



Just Immigration: American Policy in Christian Perspective

Mark R. Amstutz

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Just Immigration is an informative, thought-provoking read that sparks discussion on a pressing humanitarian issue.

Political-science professor Mark R. Amstutz comprehensively addresses one of the most contentious political issues of the day in his thoughtful new book, *Just Immigration: American Policy in Christian Perspective*.

Before diving into the philosophical and religious foundations of current views on immigration, *Just Immigration* provides a helpful overview of immigration policy in the United States. It breaks down the development of policy over two centuries and highlights many racist and exclusionary laws that favored Northern European immigrants and discriminated against Asians and other groups. The book then takes an interesting turn, focusing on recent policy, specifically that related to immigration from Latin America, and explores Christian perspectives on the issue. These include both mainstream Catholic and Protestant views.

Just Immigration attempts to ground its own view of immigration in a contemporary Christian ethic. It levels incisive criticism at the positions of both evangelicals and Catholics, revealing shortcomings in their respective arguments. While it's easy to moralize on the issue, and to profess the Christian duty of helping the less fortunate, it's harder to recognize the essential nature of the state in regulating immigration and protecting both citizens and immigrants, the book argues. The best insight it offers is its differentiation between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism. The former views the people in the global community as more important than national boundaries. The latter views globalism as important but also recognizes the power of communal identities, nation-states, and the rule of law in securing human rights.

Amstutz professes his preference for a complex communitarian view of immigration and, to his credit, tries earnestly to reconcile what he views as the competing interests of transnational migrants and native citizens. The book falters, however, when it repeats the claim that low-wage migrant workers depress wages for low-skilled citizens, but he offers scant proof. It also mentions the importance of addressing root causes of global migration but doesn't get into specifics.

At its best, *Just Immigration* is an informative, thought-provoking read that sparks discussion on a pressing humanitarian issue.

SCOTT NEUFFER (Religion 2017)

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