Formation and Flourishing for the Church in the World

Sung Hee Chang

. . . and then the day came
when the risk to remain tight,
in a bud,
became more painful
than the risk it took to blossom . . .
—"Risk," attributed to Anaïs Nin[1]

At the turn of the twenty-first century, when he was elected president of American Psychological Association in 1998, Martin Seligman proposed *a new goal* for the profession of psychology: "exploring what makes life worth living and building the enabling conditions of a life worth living."[2] This goal was to supplement, not replace, "psychology's venerable goal of [understanding and] relieving misery and [undoing and] uprooting the disabling conditions of life."[3] The University of Pennsylvania professor made this proposal because he saw that "the relatively young profession of psychology—which [he] had just been elected to lead—had been almost exclusively about removing the disabling conditions rather than creating the enabling conditions for people to flourish."[4]

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Seligman named this emerging field of psychology positive psychology, which might be defined as "the science of the good life" or "the scientific study of what . . . make[s] life most worth living."[5] This signaled a shift of focus in psychology from illness to wellness, from suffering to well-being, from the abnormal to the normal, from shortcomings to potentials, from depression and learned helplessness to resilience and learned optimism, and, in essence, *from surviving to thriving.*

In this new and forward-thinking discipline, psychologists still adopt the same scientific methods, but they study different topics such as happiness, well-being, gratitude, contentment, mindfulness, hope, and compassion. They ask different questions, such as "What is right with this person and what works for her?" rather than "What is wrong with this person and what is not working for her?" This shift from the negative to the positive in life is a welcome development in the study of the human mind and behavior, and its takeaway lesson is that mental health is concerned not so much with the absence of illness as with the presence of flourishing. Formerly, psychologists were viewed as victimologists and pathologizers based on the traditional disease model of psychology. Psychologists oriented to positive psychology are seen as educators and trainers due to the new research into maximizing human potential. As Seligman saw it, the time had finally come for psychology, and science in general, to take flourishing seriously as its goal.

This perspectival shift in psychology gives theologians, ministers, and educators, good food for thought as we set new goals for theological formation in the twenty-first century. One of the goals for the relatively old profession of theology, particularly in Western evangelical church traditions, is "to heal the sin-sick soul." No doubt, saving a soul and restoring its spiritual health is a worthy cause that merits not only our attention, aid, and action but also God's (Jeremiah 8:20–22).[6] But isn't it more proper to say, "Being a Christian is less about cautiously avoiding sin than about courageously and actively doing God's will," as Eric Metaxas sums up a theological theme of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's?[7] One may wonder whether it is possible to imagine a sort of *positive theology* (not in the sense of Norman Vincent Peale's "positive thinking" but in the sense of Seligman's positive psychology) that might be defined as a theology of flourishing life or the theological study of what makes life most worth living.

According to Miroslav Volf, who deplores the fact that many universities no longer reflect on and teach on the meaning of life and no longer see faith as a way of life, to imagine a theology of flourishing life is not just possible, it is imperative. The Yale theologian from Croatia regards accounts of flourishing life as the most important gift of religions to the world and declares as his manifesto that the flourishing life is the central and encompassing purpose of theology. "The goal of Christ's Spirit-anointed mission to establish the kingdom [of God]," he argues, "was for human beings and the entire creation to flourish."[8] Accordingly, the mission of the church, as the continuation of the mission of Christ in the world, should be closely attuned to God's will as regards the flourishing of life, both human and other, of the world from the creation (Genesis) and to the new creation (Revelation). In this regard, we could imagine a sort of "worldly theology," that is, *a theology for the flourishing life of the world*.[9]

Before I explore further Miroslav Volf's understanding of faith, theology, and formation in terms of the flourishing life of the global world, I would like to draw our attention to the risk-taking moment for an organism or a living being that the poem quoted in the epigraph of this article describes: the moment "when the risk to remain tight, / in a bud, / became more painful / than the risk it took to blossom." I believe that the time has come for the church in the world, "called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory" (Isaiah 61:3), to take the risk to blossom. The Spirit-anointed flourishing and blooming life (see Isaiah 61:1–11) is the goal of the church in the world. Why then does the church in the world still hesitate to "take the risk to blossom"? Which is more painful for God to observe, the church in the world remaining self-centered ("in a bud") or its daring to be other-oriented ("to blossom")? What is the church in the world afraid of when it is challenged to accept the flourishing life as a new goal of theological formation? According to the astute observation of William Temple (1881–1944), while the church in the world is "the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members," many of her members turn a blind eye to what is happening in the world and use their belief in God "as a means of escape from the hard challenge of life."[10] These self-centered people simply do not want to take the risk to flourish for the benefit of the world, for fear of losing themselves in the world. They prefer surviving over thriving and, consequently, fail to listen attentively and reflect theologically on Christian faith formation in light of the words

of Jesus Christ: "I came that they [read: the world] may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

Public Faith and Theology for the Flourishing Life of the World

What then is the flourishing life or the good life or the life worth living toward which we human beings are meant or wired to strive? According to Miroslav Volf, diverse and compelling visions of the flourishing life have been offered by world religions (and philosophers) in answer to this question, and these visions of flourishing share three formal components or aspects: "the life that is lived well (life led well: the agential dimension), the life that goes well (life going well: the circumstantial dimension), and the life that feels good [or right] (life feeling as it should: the affective dimension)—all three together, inextricably intertwined."[11] Volf argues that world religions including Christianity imagine the flourishing life in such a way that the agential dimension defines and sustains and, in case of conflict, trumps the other two dimensions. Yet, in our globalized world these three dimensions of the flourishing life are often not fully integrated in our ways of understanding our world. Most people tend to focus on either the circumstantial or the affective dimension, or both, in their pursuit of happiness. They desire health, wealth, fertility, and longevity, which are four key aspects of natural flourishing or natural forms of well-being based on what Charles Taylor calls one of "the most powerful ideas in modern civilization: the affirmation of ordinary life."[12] Increasingly, faith has become privatized and religions irrelevant in our globalized world. This is marked by two notable negative characteristics: secularism as the absence of religion in the public square and consumerism that disregards moral norms and meanings.

Hence, we have the question that Volf tries to answer with his book *Flourishing*: *Why We Need Religion in a Globalized World*. He believes that we can answer the question of why we need religion with the words of the Bible: "*because we do not live by bread alone*" (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4). Or, in the words of Paul, "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink" (Romans 14:17). As Jesus reminded those who worried about what to eat, drink, and wear, "life is more than food" (Matthew 6:25; Luke 12:23). And all world religions teach that the true meaning of the flourishing life in the mundane realm lies in the transcendent realm. It is *our relationship to God*, or

to the transcendence that all world religions presuppose, that makes us experience ordinary things as extraordinary and enjoy the world broadly and deeply. And yet, we are living in the era of market-driven globalization that turns religions, including Christianity, into a means of affirming the world in service to the economy as prosperity religions. Market-driven globalization, the means that have become the ends, makes us think and act "like a painter who is forever concerned about improving his materials . . . but never really starts to paint."[13] Consequently, we become experts in means but remain amateurs in ends, without knowing what Paul calls "the life that really is life" (1 Timothy 6:19). For us to get glimpses of the character of the truly flourishing life and of the ultimate goal of all our desires and loves, Volf argues, we are in dire need of religion-formed alternative accounts or visions of the flourishing life.

How could the prevailing globalization process be co-opted to serve as a means to the end of the flourishing life of the world, as Volf suggests? I believe that this is possible only if we understand our faith as *a publicly engaged faith* that Jesus Christ himself started by entering the public square. In *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good*, Volf addresses the malfunctions and misuses of faith in the public space and suggests that Christian faith as a publicly engaged faith should function as "an instrument of God for the sake of human flourishing, in this life and the next" and become "an alternative both to the secular total exclusion of all religions from public life [or space] and to [the religious] total saturation of public life [or space] by a single religion."[14] As he sees it, Christian faith affirms a political if not religious pluralism in which people of different religions practice "hermeneutical hospitality" with regard to each other's sacred texts and receive from one another "reverse prophetism" (Paul Tillich), that is, "a prophetic challenge to alter their convictions and practices so as to live in the here and now more consistently with the wisdom they embrace."[15] In this regard, we could say that religions have the common mission "to make plausible in contemporary culture that human beings will flourish only when the love of pleasure, a dominant driving force in our culture, gives way to the pleasure of love."[16] Epistemologically speaking, love here means love of the interdisciplinary knowledge that focuses on the flourishing life of the world and encompasses the wide relationship between God and the world.

In *For the Life of the World: Theology That Makes a Difference*, Volf promotes a theology that serves a public faith and argues that the purpose of Christian theology is to "discern, articulate, and commend visions of flourishing life in light of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ."[17] He proposes to use "the home of God" (explicitly the eschatological "new Jerusalem" in Revelation 21:3 and implicitly the Garden of Eden, the Tabernacle, the Temple, Jesus Christ, his followers and the church-in-the-world, and even every person and the entire world) as the overarching biblical image as we develop a theology of flourishing life. Like the image of the kingdom of God that Jesus Christ used, this image provides the goal, and our striving for this goal makes our life on earth meaningful. And it helps Christians to have open and growth mindsets in which they imaginatively improvise their lives in the power of the Holy Spirit within the creative space opened up and structured by their relationship to Christ and to their neighbors. Reflecting on Paul's understanding of the kingdom of God in Romans 14:17 ("righteousness and peace and joy") and of the Holy Spirit's fruit of "love, joy, peace . . ." (Galatians 5:22), Volf discerns and commends the Christian understanding of the flourishing life as the "perichoresis" (that is, the interdependence and interpenetration) of the agential, the circumstantial, and the affective dimensions of the flourishing life. As he sees it, the Christ-formed accounts of the flourishing life concern "a life lived through the agency of God and in the presence of God," which is "not the accomplishment of the diligent believer, but rather a free *gift* of grace."[18] In this regard, we could imagine with Volf the goal of Christian education in general and of theological education in particular as follows: "forming human beings according [to] the pattern of Christ, such that each person and community is able to improvise the way of Christ in the flow of time in anticipation of becoming, *along with the entire creation*, the home of God."[19] What then could be a pedagogy that corresponds to Volf's grand vision of a theology that makes a difference in serving the common good of our globalized world?

Practicing Christian Faith and Theology Publicly

Culture critic and progressive educator bell hooks sees spirituality as a concern for the needs and qualities of the human spirit. In her book *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*, she asserts that "*spirituality is about practice, how we live in the world and how we relate to self and others*."[20] Throughout

her teaching career, she has tried to bring spiritual matters to the classroom without stepping into religious matters, believing that many students suffer from being disconnected from others and from the world (and from God) and that the intellectual is one who seeks to become a whole person with their body, mind, and spirit in union. Her understanding of spirituality as practice is, perhaps, a sort of *worldly spirituality*, but the concept of worldly spirituality itself would sound like an oxymoron to the ears of those who have a traditional otherworldly understanding of spiritual formation. No doubt, spirituality is based on belief in the other world, but it does not necessarily follow that spirituality should be otherworldly. Rather, true spirituality is world-oriented or world-rooted. For the church-in-the-world, Christian spirituality is a spirituality of being in but not of the world. And, like philosophy, Christian spirituality is a search for wisdom about the flourishing life. It follows then that Christians are a searching people and that those of us who are concerned with and engaged in Christian formation in terms of human flourishing are in search of a sort of *worldly pedagogy,* that is, practical wisdom.

By practical wisdom I mean the wisdom that enables the flourishing life of the world, for without nourishing, there is no flourishing. By practical wisdom I also mean the wisdom of the world that God sees as "good" in its ordinary makeup. According to the biblical wisdom tradition, wisdom is "not exclusively wisdom for religious life, *but very practical insight for daily life.*"[21] Furthermore, it should be noted that *Christian faith as a way of life* has been understood "not as a religious add-on to life but as itself constituting *an integrated way of life*" and that Christian public engagement means the engagement of the Christian's "whole person in *all aspects* of her life" and "*all dimensions* of a culture."[22] In the public square, people in search of flourishing life see and stare at us Christians in order to know how we live in relation to others as well as to God. When they see in our practices what is called "practice malfunctions," a gap between what is professed and what is practiced, they are not impressed by our claim on the integrative function of our practical wisdom. Just as Albert Einstein reported that "science can flourish only in an atmosphere of free speech," so Christian theology can flourish only in the public square of practical wisdom, that is, Christian practices.

According to the authors of *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*, "Christian practices are things Christian people do to-

gether over time to address fundamental needs and conditions of humanity and all creation in light of and in response to God's active presence for the life of the world in Jesus Christ."[23] Here they attempt to show where and how "a way of life that is deeply responsive to God's grace [in Jesus Christ] takes actual shape" in our changing contexts, and they also help us to "learn to recognize the lived wisdom of Christian people over time and across cultures as a constructive resource" for our imagining of the ways of a flourishing life, rather than the lifestyles of flourishing, in our globalized world.[24] Believing that Christian practices are related fundamentally to the presence and activities of God in Jesus Christ, they would concur with Volf that Christian practices have a correspondence structure: as Christ, so we. This does not mean that Christians are copycats of Christ and Christian practices carbon copies of what Jesus Christ did. It rather means that "to be a Christian is to explicitly believe in Christ and commit oneself to follow his way of life."[25] For those who are faithful witnesses to the Christian way of life, Christian practices concern "an ongoing reorientation of life in relation to God," that is, "an ongoing journey of conversion, a process of embracing a Christian way of life by turning from one way of living to another."[26] This ongoing process of Christian formation in terms of the flourishing life is what I mean by practicing Christian faith and theology publicly. We may call it a pedagogy of life. As we take part in Christian practices, we expect to learn the presence and activity of God in the wider world and to cultivate not only new qualities in our spiritual life but also a wider spiritual community where we empower others to flourish and, together, pray for and work on the flourishing life of the world.

Faithful and Responsible Dialogue: Toward a Public Pedagogy of Life

In *Public Faith in Action: How to Think Carefully, Engage Wisely, and Vote with Integrity*, Volf explores "what kind of virtues and commitments should inform the public engagement of the followers of Christ" and helps us to see that our Christian faithfulness in the public square concerns our "being formed into a certain pattern of character so that we become witness to Christ in the whole of our lives."[27] No doubt, faithful public engagement or faithful discipleship in the public square involves certain virtues or aspects of character. And yet, it also concerns certain convictions or stances about particular issues that set the agenda for discourse or debate among people

of different faith and ideologies. Often the pressing public issues that the church-in-the-world faces and respond to are ambiguous; they are difficult to tackle with predetermined answers. What then is required of the church-in-the-world to develop a public pedagogy of life? I think it is faithful and responsible dialogue.

We human beings are interested beings. We are interested in ourselves, in others, in the world, and, most of all, in God. We are also interbeings. We live in a web of social relationships, relating to God, to the world, to others, and, above all, to the self. As interested interbeings, we hold an interview with someone who interests us in order to learn about the person. But, for some of us who are self-reflective and self-reflexive, the dialogue we engage in with the person we interview provides what Parker Palmer calls "an 'inter-view,' a way of looking into other people's behaviors and attitudes that open our own lives to view."[28] In this dialogue or two-way conversation, we see not only our dialogue partner "as individuals, being recognized, respected and appreciated," to put it in the language of a pedagogy of appreciation,[29] but also ourselves as persons, being self-aware and intersubjective, "using [our] personal knowledge as a starting point and as a building block for [our] critical engagement," to put it in the words of a pedagogy of self-reflection.[30] For us interested interbeings, to understand is not just to interpret or view someone or something in a certain way but also "to be able to interact, to carry a conversation forward."[31]

Once one moves into the public square, one cannot and should not assume that one's way of life is the only way worth living, for there are others in the same space who make the same assumption. It does not mean that one must give up one's own point of view regarding the flourishing life; it simply means that one must learn to have conversation with others. As Volf puts it, "[R]eligions only become a public problem when people from diverse religions and secular humanists cannot engage each other in a meaningful way because they have never mastered *the art of conversation* about alternative accounts of what makes life worth living and what values should guide it."[32] In order not to be a nuisance to the public and in order to create a public space of learning together, we have to learn to converse.

How then should we practice "the art of conversation" in the public square? We may learn about it from experienced politicians who are religiously motivated and willing to responsibly express public values of their own religions. According to Elaine Graham, such politicians are well aware

that "to claim an allegiance to faith is increasingly suspect" in public contexts and that "the language of faith has to be carefully mediated and its deployment highly contextual."[33] They refuse to play God and attempt to relate, and even translate, some values of their own private faith to the public reasoning in their own contexts. They would agree with Volf that "there is no incompatibility between religious exclusivism and political pluralism" and that "public engagement is distinct from entanglement with political power."[34] What is most needed for those who have a publicly engaged faith is *public religious pedagogy* (*Öffentliche Relgionspädagogik*), which is a religious pedagogy that, like public theology, takes "public responsibility" seriously and aims to "explicate Christian perspectives in such a way that non-Christians, too, can relate to and benefit from them."[35] This pedagogy concerns a process of translation and requires of concerned politicians as well as of theologians and educators what is called "bilinguality"—"the ability to 'translate' the thick languages of worship and faith into the moral language[s] of secular and pluralist societies" and also "to learn how to see, how to think, how to become sensitive, how to care, how to be present and act and get involved, and . . . how not to commit the so-called 'sins of omission' through our apathy and moral indifference."[36] This necessary bilinguality (and even multilinguality) of the church-in-the-world as a go-between is based on what Emil Brunner called the "responsibility" (literally, "respond-ability") of human beings as responsive agents created in the image of God.[37] As interested interbeings, we are all responsible for all God's creatures, human or other, and should respond to their need for a flourishing life.

Now let us move to our faithfulness to Christ. As we Christians move into a dialogue in the public square, we enter into "an interreligious [and intercultural] dialogue which avoids both relativism and absolutism" and in which we realize that our traditional Christological exclusivism is "not Christological enough. Confessing Christ means loving radically."[38] In order to be faithful to Christ, we have to learn or relearn what faith really is. Ellen Ott Marshall argues that "faith is always the starting point for a conversation, never the final word" and that "critical investigation of one's faith is a form of discipleship, not an obstacle to it." For Marshall, faith is like a *mobile*, sculpture in motion, "a structure designed to move and to motivate" in the double sense of the French word ("as an adjective, it means movable; as a noun, it means motive"); the mobile faith is able to "catch the air, in-

terrupt habits [of hatred, over-simplification, and theological bravado that pervade our religious-political conversations], and move in new ways."[39] In this regard, to do a theology in faithfulness to Christ for the purpose of the flourishing life of the world means to be motivated by God's air (the Holy Spirit) to unlearn whatever drags our public conversations into the gutter, to move out of the safe haven of closed-minded tradition, and to set sail for the future of God that waits for us beyond the troubled waters of our global world.

To conclude, in our globalized world where all human barriers are taken down and all people are, knowingly or unknowingly, thrown and integrated into a single interdependent network of relationships, we people of different religions and ideologies often pick a quarrel with one another, attempting to shape public life with our convictions and practices that reflect our own vision of flourishing life. To learn to live together with our differences and create a global learning community based on faithful and responsible dialogue, all of us must have a public faith and do a public theology. To have a public faith and do a public theology, that is, to learn publicly, we should refuse to play politics with faith and instead embrace theological humility. And what is most needed for the development of a pedagogy of life based on a public faith and a public theology is cultural and religious and even interreligious literacy, for which the best preparation is "that of encounter with lived [phenomenological] expressions of faith in all their complexity."[40] Every encounter or dialogue in the public square involves risk-taking or a leap of faith. Are we the church-in-the-world ready to take the risk to blossom together with other trees of practical wisdom? Is our Christian faith mobile enough to let go of our thoughts, feelings, and wills and let God be God in our globalized world? Does our theology make a difference in "fashioning each human and the entire world into God's home and our true home as well?"[41] These are key questions for all of us to wonder about and ponder as we support our students in their engagement in the interdisciplinary curriculum of theological education for the flourishing life of the world.

NOTES

1 It seems that the French-Cuban-American writer Anaïs Nin didn't write this poem. Its original writer, named Elizabeth Appell, came forward "with a compelling case" for her authorship in 2013. The poem quoted here is what Appell wrote in 1979, not what is now circulating on the internet. See "Who wrote 'Risk'? Is the mystery solved?" The Official Anais Nin Blog, 2013, http://anaisninblog.skybluepress.com/2013/03/who-wrote-risk-is-the-mystery-solved/.

2 Martin E. P. Seligman, Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being (New Work: Atria, 2011), 1-2.

3 Seligman, Flourish, 1.

4 Seligman, *Flourish,* 68.

5 Christopher Peterson, *A Primer in Positive Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), vii, 4. Peterson identifies the positive psychology-influenced shift in his own professional career concern from "depression, despair, and demoralization" to "happiness, character, and purpose" (p. viii) and refers to it as "a sea change in perspective" (p. 5).

6 All Biblical references are from the New Revised Standard Version.

7 Eric Metaxas, *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy. A Righteous Gentile vs. The Third Reich* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2010), 486. On the internet, the quoted words are attributed to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, but they were actually written by Eric Metaxas. "On behalf of history and accuracy," Metaxas asks the readers of his blog to fix this mistake. See Eric Metaxas, Bonhoeffer Never Said That!" Eric Metaxas (blog), June 10, 2014, http://ericmetaxas.com/blog/bonhoeffer-never-said/.

8 Miroslav Volf and Ryan McAnnally-Linz, *Public Faith in Action: How to Think Carefully, Engage Wisely, and Vote with Integrity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016), 13.

9 To put it more controversially, "[T]heology is not for the church; theology is for the world." Terence Lovat, "The Theological Lacuna in Australian RE: Closing the Gap with a Reconstructed Public Theology," in *Public Theology Perspectives on Religion and Education*, ed. Manfred L. Pirner et al. (London: Routledge, 2019), 170. Lovat says these words "from a public theology perspective." By contrast, Carl Michalson's *Worldly Theology: The Hermeneutical Focus of an Historical Faith* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967) is a theology framed in purely historical terms.

10 Quoted in Rose Hudson-Wilkin, "Keeping Faith in the Public Square: An Autobiographical and Contextual Approach," *Anglican Theological Review* 102, no. 2 (2021), 241–42, 235.

11 Miroslav Volf, *Flourishing: Why We Need Religion in a Globalized World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), ix. The rephrases in parentheses come from Miroslav Volf and Matthew Croasmun, *For the Life of the World: Theology That Makes a Difference* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2019), 17.

12 Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 14, as cited in Volf, *Flourishing*, 42.

13 Volf and Croasmun, *For the Life of the World,* 26. The image of a painter here is borrowed from the German philosopher and sociologist Hartmut Rosa. This image is

akin to the image of not taking the risk to blossom that I talked about with regard to the poem "Risk" in the epigraph.

14 Miroslav Volf, *A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2011), 5, xi. Regarding "idle" faith and "coercive" faith, see Volf, *A Public Faith*, chapters 2 and 3.

15 Volf, *A Public Faith*, 136, 113.

16 Volf, *A Public Faith*, 145.

17 Volf and Croasmun, *For the Life of the World*, 11; see also 34, 45, 51, 61.

18 Volf and Croasmun, *For the Life of the World*, 181.

19 Volf and Croasmun, *For the Life of the World*, 9, italics added.

20 bell hooks, *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 150, italics added.

21 Sebastian Kim, "The Biblical Wisdom Tradition for Public Theology and Its Consequences for Public Education," in Pirner et al., *Public Theology Perspectives*, 91, italics added.

22 Volf, *A Public Faith*, 101, 97, italics added.

23 Craig Dykstra and Dorothy C. Bass, "A Way of Thinking about a Way of Life," in *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*, ed. Dorothy C. Bass, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 204. In the first edition published in 1997, the last three words "in Jesus Christ" were not included. The authors choose the following twelve practices: honoring the body, hospitality, household economics, saying yes and saying no, keeping sabbath, testimony, discernment, shaping communities, forgiveness, healing, dying well, and singing our lives.

24 Craig Dykstra and Dorothy C. Bass, "A Theological Understanding of Christian Practices," in *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, ed. Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 15, 16.

25 Miroslav Volf, "Theology for a Way of Life," in Volf and Bass, *Practicing Theology*, 250. Volf deals with the "as-so" structure of Christian practices in detail in his book *Exclusion and Embrace: Theological Reflections on Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996).

26 L. Gregory Jones, "Beliefs, Desires, Practices, and the Ends of Theological Education," in Volf and Bass, *Practicing Theology*, 193, 194.

27 Volf and McAnnally-Linz, *Public Faith in Action*, x, xii. In this book, five virtues or aspects of characters for our faithful public engagement are identified and considered: courage, humility, justice, respect, and compassion, and seventeen convictions are also examined.

28 Parker J. Palmer, *To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1993), 62.

29 Werner Haussmann, "The Spirituality of Mindfulness: A Religious Contribution to Public Education," in *Public Theology, Religious Diversity, and Interreligious Learning*, ed. Manfred L. Pirner et al. (London: Routledge, 2018), 202.

30 Marianna Papadopoulou, "The Authority of Personal Knowledge in the Development of Critical Thinking—A Pedagogy of Self-Reflection," *Enhancing Learning in the Social Sciences* 3, no. 3 (2011), 20.

31 Volf and McAnnally-Linz, *Public Faith in Action*, xiii.

32 Miroslav Volf, "Life Worth Living: Christian Faith and the Crisis of the Universities," ABC World and Ethics, April 30, 2014. https://www.abc.net.au/religion/life-worth-living-christian-faith-and-the-crisis-of-the-universi/10099272, italics added.

33 Elaine Graham, "A Window on the Soul: Four Politicians on Religion and Public Life," *International Journal of Public Theology* 3 (2009), 163. The politicians Graham examines here are Tony Blair (United Kingdom), Helen Clark (New Zealand), Barack Obama (United States) and Kevin Rudd (Australia).

34 Volf, *Flourishing*, 151, 190.

35 Manfred L. Pirner, "Public Religious Pedagogy—An Emerging New Paradigm?" in Pirner et al., *Public Theology Perspectives*, 43, 47.

36 Dirk J. Smit, "Contributions of Religions to the Common Good in Pluralistic Societies from a Christian Perspective? Some Critical Remarks," in Pirner et al., *Public Theology, Religious Diversity, and Interreligious Learning*, 15–16.

37 Referred to in William A. Dyrness, *Poetic Theology: God and the Poetics of Everyday Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 90.

38 Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, "Public Theology and Interreligious Dialogue," in Pirner et al., *Public Theology, Religious Diversity, and Interreligious Learning*, 111.

39 Ellen Ott Marshall, *Christians in the Public Square: Faith That Transforms Politics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2008), 104, 105, 112, 113.

40 Elaine Graham, "Reflexivity and Rapprochement: Explorations of a 'Postsecular' Public Theology," in Pirner et al., *Public Theology Perspectives*, 21. For interreligious literacy, see Lovat, "The Theological Lacuna in Australian RE," 166.

41 Volf and Croasmun, *For the Life of the World*, 8.