God Complex Radio: Faith, Violence and Human Rights

Guest:
- “Rick [Ufford-Chase] is a peace activist who founded Border Links. He served as the moderator of the Presbyterian Church USA, and presently Rick is the executive director of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship. He works with his wife, Kitty, as a co-director of Stony Point Center, and they are involved in Community of Living Traditions: a multi-faith community dedicated to the practice and study of hospitality, nonviolence, and justice.”

Suggested learners:
- Adults and teens, especially those interested in peacemaking and human rights

Outline of interview:
- An effort for peace with genuine security for the entire Middle Eastern
  - Ending occupation of Palestinian territory
- We must maintain the ability to sustain friendships in the Jewish community and work to make amends for 1,900 years of Christian oppression of Jews, culminating in the Holocaust
- *And* we also cannot ignore the significance of the occupation; dialogue about the occupation cannot be tinged by accusations of anti-Semitism
- “Our government is the most powerful government in the world and people around the world are impacted by the policies that are created by our Congress and our President. So if we’re going to get involved in that kind of work, and I believe we should, it seems to me that we have an obligation to better understand the situations that we’re trying to weigh in about.”
  - Applicable to all policies concerning human rights, both foreign and domestic
- The issue of immigration reform ought to be cut-and-dried for Christians: “we must welcome the stranger”
- We ought not to have a societal model which demands a segment of the population be undocumented; it creates a society predicated on fear rather than progress
  - “it puts all of us at risk when we have an undocumented population”
- In sum, to accomplish one human-rights goal at the expense of another is never appropriate

Additional reflection questions:
1. Ufford-Chase appears to have mastered the art of interfaith dialogue. How does this shape his views? Is he approaching difficulty in his professional life as a Christian or as a
human being? How do you approach conflict and dialog?

2. “It’s work for us to try and understand what it’s like to live on the underside of the global economy.” What connects you to the plight of those less privileged, and do you find yourself connected on a spiritual level, or simply one of common existence?

3. In the immigration debate, do we have an obligation as Christians and as Americans to “welcome the stranger,” or do you believe that our Christian values interfere with our obligations to our society and economy? Where is the confluence of Christianity and nationality most strained? What resources do we have to support this discussion (biblical, liturgical, interpersonal)?

Podcast study guides are a new genre for us all. Have a suggestion? Please contact us at cmt@vts.edu.