit the earth on satellites. They're on your colleague's Personal Digital Assistant and your best friend's mobile phone.

What does it mean that we live in a culture filled with cameras? What does it mean that our comings and goings at shopping malls, behaviors at ATM machines and within

dressing rooms, as well as shopping and driving habits are being recorded all of the time? Further, what does it mean to live in a culture in which we are becoming increasingly aware that we are being watched, photographed, videotaped?

In his book, *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault gives us the beginnings of an answer to these questions when he describes and then comments on the significance of an extraordinary eighteenth-century design by Jeremy Bentham. Bentham was interested to develop an efficient solution for social control. His answer was an architectural design for a prison (that was adapted for use in other kinds of structures including hospitals and factories). The design features a tower at the center with rooms on the periphery. Each room is open to the inside of the ring and includes a window on the outside of the ring. When someone is positioned in the tower, the outer window enables a silhouette of the person in each room that is on the periphery of the building. Thus, the inmates are constantly available for view. They are trapped in visibility.<sup>3</sup> (see figure 1, p.223)<sup>4</sup>

The genius of the Panopticon, says Foucault, is in the realization of a new technology of power. The architecture of the Panopticon creates a permanent situation in which anyone imprisoned there knows that they may be subject at any time to being watched. As Foucault puts it:

Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. . . . In view of this, Bentham laid down the principle that power should be visible and unverifiable. Visible: the inmate will constantly have before his eyes the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon. Unverifiable: the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at any one moment; but he must be sure that he may always be so.<sup>5</sup>

Once the inmate becomes aware that he may be watched at any time, Foucault argues, he interiorizes the power relation

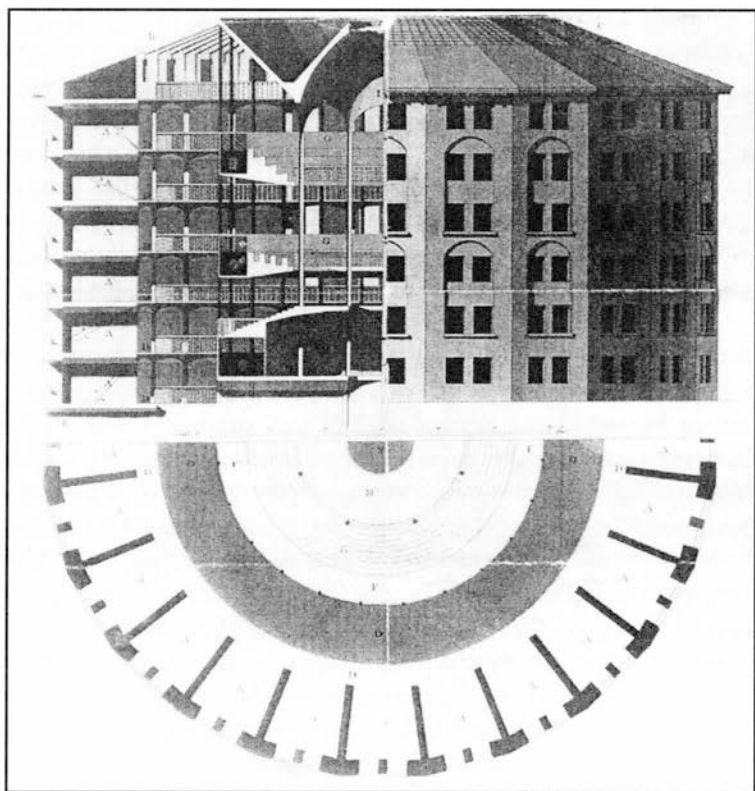


Figure 1. Jeremy Bentham's Penitentiary Panopticon

and becomes his own guard. Aware that he is always visible, he begins to think of himself as watched. He begins to watch himself as if he were the guard. As a result, he adjusts his behaviors to comply with the guard who is now himself. Here is Foucault again:

It is not necessary to use force to constrain the convict to good behaviour, the madman to calm, the worker to work, the schoolboy to application, the patient to the observation of the regulations. . . . He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection.<sup>6</sup>

When I walk into a store and suddenly become aware either by way of a sign or because I see the black globe hanging from the ceiling or because I catch my own image on a closed circuit TV, I am immediately reminded that I am being watched. More than that, even, I am reminded that I am being recorded. In the case of closed-circuit TV in a store, the awareness of being visible is a particular awareness associated with criminal behavior. I am being watched and recorded because I may be a thief. I am constituted as I enter as a potential suspect. Like the inmate in the Panopticon, I begin to think of myself as one who is watched. I begin to watch myself as someone might watch me who thinks I might be a thief. So, I adjust my behavior. I try to look like someone who is not a thief. I try to look honest, law-abiding, like a good shopper properly browsing and preparing to make a purchase. I want to demonstrate that I belong in the store—that I am a good store-citizen.

An example like this one, which is about security systems, suggests a strong likeness, I think, between Bentham's Panopticon and our own visual culture. Of course, not all cameras are positioned for purposes of security (though many are). But a good number of others are around us for

presumably more playful purposes. Take the tiny digital cameras showing up on our mobile phones. These cameras are not becoming a part of our daily lives in order to make sure we don't steal something. Nevertheless, they are available to record our behavior at any time. That is their draw. Soon we will all or nearly all be able to take a picture at absolutely any time of anything and, notably, most of the others in our camera's field of vision will likely not be aware that we taking a picture. The camera is, after all, on a phone and thus is not itself particularly visible as a camera. So, here again, we have what Foucault identifies in the Panopticon—visibility and unverifiability. With these tiny cameras tucked into other sorts of devices, we are becoming increasingly visible (not just to be seen but to be recorded) while the cameras are becoming increasingly unverifiable.

How will technologies like these shape us as individuals and as a culture? Aware that we may as well assume that we can and may be watched, photographed, or videotaped at any time, who will we become as citizens of this visual culture? How will we interiorize our increasing visibility? What new modes of compliance will we adopt as technologies for watching and recording become ever smaller, more portable, more invisible?

These are important questions for all of us to ask because these are questions about the complex technologies of power within which we live and about who we may be becoming as we live within them. But particularly as Christians I think we ought to be especially interested in these questions. Remember that what we are talking about here is the interiorization of the gaze of visual culture and its concomitant values. We are talking about how visual culture, with all its commercial images and surveillance cameras, is teaching us to watch, assess, and transform ourselves according to demands that suit various commercial, state, and national interests within that culture.

Those interests are many and complicated but not neutral. Thus, the gaze we are encouraged to interiorize is also not neutral. Rather it brings with it certain values concerning what

counts as normal or aberrant behavior; who belongs here or should be deported there; who is a good citizen of the mall, the city, the nation; who is a problem, a threat, an alien; who is desirable or unlovable; who is cool or out of it. And these values are driven by two overriding concerns: (1) to get us to buy continually by teaching us that whatever look we're sporting is "so six months ago"—to teach us, in other words, that our image and the image of most people we know is inadequate, and (2) to gain our compliance with erosions in freedom by teaching us that we are safe when we recognize that there is an "us" and a "them," when the state is given increasing powers to watch us all, when the "right" people are allowed in and the "wrong" people are kept out. Are these our values as Christians? Are these the values of Jesus' teachings? I don't think so.

As Christians, as followers of Jesus Christ, we have chosen another way. We have been born again into another kind of life. We have been called to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ and we have said yes. So we cannot be content simply to adopt the lens through which our culture would have us see ourselves, others, and our world. We should not interiorize either its gaze, its values, or its teachings and all that they would tell us about how we and probably just about anyone else we know is suspect, inadequate, undesirable, a problem, out of it, behind, a threat, or uncool. As people of God, we are called to be a blessing to all nations, to love our neighbor as ourself.

Yet, of course, we do live in this visual culture. The images and the cameras are all around us. We cannot help but know that we are being watched. We cannot help but see ourselves as others do. How can it be otherwise? How can we possibly resist the teachings of this visual culture?

With these questions we set before ourselves a big task. Indeed, it is an overwhelming task when undertaken alone and as if no one else has ever undertaken anything like it before. Fortunately, we have no reason to take it on alone because we are brothers and sisters in Christ. Indeed, together we are the



very body of Christ. In addition, others have undertaken similarly difficult tasks before. We can learn from them.

### Another "Visual Culture"

While we may be the first humans to live with cameras everywhere, we are not the first to live in a culture saturated by images. Images have dominated life before. Consider, for example, medieval Europe. There images were central, especially in religious life. Images, in the form of paintings, stained glass windows, statues, relics, and icons were probably for most medieval Europeans the focus of their religious life. During this time the laity learned the Christian story largely through images. As a predominantly illiterate culture in which the Mass was given in Latin, most people would have had access to the Christian story by studying the images made available in the churches. Indeed, according to Martin Luther, the primary value and purpose of religious images was to instruct the laity in the Christian story. But medieval Europeans did not only depend on these images for instruction. They also incorporated these images into their lives in concrete ways. They prayed to these images for healing and other blessings. They brought sacrifices to them as if the images were themselves deities. In short, these images took on personalities and powers all their own.

By the sixteenth century the Reformation was underway. The Reformation was a time in which many church leaders and intellectuals began questioning certain practices within the Church and called for changes or reforms. In general these folks felt that the Church had lost its proper moorings. It had become so big and so powerful that it no longer resembled the body of Christ. In order to return to its proper role and function, they argued, the Church needed to make a return to the Bible. Through study of the Bible, they believed, Christians could once again discover what it really means to be a Christian.

## An Anabaptist Critique of "Visual Culture"

Within that larger context of reform, some folks became particularly concerned about the role of images in Christian life. Among the most vocal critics of images were the Anabaptists. Anabaptists were probably best known for their resistance to the practice of infant baptism—a practice that at that time made newborns into a subject of the state at the same time as it brought them into the church. Anabaptists argued that one's baptism should not be connected to one's subjection to the state but should only be about a conscious decision on the part of a believer to make visible what had become true—namely, their membership in the body of Christ. Although infant baptism was perhaps their most well known and, for the powers that were, bothersome call for reform, Anabaptists were also concerned about how images were being used in the Church and what their use meant for the relationship between the believer and God.

Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt was a particularly vocal critic of the use of images in the Church. Of course, Karlstadt was not technically an Anabaptist. Although he argued against infant baptism, he neither advocated re-baptism nor was re-baptized himself. Nevertheless, his writings were much read by Anabaptists and influenced their views on images. In his most famous pamphlet on the subject, known as "On the Removal of Images," Karlstadt developed a series of arguments against any use whatsoever of images in the Church.<sup>7</sup> The argument that is most interesting to us is the following: Human beings are oddly compelled by images. Although images really can't signify anything spiritual, since they are themselves material, they still somehow fascinate us. Thus, they take on spiritual-like qualities for us. We relate to images as if they had spiritual features. Given their immediate availability to us and our fascination with them, Karlstadt reasons, we all too easily give ourselves over to such images. Thus, they get in the way of our relationship with God.

To be sure, there are a number of theoretical limits we could identify in Karlstadt's argument against religious

images. Just for one, he mobilizes a troubling opposition between the spiritual and the material (favoring the spiritual, of course). In addition, he argues that believers need to turn from the image (as a material sign) to the Word (as a spiritual sign). What he fails to notice is the materiality of the Word. It was the Word, after all, that God made flesh. Despite such limits, what I find helpful in Karlstadt is his insight that images (which are purely material) have the capacity to take on spiritual significance. Further, because of the profound connections we are able to develop with images, images can shape our daily lives and practices. Given their vividness, concreteness, and availability to us combined with our own tendency to be fascinated by them, they can perhaps rather easily evoke a religious experience on our part. Thus, we may be inclined to worship them rather than God.

Karlstadt's critique of the power of images in his day from a Christian perspective is instructive to us in two ways. First, the specific content of his critique gives us an important caution as we enjoy the images of our day. Through that critique he invites us to consider, for instance, whether our visual culture serves as a distraction from our calling as people of God. He prompts us to ask whether the commercial and national images of our culture and, indeed, our own images of ourselves are becoming our twenty-first century idols. Second, the seriousness with which he engages the visual practices of his culture may serve as a model for our own engagement as Christians. Karlstadt is not content to accept the wisdom of his culture about the roles, functions, and effects of images on Christian faith. Instead, he asks informed and challenging questions about them.

He is not alone in this. Indeed, one of the things I find most inspiring about the Anabaptists more generally is their insistence that a Christian must be informed about culture and must ask hard questions about its relationship to faith. The reason that Anabaptists are so insistent on this point and practice is that for them faith always happens within and often against culture. For an Anabaptist, to say that we are the body of Christ is to say that we are of Christ and also that we are a

body—which is to say, material, as Jesus was material or of the flesh. So they were concerned about the venue within which they found themselves as followers of Jesus Christ. They worried about their culture and especially its impact on their faith. I think we need to do the same. So, from Karlstadt's critique of the images of his day we may learn something important about the tendency for images to become idols and about how we ought to engage our visual culture as Christian critics of that culture. But in addition to adopting a critical Christian posture to our visual culture, we may learn something else about other forms of action. Not only did Karlstadt and other Anabaptists publicly comment on the problematic relationship between certain images and faith, they also took it upon themselves to remove images from churches. Notably, they tended to do this without the permission of church leaders or anyone else. According to Karlstadt, it was quite appropriate for Christians to remove religious images from the churches. The analogy he made was between removing images from the church and removing a sharp knife from the hand of a child. In both cases, he argued, you were preventing a terrible harm.

It would be very interesting to consider the use of such a tactic in our own time. We could consider whether and in what settings or circumstances it would be appropriate for one or more Christians to change the channel on a public TV, take down a poster, remove a magazine, paper over a billboard, etc. We would definitely need to consider the limits on this form of resistance established by new technologies that proliferate these images electronically such that whatever we might remove here would show up immediately over there. In any case, this would be an interesting discussion to have because it would raise important questions about the character of the images we see, their impact upon us, our role as Christians in culture, the status of property, the relationship between "private property" and public viewership, etc. But even if we did not adopt this tactic, we might at least be inspired by the Anabaptists to be more thoughtful about the images we do make available to our eyes.

What I think we can learn most helpfully from Karlstadt and Anabaptists who were influenced by him on these points, is that we need to be vigilant about asking questions about our visual culture and our faith. What kinds of images dominate our visual culture? What messages do they tend to convey or seem to want to convey? What are our reactions to them? How do they impact our feelings, perceptions, and attitudes about ourselves and others? What do they encourage us to do and to feel? How do they impact our ability to be disciples of Jesus Christ?

### Visible Anabaptists

Adopting an informed, critical, and active posture toward images was just one way that sixteenth-century Anabaptists engaged their "visual" culture from within their commitment to live as Christians. Another way was by becoming rather visible themselves. Appreciating the importance of the visual (even as they critiqued the use of images in the churches), many Anabaptists transformed their bodies into visible witnesses for the reign of God. I think we have much to learn from their embodied witness.

During the course of the Reformation and the Radical Reformation, Anabaptists developed what you might call a bad reputation among many of the folks in power. Theologically speaking, the reason for this was their radical version of two-kingdom theology. According to this theology, the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of the God are fundamentally different. The kingdom of the world is driven by the desire on the part of human beings to make history come out a certain way. The desired outcome varies in its particulars over time and across cultures but, in general, it has to do with people trying to exercise power over other people through violence or the threat of violence in order, typically, to gain more territory, more wealth, and more power.

By contrast, in the kingdom of God, God is in charge of history. Since it is not for human beings to make sure

something does or does not happen in the kingdom of God, it makes absolutely no sense for human beings either to use violence against one another or to threaten one another with the potential use of violence. What does make sense is for human beings to love their God and one another. Although Anabaptists believed strongly in this idea that there are really two kingdoms—one dominated by human values and another governed by God's values—they also recognized that human beings are obliged for now at least to live in the kingdom of the world.

Importantly, though, the Anabaptists also thought that what was decisive about the incarnation was that the kingdom of God had come to dwell among humans, that the Holy Spirit had remained after Christ returned to the Father, and that the church was called by Jesus to be the body of Christ. So although these two kingdoms are fundamentally different, according to the Anabaptists, they also overlap to the extent that human beings are the body of Christ in the world. For the Anabaptists, then, living as the body of Christ in the world was *the* task for Christians. To live each day and in every way as a witness to the kingdom of God represents not only faithfulness but also the continued work of Christ in the world. Theologically speaking, then, the Anabaptists understood the church to be called to witness to what God ultimately wants the world to be—namely, the kingdom of God.<sup>8</sup>

Given their two-kingdom theology and their understanding of what Christians are called to be and do, it makes sense that Anabaptists were often tough critics of the church. They critiqued the use of images in the churches, for instance, because they were absolutely convinced that the churches were the sign for the reign of God on Earth. Thus, for them, it was essential that the churches embody the values of the kingdom of God. Importantly, the Anabaptists did not focus their critiques on the world. They often pointed out how the world was not the kingdom of God, but they did not expect the kingdom of the world to adopt the values of the kingdom of God. Thus, though they knew that Christians must not use violence, they understood that states sometimes have to.

Further, as people called to avoid the temptation to make history come out right, they did not think it was for them to try to make the state adopt the values of the kingdom of God.

However, although they didn't think it was their job to convince the state to forsake violence, they were convinced that they should make sure the church served as a witness to the kingdom of God and that they should try to convince other human beings to join the church. Practically speaking, what this radical two-kingdom theology amounted to was a call for recognizing the difference between the church and the world through the separation of baptism and citizenship, church and state. When Anabaptists re-baptized one another, they were giving witness to the kingdom of God by demonstrating that the kingdom of God is different from the kingdom of the world, that it is necessary for human beings to choose their master, whether it be God or the world, and that they were choosing to put God first. This was a powerful witness as well as a persuasive one. People understood what was being signified in adult baptism and many earnest Christians joined the Anabaptist movement out of a desire to say publicly and to live daily as people who had chosen to put God first too.

This visible enactment of two-kingdom theology posed a serious problem for the powers of the world because it threatened the longstanding tradition and practice of the state, on the one hand, enjoying divine legitimation through its connection to the church and the church, on the other hand, exercising significant influence in the affairs of the world through its connection to the state. To a great degree, the state's and the church's interest in sustaining their close inter-relationship drove them to try to bring an end to the Anabaptist movement. This they did through violence and the threat of violence. They engaged in theological and biblical interrogations of Anabaptists in which they sought to show that Anabaptist views were heretical. Through the threat of torture and its use, they tried to get Anabaptists to recant their beliefs. Through execution they endeavored to get rid of Anabaptists. But for the Anabaptists all these uses of violence and the threat of violence on the part of the state and the

church only served to make them more resolute in their conviction that their task was to live on behalf of that other kingdom in which such violence was not only nonexistent but also simply nonsensical.

For hundreds of years, the church and the state together sought to bring an end to Anabaptism especially through the use of torture and execution. The stories of church/state efforts to watch, arrest, interrogate, torture, and execute Anabaptists as well as Anabaptists' efforts to live daily, answer their interrogators' questions, endure torture, and go to their deaths as witnesses to the reign of God are collected and told in the *Martyrs Mirror*. The *Martyrs Mirror* is a compilation of martyr stories (and other letters, edicts, confessions of faith, etc.) that begins with Jesus and includes the stories of the early martyrs and then focuses on the stories of Anabaptist martyrs from 1500 to 1660.

To read the accounts of Christian martyrs like the ones compiled in the *Martyrs Mirror* is not, initially at least, a pleasant experience. This is because the accounts include a good bit of disturbing detail. To read the *Martyrs Mirror* is to be instructed in the application of tongue screws, the procedures for drownings and burnings at the stake, the workings of the rack on the body, the effects of being hung either right side up or upside down on a cross, what it's like to be buried up to your neck in dirt, etc. It's difficult to read the details of how hundreds of Anabaptist martyrs were put to death in the course of 160 years. But if we can get past that difficulty, there is something else that is really quite remarkable and, in fact, inspiring for us as twenty-first century Christians interested in challenging certain troubling features of our visual culture.

Much should be said about the *Martyrs Mirror* and, in particular, about how the book itself serves as a powerful witness to the reign of God. But for the purposes of this essay I will focus on a series of engravings that were first included in the 1685 edition and that give especially vivid visual witness to Anabaptist commitment to be people of the kingdom of God in the world. Although it would be very



interesting to talk about these printed images as persuasive efforts to witness visually in a culture of religious images to the reign of God through the new technology of the printing press, what I focus on is what is depicted in the image itself—namely, the visual witness of the Anabaptist martyr. Thus, I turn to three of these engravings as lenses for seeing how Anabaptists embodied their faith in a powerful Christian witness to the kingdom of the world in their visual culture.

Earlier I talked about the Panopticon—a modern invention designed to gain compliance from an imprisoned criminal by instructing him in the fact that he is always being watched. Without getting anywhere near the convict, a guard could be confident of the prisoner's subjection to the guard's authority. In addition, this treatment took place within the walls of the prison. In pre-modern Europe, authorities took a different approach. Within the dungeon the authorities got very close to the prisoner for purposes of gaining cooperation through physical torture. Then, even more importantly, outside the walls of the dungeon, the prisoner became an instrument for training the public in the wisdom of compliance. As the prisoner was executed in especially public and often horrific ways, they became a vivid argument on behalf of obedience to the authorities.<sup>9</sup> This pre-modern approach to gaining compliance was used in the case of Anabaptists. That is, authorities publicly executed Anabaptists in spectacles of bodies in pain to teach others that they should not join the Anabaptists. The Anabaptists recognized this strategy and, interestingly, turned those public spectacles against themselves and into occasions to making powerful witness to the kingdom of God. Consider, for instance, this etching (figure 2, p. 236).<sup>10</sup>

Here we see a typical beheading/burning at the stake. At the center of the image—the middle third of the image—we see six posts erected atop a platform. At each of five posts, we see one or two figures. Two are embracing one another, a third is on her knees and looking up, two men are standing with their hands clasped in front of them. One has bowed his head; the other stands erect. Also atop the platform we see public

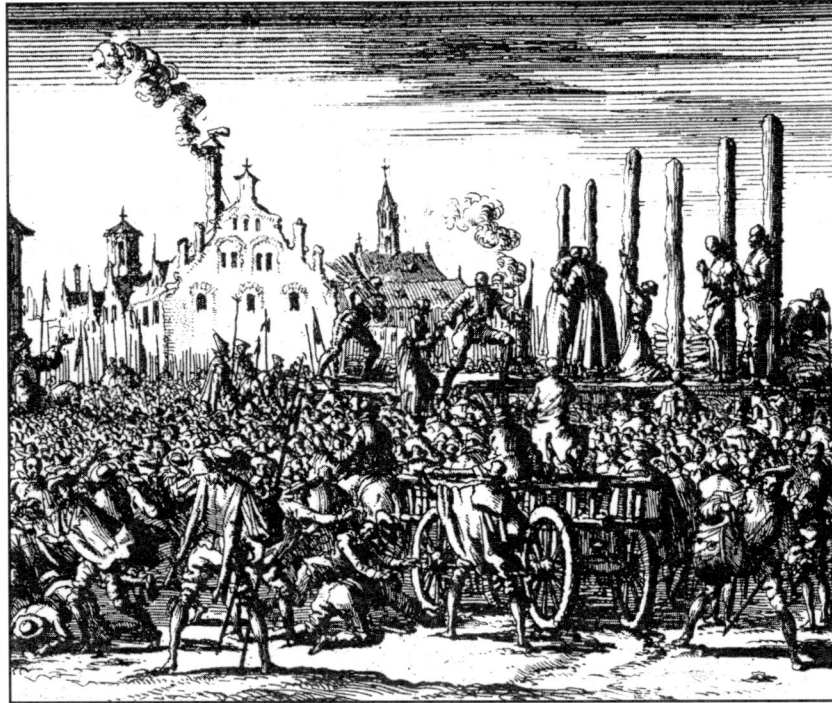


Figure 2. Twelve persons beheaded or burned at Deventer in 1571

officials carrying and arranging wood for the fires as well as leading a woman to the unoccupied post. In the top third of the image and in the background we see two large churches. Surrounding the platform and continuing all the way back to the church is a huge crowd of people. In the foreground we see a cart bringing more prisoners to the platform, public officials standing near the cart, and members of the crowd covering before the officials.

We can see in this image all the features of the typical pre-modern execution that was designed as a spectacle to instruct all present in the deadly consequences of disobedience to the authorities. At the center of the scene are the condemned who are positioned on a platform to make sure the entire crowd can see them. The location is at the center of the town or village. There is a huge crowd. The authorities are present and seeing to the deed that is about to be done.

Having said that much about the image, consider an excerpt from the *Martyrs Mirror* that describes this scene:

Thus it came to pass on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May, in the evening, that monks came to them, to speak with them, that they should prepare themselves, since they were to die the next day. First, when they came out of the prison, with a very joyful countenance and smiling, they, bowing their heads, said adieu to a friend whom they knew well, and who had visited them in prison; and he smiled to them in return. . . . the women, . . . , spoke much and greatly reproved the monks that were with them . . . and they kissed one another very affectionately, the two sisters having hold of each other's hand, and began to sing: "My God, whither shall I go?" . . . When they arrived at the scaffold, they brought Catharina, the younger sister, upon the scaffold first. She was very bold in speaking, and said: "Know, ye citizens, that it is not for any evil, but for the truth." . . . She was then taken from the scaffold again, and put into the wagon; and her mouth was closed, so that she could not speak any more. . . . They then returned to the tower, and fetched Dirck and Harmen. These both had

their mouth gagged, so that they could not speak; but they made many signs on the way by nodding, and smiling and were very bold, so that people were astonished.

Thus these two were brought upon the scaffold, and they frequently smiled and nodded to those whom they knew, and who stood before them. Harmen then fell upon his knees and prayed to the Lord; but as he made it too long for them, the executioner pulled him up, and he boldly placed himself at the stake. While the executioner was fastening Harmen, Dirck kneeled, and called upon the Lord from the heart; for they could not speak. Then Dirck arose and affectionately embraced Harmen as he stood at the stake, kissed him, and pointed with his hand up to heaven. Thereupon Dirck went with a joyful and smiling countenance, and stationed himself with his back to the stake, and cast up his eyes to heaven.<sup>11</sup>

The story continues in this manner as it tells how others were brought out, how they too smiled at the crowd and embraced one another, how they gestured toward heaven and prayed, how the monks tried to instruct the crowd to stay away from people like these, and how they all finally died in the fire. With that text to complement the image, what may we now see here?

I think at the very least we see a much more complicated scene. The authorities are still there and clearly they do bring off the executions. But they clearly do not have an altogether easy time of it. They have to contend with a lot of interaction between the prisoners and the crowd. The prisoners are not functioning only as visible evidence against joining the Anabaptists. They are smiling. They are addressing the crowd. Even after they are physically forced into silence they continue to smile, to gesture toward heaven, to kneel and pray, to embrace one another, to go on their own to the stake. So there they are just moments before they are going to be burned alive interacting with the crowd, showing sisterly and brotherly love, praying to God, accepting their fate even as they continue to insist that they have done no wrong.

What are they saying to this huge crowd through all this activity on the platform? I think they are being the church on that platform. They are proclaiming the word of God through prose and song. They are showing the love that characterizes Christian relationship. They are worshipping God through prayer. They are evangelizing to others when they smile at the crowd and point to the heavens. They are instructing the crowd that what is more true than the coming suffering of this moment is the kingdom of God. And the people are paying attention. And the authorities are frustrated. Thus, I think we can say, that the twelve Anabaptists at Deventer in 1571 succeeded in being the body of Christ on that platform and transforming that platform from a course in compliance to the church/state to a vivid example of how the body of Christ continues to triumph over the powers.

The lesson that is commonly derived from stories of martyrs is that Christians ought to be willing to die for their faith if called upon to do so. But for Christians like you and me that lesson can seem irrelevant. Chances are, given the privileges we enjoy and the context we live in, we are not going to be persecuted in this manner. But is that all the martyrs can teach us? I don't think so. I think, for instance, that this image and its corresponding narrative in the *Martyrs Mirror* teaches us that there is much more to the witness of the martyrs than their courage in dying. These martyrs were witnessing to the kingdom of God, to the presence of the Holy Spirit, and to the continued work of Christ in a world that insists on perpetuating its power through violence. They made this witness through their speaking, embracing, gesturing, praying, singing, and smiling. In addition, these martyrs teach us that it is possible to make such a witness as the body of Christ. That is, as a gathered body of believers. It is clear in this image and in the account given in the book that these martyrs went forth boldly together. The church is central to the possibility for witness. And, finally, these martyrs teach us that it is possible to turn the devices of the powers into opportunities for Christian witness. Just as these martyrs turned an executioner's platform into a place of worship, so

too might we transform the technologies of our visual culture into techniques for Christian witness.

How might we Christians of the twenty-first century mimic the strategy of these persecuted Anabaptists? Fortunately, we do not find ourselves in a situation like theirs wherein we must choose between forsaking our faith or dying in a painful public spectacle. Nevertheless, I do think there are important instances in which our Christian brothers and sisters are using the technologies of our visual culture to make public witness to the kingdom of God. Recently the State of Ohio began to execute prisoners on death row largely in response to public opinion which seemed to demand it. Thus, in Ohio the state execution now demonstrates to the public (especially as it is covered fairly extensively in newspapers as well as television and radio news broadcasts) that the state is making sure justice is being done on behalf of the citizenry. In response to this public exhibition of state-sanctioned violence, some churches in Bluffton, Ohio, have organized and held prayer vigils simultaneous with the execution (see figure 3, p. 241).<sup>12</sup>

During the vigils, which occur simultaneous to the executions, believers from several churches in the town gather on Main Street to pray on behalf of the condemned out of the conviction that God does not want our blood and on behalf of the state that it will discontinue its use of execution as a way to dispense justice. As I mentioned, state executions in Ohio get quite a bit of media attention prior to, during, and after the event. Given the public importance that is granted to the event through all that media coverage, even a small vigil held in prayerful protest becomes newsworthy. In figure 3 we see that the people of God have become their own particular kind of media spectacle as well. Thus the twenty-first century church (like the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Anabaptists) transforms the state-sanctioned public spectacle of bodies in pain into an occasion for the people of God to witness to the love of Christ.

Although the public spectacle of the execution was perhaps the primary strategy for discouraging people from

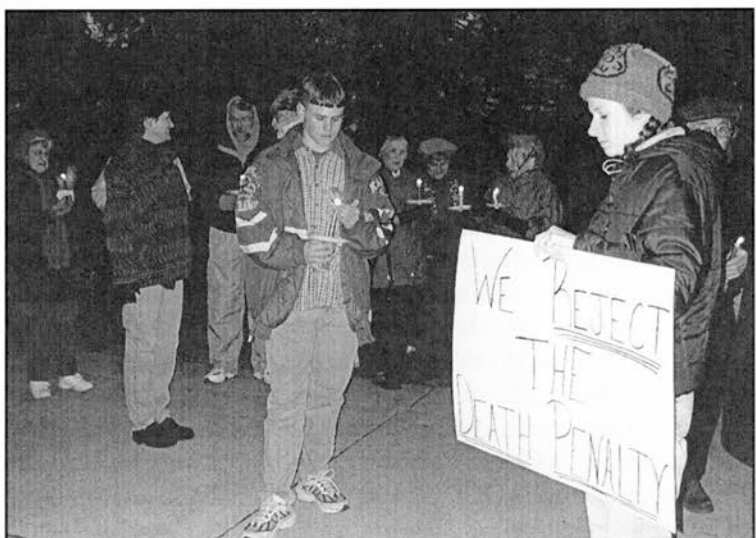


Figure 3. Bluffton, Ohio, capital punishment vigil



Figure 4. Pieter Pietersz's boat as used for secret Anabaptist services

joining the Anabaptists, a key strategy for capturing Anabaptists in order to reduce their numbers and make them into spectacles was surveillance and infiltration of Anabaptist meetings. Authorities worked very hard throughout the sixteenth and much of the seventeenth centuries to figure out where Anabaptists were gathering for worship. When they were successful in obtaining intelligence about a meeting, they would attend the meeting in order to figure out who the Anabaptists in the area were, or they would try to infiltrate the group in order to create disharmony and division within the group, or they would storm the meeting and make arrests. In any case, the problem for Anabaptists was how to meet without being seen. The problem was to avoid the persistent gaze of the authorities. Although they weren't surrounded by cameras as we are today, Anabaptists understood the problem of being watched.

Often times they responded to this problem of being watched, infiltrated, and raided by meeting in secret and remote locations deep within forests and inside hidden caves. These were fairly successful strategies for avoiding the watchful eye of the authorities. But consider this image also taken from the *Martyrs Mirror* that depicts another instructive Anabaptist response to the authorities and powers of their culture (figure 4, p.241).<sup>13</sup>

In this image we do not see an execution but, instead, a group of nine Anabaptists in a boat on the waters of the Amstel River just beyond the city of Amsterdam. As we take a first look at this image we notice that a figure toward the back of the boat is holding a large book. Other figures around him are either looking at him or one another as he is bent over the book, perhaps reading. One man toward the back of the boat seems to be looking beyond the reader at us. Another is looking up. At the front of the boat a man is standing and appears to be talking with the man seated next to him. The city with its churches, other buildings, and windmills is in the background not too far behind this scene.

The *Martyrs Mirror* doesn't say much about this scene. What it tells us is that Pieter Pietersz was a boatman and that



“at divers[e] times he gathered the little flock of the oppressed pious who lived about Amsterdam, into his boat, in order to edify one another with the Word of God, and to strengthen one another in the accepted faith.”<sup>14</sup> Presumably, then, the book that the one man is holding is the Bible. This may be a worship service or something like a Bible study in which they are reading the Bible together and trying to figure out what it means for them in their daily lives. It is important to remember that the printed Bible was a rather new invention in the late 1560s. To be able to gather as believers around the Bible to study it rather than to hear of it only from the pulpit was still a fairly new experience.

I bring attention to this image because in it we see that these nine people sought freedom to study the Bible as Anabaptists in a boat. Rather than hide deep in the forest or in a cave, they went out to a visible spot—out on the waters near the city. They were not hiding their actions even as they were clearly trying to avoid being watched. But they escape the gaze of the authorities by doing something quite normal and rather public—floating around in a boat just beyond the city. Thus, they seek to avoid detection by being visible. If anyone saw them and knew what they were looking at, these Anabaptists would be in trouble. Indeed, the man who appears to be looking at us may be an indication that they were aware of the risk they were taking. Are we friend or foe, he seems to be wondering. Significantly, the boat is just beyond the city with its churches, businesses, and government offices. These believers have found a place that is at least a bit beyond the rules of that culture. They have found a space in which they can read the Bible for themselves as gathered believers according to their own hermeneutic which begins with Jesus. So it is just beyond that world, with that world nevertheless in the background, in a space that is hidden in so far as it is visible, that this body of Christ is able to discern the meaning of the Scriptures.

What can this image say to us in our own culture of surveillance? I think it can tell us much. First, that it is necessary to get some distance between ourselves and our

visual culture. We need to seek out spaces somehow beyond the rules of that culture. Second, it teaches us that we don't have to go very far. We don't have to find a complete escape. We just need some distance. Our visual culture will remain in the background, but we must find ways to put our own engagement with the Word in the foreground. Third, it tells us that to do this, we must be among other believers. We can't do this alone. We must hear and study the Word together. Finally, it teaches us that sometimes the best way to respond to being watched for purposes of gaining our compliance is to be altogether ordinarily visible yet engaged in an activity that is other-worldly.

Students at a Christian college like Messiah College, a school dedicated to being a space within which young people can develop their faith as they explore their world, are much like the Anabaptists in this boat. Like the Anabaptists, Messiah College students have found a space, a rather ordinary space (insofar as it is a college) and a public space (anyone can come here to see what is happening) that nevertheless offers a bit of distance from our world. Of course, for students at a Christian college like Messiah, the world is always nearby (as it was for the Anabaptists in that boat), yet at such a college (as in that boat) something is enabled to happen, something beyond that which is prescribed by the world. Messiah College is a place where, for instance, it is not enough to learn how to succeed in the world. One is also called to become a better disciple of Christ and a finer citizen of the kingdom of God. So even as the world is ever present here, as it was for those Anabaptists on the Amstel River, there is also much more going on here than the typical college education (Figures 5–7, p. 245).<sup>15</sup>

No one seems particularly interested in keeping visual tabs on Messiah College classrooms or Bible study groups. We can be thankful that we live in a country that grants the status of a fundamental right to the freedom of religion. But the fact that probably most people in America think that classrooms or Bible study groups at Christian colleges like Messiah are at worst harmless and at best training grounds for producing



Figure 5. Student study group at Messiah College



Figure 6. Students gathered out of doors at Messiah College



Figure 7. Students gathered for chapel at Messiah College

upstanding Americans, should not diminish our own appreciation for their significance.

To study history or philosophy or English or communication or biology or education through the lens of the kingdom of God is not business as usual. To consider how to conduct business, or run an organization, or broadcast the news, or write poetry, or develop biotechnologies through the teachings of Jesus is a life-transforming and potentially community-transforming education. To learn how to put the values of the kingdom of God ahead of the values of a chosen profession will forever make a different kind of CEO, school principal, physician, politician, lawyer, or professor. And whenever two or three students gather around the Word and study it carefully together, perhaps sometimes consulting the wisdom of other believers through commentaries and other Bible study materials, the possibilities for radical transformation become real. Jesus did not come to teach us how to be upstanding Americans. Rather, he came for the purpose of calling us to membership in his body, a body that knows no national boundaries, no end to compassion, no limit on love for the stranger.

In all likelihood, most people today think Messiah College classrooms and Bible studies are ordinary, perhaps like anyone who saw those Anabaptists floating down the Amstel River in that boat. And, indeed, I pray it will always be that way. But we should not be fooled by public perception. There is indeed something radical going on in both places that is about bringing forth the kingdom of God.

We have studied an image of Anabaptists transforming a deeply regrettable public display into an occasion for witness to the kingdom of God. We have seen how Anabaptists were able to continue their other-worldly practices by engaging in an activity that to most looked ordinary. Now, consider this third image in which an Anabaptist takes a different approach to his visual culture (figure 8, p. 247).

In this image we see a procession from the church, which is in the background, through the market square, in the foreground. The procession consists of the local church



Figure 8. Simon the Vendor at his stall in the market square at Bergen op Zoom, The Netherlands

leaders in their fine robes carrying a crucifix, candles, and a special container holding consecrated communion wafers. As the procession passes through the market, the people get on their knees and bow their heads, sometimes all the way to the ground, to show through their bodies their obedience to these icons of the church. But then in the bottom right corner we see this figure: Simon the Vendor.<sup>16</sup>

As we study this figure, we see that he remains standing as the procession approaches with his arms folded in front of him and what looks like a slight smirk on his lips. The people around him are pulling on his coat and pointing to the procession. They are pleading with him to bow down and, thereby, spare his life. But he won't bow down. He remains standing as they pass. According to the account in the *Martyrs Mirror*, Simon would not bow down because he believed that the church had made idols of the icons they were carrying. Thus, according to his reasoning (and the reasoning of many other Anabaptists), when church leaders required that people bow down to these icons, what the church was really doing was obliging them to worship the church and obey its authority rather than worship God and obey him. Simon was not willing to signify with his body that he worshipped the church and its leaders, so he remained standing. For this he was immediately seized by the priests' followers in the procession. Within just a few days he was burned at the stake in another public execution of an Anabaptist.

For Simon the Vendor, the images at the center of his culture as well as the way people responded to those images were antithetical to Christian faith. As Christians, he and many others thought, we are called to worship the one true God and no others. So, when someone either requires or tries to get us to worship another, we must resist. In our visual culture, saturated as it is with images designed to get us to worship the accumulation of wealth, the production of the perfect body, the consumption of ever more goods and services, the global power of our military, the achievement of the "cool" and constantly changing look, we may do very well to think of this image. This image challenges us to consider whether we

worship certain narrow ideas of wealth, status, power, and beauty rather than the God of Abraham (a man who gave up his worldly possessions and was exiled from his homeland to follow God) and of Jesus (the son of a carpenter who as king of the Jews loved the leper, the tax collector, the prostitute). Not only does this image challenge us to consider whom or what we truly worship but also how we will choose, in this visual culture, to signify that love. Consider how this Christian brother chose to signify his love (figure 9, p. 250).<sup>17</sup>

Here we see the body of a Christian brother self-consciously made into a sign not of the latest fashion trend or personal achievement or worldly success but of obedience to the Prince of Peace in a region that pits all three religions that descended from Abraham against one another in what seems like unending violence. Against one of the most visible and intimidating signs of state power that there is in the world—the tank moving through a city street—this man stands up, right in front of it, to say I will not bow down, I will not be obedient to your threat of violence, I believe in the Prince of Peace who came to teach us to love one another as God loves us. This is a powerful witness. It calls to us to consider what our witness will be. What do our bodies say? What should they say?

### Conclusion

In the course of this essay I have tried to say something about the challenging world in which we live. It is a world that is increasingly dominated by and saturated with images. It is a world driven by values that are not the values of the kingdom of God. In many ways these images and this world that they largely constitute seek to divide us from one another, to focus our attention on our own and others' inadequacies (largely defined by those images), to teach us to fear people who are not like us, to encourage us to be always compliant to the various powers and interests of this world.

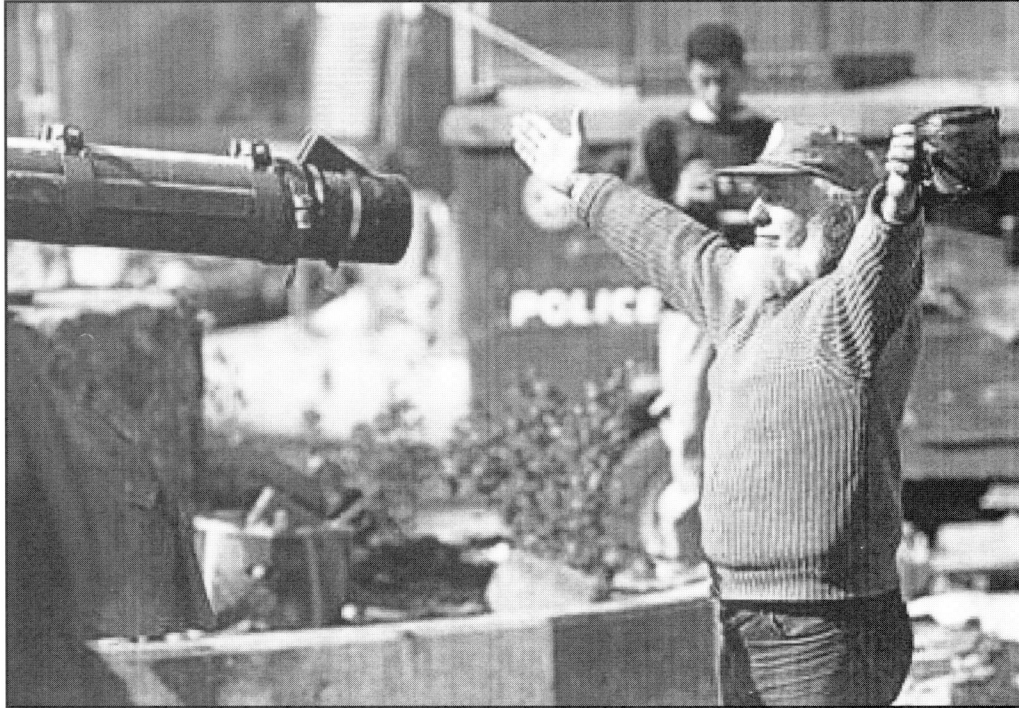


Figure 9. Art Gish standing before an Israeli tank in Palestine



But this is also a world in which the reign of God can be found in the teachings of Jesus, amidst the cloud of witnesses (some of whom were Anabaptists) from the past, and among our brothers and sisters in Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit we may study these images and, when appropriate, critique their meanings; we may seek to transform violent public spectacles into opportunities to witness to the Prince of Peace; we may embrace the possibilities of our own communities, learning environment, and Bible studies to transform us into disciples of Christ; we may find the courage to make our very bodies into signs of the reign of God.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>As Nicholas Mirzoeff has argued, "The point is that the photograph is no longer an index of reality. It is virtual, like its fellow postmodern visual media, from the television to the computer." Nicholas Mirzoeff, *An Introduction to Visual Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 88–89.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>3</sup>Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), p. 200.

<sup>4</sup>This image was copied from Katrin Kaschadt, "The Penitentiary Panopticon or Inspection House," in *Ctrl Space: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, ed. Ursula Frohne Thomas Y. Levin, and Peter Weibel (Karlsruhe, Germany: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002), 115.

<sup>5</sup>Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 201.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 202–203.

<sup>7</sup>His main three theses were the following: (1) Images in the house of God are contrary to the first commandment ("You shall have no other gods before me." Ex. 20:3), (2) Displaying carved or painted idols on the altar is harmful and devilish, and (3) It is a good thing to do to remove images from the Church as well as to give scriptural reasons for doing so. Andreas Bodenstein Karlstadt, "On the Removal of Images and That There Should Be No Beggars among Christians," in *The Essential Carlstadt*, ed. E.J. Furcha (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1995), p. 102.

<sup>8</sup>For an exposition of this point, see the introduction to John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus: Vicit Agnus Noster*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich., Carlisle, UK: Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1994).

<sup>9</sup>For a discussion of these important differences between pre-modern and modern approaches to punishment, see Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

<sup>10</sup>This image was copied from Thieleman J. van Braght, *The Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror of the Defenseless Christians*, trans. Joseph G. Sohm (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1997), p. 886.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 885–887.

<sup>12</sup>This photograph was taken by Gerald Biesecker-Mast on April 17, 2001, and is reproduced here with his permission.

<sup>13</sup>This image was copied from Braght, *The Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror*, p. 739.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 738.

<sup>15</sup>Photographs courtesy of Messiah College. Photographer for figures 5 and 6 is Steve Hulbert. For figure 7 the photographer is Stephanie (Fenton) Perry (class of 1999).

<sup>16</sup>This image was copied from *ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>17</sup>Photograph of Art Gish accompanies Art Gish, "Terrorists Among the Apples," published by Middle East Christians Against the War on Iraq and the Occupation of Palestine. Available at <http://mideastchristians.virtualactivism.net/articles/amongapples.htm>

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