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Stories: How Mennonites Came To Be (John Roth Trilogy)



Synopsis

John D. Roth's straightforward, accessible narrative invigorates this contemporary introduction to the Mennonite story. Whether readers are new to the Mennonite community or just yearning for a fresh telling of Anabaptist origins, *Stories: How Mennonites Came to Be* will serve as a compact digest of the church's history for generations to come.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the best church books I've ever read--it definitely deserves re-reading. In order to avoid the common mistake of telling the Anabaptist story by starting in the sixteenth century, Roth opens up by relating the story of Jesus and His first followers, and summarizes the first three centuries of the Christian faith. He then moves to the conversion of Constantine, the Roman emperor, and explains why that was a defining moment in the history of the church. Roth provides an overview of the next thousand years, then explains the events of the Protestant Reformation. Only then does he introduce the Anabaptist-Mennonite chapter of the story. Indeed, only against the background of the early church, the Catholic church, and the Reformation can we really understand Anabaptists as the reformers of the Reformation. Only in this context can we see the striking parallels between the early church and the sixteenth-century Anabaptist movement, and between the sixteenth-century movement and the position we find ourselves in today. (The parallels with today's Mennonite church can be seen in various periods all throughout the history of the Anabaptist

movement.)As I continued reading, I was really appreciative of the scope Roth uses to tell the Anabaptist-Mennonite story. It really is unique! He gives us the how and why of Anabaptists' break with the Protestant reformers, gives a straightforward account of their persecution (neither exaggerated nor understated), and explains the scattering of the Anabaptist-Mennonite church across the globe and how this dispersion has affected the faith. Consistent with the insight and depth of the book, Roth brings us up to the present day and helps us understand what impact our past has on our present and our future.

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