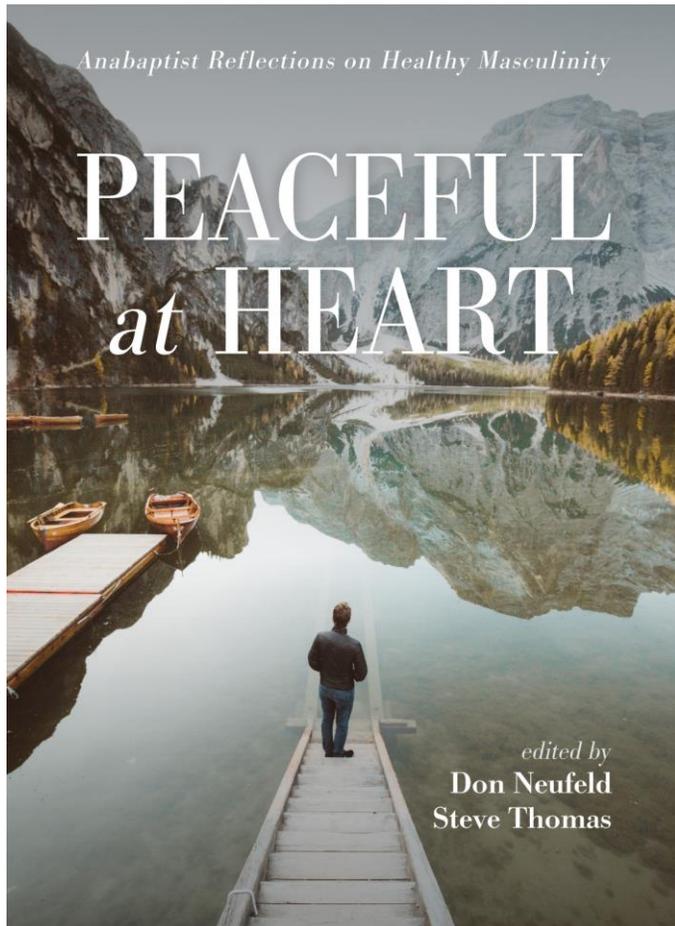


***Peaceful at Heart: Anabaptist Reflections on Healthy Masculinity* recently released**

By Don Neufeld and Steve Thomas

Here's a book by men for men seeking healthy masculinity.



This book comes at a time when men and masculinity are in the spotlight. We see many men behaving badly on the news—abusing power, violating women, and mistreating others. But most men I know aren't like this. In my work as a pastor and with Mennonite Men, I see those seeking to be good men but wondering what that means as we wrestle with issues of gender identity, conventional masculinity, power and privilege, and expectations in the grind of daily living.

Along with many men, we have questions about masculinity. What kind of man am I? What do I wish for my sons as men? How do I want men to relate to my daughter? What does it mean to *be a man*? Who are we as males? Why isn't there more agreement on a description of masculinity? Aren't we just talking biology? How are men essentially different from women (if at all)? Where can we find healthy models of masculinity?

Depending on who we ask, we get different answers to these questions. Leaders in men's work offer various perspectives. Those in the mythopoetic men's movement

draw on a rich tradition of stories and rituals, gatherings of men, and psychological archetypes for male formation. Those in the conservative evangelical men's movement reassert traditional male roles and "godly manhood," calling men to take responsibility for how they live. Those more attuned to feminist concerns examine social constructions of masculinity, critique patriarchal systems, question traditional roles, and call men to establish gender equality. Each of these groups have their contributions and some limitations.

The book explores what our shared Anabaptist Christian tradition offers for understanding healthy masculinity. The context for answering this is outlined in Part 1 by looking at masculinity from clinical and historical angles.

A variety of perspectives on masculinity are offered in Part 2 to demonstrate there is no singular masculinity but multiple masculinities, socially constructed and remarkably varied, even among Anabaptist men. The diverse backgrounds and styles of this part reflects the nature of our subject: a rough collage of pieces pulled together as images of what it's like to be men.

Through the lens of the Anabaptist touchstones of discipleship, community, and peace, Part 3 turns to the Bible in fresh ways to envision healthy masculinity. These chapters call men to follow the way of Jesus in community for God's peace.

Part 4 offers practices for the lives of men, focusing on power, race, and peace in our relationships with others and God. Finally, three Anabaptist women leaders provide an afterword as they reflect on their reading of this book by Anabaptist men. Their experiences and perspectives provide groundwork for what needs further attention to benefit our lives together.

As with any book, this volume has its limitations. Given its scope, focusing on the experiences of individual men and their expressions of masculinity, it points to but does not assess the complicated nature of hegemonic masculinity (largely defined by white, middle-class, heterosexual males in dominant culture) nor systemic patriarchy with the power and privileges it grants certain men while subordinating women. We acknowledge that more work needs to be done on these issues to address gender identity and equality. We hope this book prompts further conversation, study, and change in these areas as people of all identities come together to create "one new humanity" (Eph. 2:14–15) in God's shalom.

For details about the book and to purchase a copy go to <https://wipfandstock.com/peaceful-at-heart.html>. In Canada <https://www.commonword.ca/Home>.