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Editorial

This thirteenth volume of the *Biblical Higher Education Journal*, like those that came before, aims to enrich and elevate the practice of biblical ministry formation and professional leadership education through informed reflection and scholarly research. Biblical higher education fills a distinctive and important niche in the broader field of higher education by providing students the opportunity to integrate Christian faith and biblical teaching into their professional and ministerial preparation. This journal supports the mission of biblical higher education by providing a venue for publication of related research and a forum for thought and dialogue regarding the issues, trends, opportunities, and challenges facing biblical higher education.

This volume contains two thought-provoking and stimulating articles. The first article is written by Larry McKinney, who is well known to the ABHE community as its former Executive Director. Following his years at ABHE, he served as president of Simpson University and currently serves as a higher education consultant with McKinney Solutions. He draws on his decades of experience in Christ-centered higher education to consider future trends and how ABHE schools will respond to them.

The second article was written by Matthew Steven Bracey, Vice Provost at Welch College. He challenges Christian educators to integrate the intellectual life and scholarship into their vocational self-identity. He shows that scholarship is not just compatible with one’s calling as a Christian educator but is compelled by that calling.

This volume of the journal also contains seven reviews of books on a wide range of topics that relate to biblical higher education. Some of these books are more inspirational and theoretical in nature, while others are more practical.

During this second year as editor-in-chief, I want express my appreciation to those fellow educators who serve on the
editorial board for their willingness to devote time to providing feedback to authors that help them produce a stronger final product. I especially want to thank our Book Review Editor, Aaron Profitt of God’s Bible School and College, for his helpful assistance in preparing the book reviews for publication. This journal would not be possible without the excellent production work of Carol Dibble and the support of the staff at ABHE.

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Editorial Policy

The articles in the *Biblical Higher Education Journal* reflect the opinions of
the authors and reviewers and do not necessarily represent those of the Editor or
the Publisher.
ARTICLES

▷ Biblical Higher Education: Past Commitments, Present Realities, and Future Considerations
   Larry J. McKinney

▷ Faith and Scholarship: A Christian Calling
   Matthew Steven Bracey
Biblical Higher Education: Past Commitments, Present Realities, and Future Considerations

Larry J. McKinney

Abstract
This article represents a departure from the normal pattern of a journal in that it purports to offer limited research findings, statistical reports, citation documentation, or academic analysis. Rather, it reflects the views of a veteran higher education administrator who has spent more than 37 years of his life in Christ-centered higher education. The article examines the significant changes that are taking place in the church and in education and the implications for institutions of biblical higher education and their leaders. The paper is divided into three sections: (1) past commitments, (2) present realities, and (3) future considerations. The first section includes a brief review of several historical commitments of the Bible college movement. Section two gives limited attention to several current realities relative to the church and higher education that should cause biblical higher education leaders to evaluate their respective missions and programs. The third section on future considerations receives the most attention. Knowing that significant changes are taking place, an agenda for renewal is considered that examines biblical and pedagogical implications while focusing on core values.

In the late 19th century, a movement began that has had a profound influence on evangelical Protestantism. Its impact
has been felt in nearly every part of the world, producing a large percentage of evangelical missionaries from North America and training leaders for the Protestant church and many parachurch organizations. This institution was the Bible institute movement, having since evolved into the Bible college.

North American Bible colleges have survived longer than their critics would have thought possible, and they have endured for more decades than many of their premillennial leaders hoped would have been necessary. One hundred and thirty-five years after the first Bible school was started, there are more than 500 Bible schools and colleges in the United States and Canada, many of which still bear a resemblance to their forebears. ¹

Increasing numbers of Bible colleges are accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education. ² Many of these longer-standing institutions also hold membership with one of the regional accrediting associations. Urged on by these associations and prevailing educational norms, they have expanded their programs, incorporated more liberal arts subjects into their curriculum, and graduated increasing numbers of students with standard Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees. Some of the larger institutions of biblical higher education have even established their own seminaries and graduate schools. In short, Bible colleges have become more recognized within the larger academic community.

Even with these successes, Bible colleges face a somewhat ambiguous future. Struggles with limited budgets, smaller student bodies, and meager endowments continue to make them more vulnerable than other types of church-related institutions. With the
growth of Christian liberal arts colleges and universities and the increasing presence of evangelical seminaries, some have questioned whether Bible colleges continue to play a vital educational role. What conclusions should be drawn about their future impact and future identity?

I began my career in biblical higher education as a young student development administrator in 1980. In that same year, Kenneth O. Gangel, a champion for biblical higher education, addressed the state of the Bible college movement in North America in an article titled “The Bible College: Past, Present, and Future,” which appeared in *Christianity Today*. He stated that increasing numbers of Bible colleges would shift from a “traditional” model with an exclusive commitment to vocational ministry and an emphasis on terminal ministry training to a “progressive” model where the emphasis would be on vocational training with a broader definition of ministry (Gangel, 1980, p. 35). Furthermore, he predicted that many Bible colleges would evolve into Christian liberal arts institutions with more focus on general and professional studies and with less focus on biblical studies and ministry preparation. Revising the topic 37 years later and making a more current assessment, I examine biblical higher education with respect to past commitments, present realities, and future considerations.

**Past Commitments**

Several past commitments, noteworthy of biblical higher education, are applicable regardless of time and culture. They are four immutable qualities deeply embedded within our institutions that must continue to be embraced. They are our core values.
Commitment to Biblical Training

A thorough knowledge of the Bible has always been central to our institutions’ educational goals. Serious devotion to the Word of God as the authority for all of life, with respect to how we think and how we live, has always been a hallmark.

Commitment to the Great Commission

The spread of the gospel has been a primary desired outcome for our educational programs. A desire to produce world-changers and infect students with a passion to win the world for Christ has been paramount.

Commitment to Holy Living

Issues of character, lifestyle, integrity, and godliness have always been important. There is a concern for belief and behavior, right living, and right thinking.

Commitment to Ministry Formation

To equip students for meaningful church-related ministries has been a primary purpose for our institutions of biblical higher education. Most, if not all, of the characteristics of institutions related to the Association for Biblical Higher Education could be summed up with the word “training.”

With respect to the past, most of us appreciate the rich history of biblical higher education. However, we must be careful not to become so nostalgic about the past that we fail to respond to the
present realities and the future challenges. It is pointless to try to recapture the past.

Ecclesiastes 7:10 admonishes: “Do not say, why were the former days better than these? For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.” This passage refers to the danger of nostalgia, the temptation to try to live in the past or to reconstruct the past. We all have exciting stories about our institutions. In most cases, these are stories of men and women of vision and courage who served faithfully. But the pioneer days are forever behind us. We should not spend too much time gazing into the rearview mirror. Some people long for the past because it is safe and comfortable. It is one part of life that appears to be under our control. We shape it at will and make it look the way we want. We can even idealize it.

What is the problem or the danger with being primarily focused on the past? Why is it not wise to want to go back? First, the past was never as good as we make it out to be. It is easy to glorify the “good old days.” Second, a focus on the past may discourage us relative to the present. Third, preoccupation with the past can paralyze us for the future. Our sensitivities may become deadened and our vision clouded.

**Present Realities**

Even with the rich history of biblical higher education, it may be necessary to evaluate our respective missions, programs, and contributions to the church and the larger world. In so doing, what are some of the current realities we must face?
Ministry Training Has Changed

When many Bible colleges were started, they began as terminal types of training schools for those who were not attending degree-granting colleges, universities, or seminaries. The diploma awarded was often considered adequate for those pursuing church-related vocations. Today, the needs of many churches and parachurch organizations have changed. The same may be said of the clergy and laity who are assuming significant ministry roles. Many churches are looking for leaders with graduate-level training. Undergraduate theological training is becoming less terminal and more foundational for career preparation.

Furthermore, some local churches are doing their own ministerial training rather than looking to the traditional Bible college or seminary. This has grown out of the frustration and perception that classical theological education has not adequately prepared men and women for leadership in 21st-century churches.

Higher Education Has Changed

It is not an overstatement to say that the world of higher education is changing rapidly and dramatically. The number of contextual changes affecting the institutional operations, the culture, and even the foundations of contemporary higher education is significant. These changes create a set of new challenges and opportunities for postsecondary education, including biblical higher education.

At the 2001 Council for Higher Education Accreditation Conference Enhancing Usefulness Conference, CHEA President J.S.
Eaton (2012) referred to three crucial challenges in the contemporary world of higher education: universalization, new commercialization, and internationalization. While all three changes are noteworthy, internationalization is perhaps the most significant development impacting higher education today. Internationalization is not a new phenomenon, but its effects are increasingly apparent.

**Mobility of People**

Although the trend may have slowed down slightly because of the effects of global insecurity, many countries including Canada and the United States have experienced the growth of international students. This phenomenon is greatly influenced by various international student scholarships and student exchange programs. Additional staff exchanges are now common exponents of internationalization in higher education.

**Mobility of Institutions**

The internationalization trend extends well beyond the mobility of people. There is also the movement of institutions. Higher education is now being exported from one country to another, particularly from Canada and the United States. Branch campuses, extension centers, and various other “transnational” higher education arrangements have become commonplace in delivering postsecondary education to new markets. This international development is accompanied by privatization because of increased opportunities for for-profit delivery, frequently offered to private providers and corporate business.
**Mobility of Content and Courseware**

The demand for flexibility of delivery has also led to internationalization characterized by moving content, knowledge, and courseware. The advent of the Internet and the production of the appropriate software and suitable courseware has opened the way for the distribution of a “virtual higher education.” It has freed students from the constraints of time and space. However, it has also created a new set of challenges with respect to serving students effectively.

**Students Have Changed**

The world of North American higher education is continuing to change in respect to the student population, not only in terms of size but also composition. The demographic revolution consists of rising and falling numbers of younger and older adults, male and female students, and various racial and ethnic groups. With more international students, more ethnic minorities, more women, more laypersons, and more older adults, a variety of approaches to biblical higher education must be developed. The focus of the early Bible schools was on students who were not being equipped through traditional theological education. Today’s Bible colleges need to demonstrate the same kind of sensitivity to education, especially nontraditional students.

Furthermore, the interests, values, attitudes, relationship patterns, expectations, and career interests have changed as we frequently serve students that are commonly referred to as “millennials.” They are not the same types of students who studied at our institutions 25
or 30 years ago. They also come to our institutions for a variety of different reasons.

In partnership with the Association for Biblical Higher Education, the Barna Group (2017) recently asked adults about their beliefs on the primary purpose of a college education. The top ten reasons why adults go to college were cited. While the responses may not come as a surprise, the percentages were quite revealing. Seventy percent of adults 18 and older believe it is “to prepare for a specific job career,” and just over half (55 percent) say it is “to increase financial opportunities.” Almost half (48 percent) think it is “to stay competitive in today’s job market.” The bottom three options were the following: “to learn how to make a difference in the world” (22 percent), “to develop moral character (14 percent), and “to encourage spiritual growth” (7 percent). Falling somewhere in between were personal growth and practical skills: “to strengthen critical thinking/writing skills (36 percent), “to grow in leadership skills” (30 percent), “to discover who you are” (27 percent), and “to learn about academic interests” (22 percent). Percentages were virtually identical between U.S. adults overall and self-identified Christians. Differences between the general population and the evangelical population were also less significant than might be expected. The reality is that most Christians who are making college choices, including those who are prospective Bible college students, have the same career focus and financial motivation as their secular peers. Ministry preparation and spiritual formation are not near the top of their priority list.

These findings are very critical for those involved in the leadership of our institutions of biblical higher education.
Recruitment strategies must be developed that consider the factors that strongly influence the college choices of prospective students.

**Future Considerations**

In 1997, I had the privilege of writing a historical account of biblical higher education entitled *Equipping for Service: A Historical Account of the Bible Movement in North America* in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges (now called the Association for Biblical Higher Education). While the book focused primarily on the history of Bible colleges, the final chapter addressed critical issues and future directions for biblical higher education. I raised the following questions: As Bible colleges prepare to move into the 21st century, what are the critical questions they must face? What is the future direction of the Bible College movement? What must these institutions do if they are to continue to be relevant? (McKinney, 1997, p. 199). I return to the same set of questions 20 years later in looking at the future of biblical higher education. An agenda for renewal needs to be considered that gives attention to biblical and educational implications while continuing to focus on core values.

**Institutional Mission**

An institution of biblical higher education exists for the sake of its mission. Every program and activity of a Bible college must grow out of its institutional purpose. The mission must be the raison d’être, the driving force behind every decision that is made. Regardless of the educational paradigm that an institution adopts, there must be a commitment to biblical training, a commitment to the Great
Commission, a commitment to holy living, and a commitment to ministry formation.

_Breakdown: Educational Flexibility_

Our institutions of biblical higher education must remain educationally flexible if they are going to relate to the needs of a contemporary culture. The founding of the early Bible schools was in response to the perceived needs of both church and society. Throughout its history, the Bible college movement has adjusted its curricula to meet the needs of the time. The same cultural sensitivity must prevail. While holding on to their core values, institutions must keep their educational programs current with today’s needs just as their leaders did in the past.

_Breakdown: Improved Academic Delivery Systems_

Recognizing the need for educational flexibility, our institutions must always be looking for new and improved ways to provide quality education. Institutions must be looking for new groups of students, new geographic locations, new technologies, and even new curricula to complement the present student bodies and educational programs. If our institutions are going to attract more and different students, they must develop new academic systems such as instructional technology, distance education, and other forms of continuing education to attract nontraditional students. With respect to instructional technology, institutions must be proactive rather than being forced to catch up. Technology provides an opportunity for providing a biblical higher education to those who are part of the Information Age.
Strengthened Enrollment Efforts

Enrollment challenges are greater than ever for private, Christian higher education, given the fact that institutional budgets are so heavily student-driven, and Bible colleges are no exception. Therefore, our institutions must develop a more comprehensive approach to enrollment management given the fact that institutional budgets are so largely student-driven. Successful management begins at the point of initial contact with a prospective student and continues until graduation. An assertive approach to recruitment and retention must be directed that provides a steady supply of qualified students to ensure institutional growth and vitality. Involved in this strategy are recruitment, financial aid, academic advising, academic assistance, orientation, student services, and a comprehensive approach to retention that involves all faculty and staff.

Strengthened Commitment to Quality Student Service

The quality of life for students is important for fostering growth and development to full potential for the Lord’s service. This type of growth can take place through classroom instruction, chapel services, student ministries, and a wide variety of co-curricular activities. But student development also grows out of the informal interactions of the academic community. Our institutions have the responsibility for the development of complete, holistic students—the physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions of their lives. Older students, part-time students, and nonresidential students must also not be forgotten, though their needs may be different from traditional undergraduate students.
Increased Participation in Graduate Education

The expectations of today’s churches and parachurch organizations, have changed. A seminary degree or some other type of graduate education is more commonly expected of pastors and Christian leaders. Undergraduate biblical higher education is often viewed as foundational for career preparation with the expectation that graduate studies will follow. This is one of the reasons why a growing number of our institutions within the Association for Biblical Higher Education have started their own seminaries or have developed partnerships with existing seminaries. Many member institutions also offer graduate-level degrees in elementary and secondary education, cross-cultural studies, teaching English to speakers of other languages, higher education leadership, business, counseling, and other professional fields.

Conclusion

We are now living in the 21st century, a time of rapid growth and change. Many challenges and opportunities face biblical higher education leaders who provide direction for our institutions. Will it be possible for biblical higher education to remain distinctive and yet be varied? Is it possible for Bible colleges to offer a variety of professional programs and still maintain a strong core of biblical/theological studies? Is it possible to gain broader academic recognition and still be firmly committed to our rich evangelical heritage? Can an institution be academically respectable and still foster a heart for Christian service? Can an institution take advantage of new academic delivery systems and still serve the holistic needs
of students? Can Bible colleges continue to train the kinds of leaders that today’s churches need?

The answers to these questions will help to determine the future of biblical higher education. We will no doubt change. However, we must also remain committed to our core values. We will have to change if we are going to remain relevant but not at the expense of our evangelical distinctives. These core values need to be affirmed if Christian institutions are to remain true to themselves. This has been the pattern in the past as we have adjusted curricula and programs to meet the needs of a changing church and a changing society. The same sensitivity to time and culture needs to continue. We must remain flexible if we are to respond to current needs of the 21st century but not at the expense of the immutable qualities embedded within our institutions.

Yes, the needs of the church and related ministries are changing. Although there will always be the need for workers in traditional pastoral and cross-cultural ministries, the variety of ministry opportunities available is wider today than ever before. There is also a greater need for qualified lay people who are equipped to serve in marketplace careers.

The spiritual needs of the world, in depth and scope, are also greater than ever before. The issue is not whether there is a need for equipping Christians for service, but rather how will the need be met most effectively? Higher education institutions that are firmly committed to biblical education must continue to carry out the critical mission of equipping students for his service.
May this article serve as a clear reminder about the important role that biblical higher education plays in the church and the world. We are grateful for our past commitments. We are cognizant of our present realities. We are focused on future considerations with a clear understanding of our core values.

★★★
References


Endnotes

1 The Missionary Training Institute, founded by Albert B. Simpson in New York City in 1882, is commonly recognized as the first Bible school in North America. The number of current institutions is based upon an informal database of more than 500 non-accredited Bible institutes and colleges that was maintained by the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

2 Currently, 106 institutions are accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education; another 16 institutions hold candidate status; and 17 institutions hold applicant status. Six institutions hold programmatic accreditation with ABHE.
Faith and Scholarship: A Christian Call to Action

Matthew Steven Bracey

Abstract

This essay proposes to examine how Christian academics should conceive of their scholarship in relation to their faith; it is aimed particularly at those in education. In so doing, Christian scholars should first define faith and scholarship. Next, they will look to some theological concepts important for their calling as intellectuals. The topics of faith and theology will reveal vital truths from which Christian scholars can consider their vocations more fully. Research will then demonstrate, first, that Christian scholars are intellectuals, meaning not that they are unspiritual, unsocial, or unfeeling but that they follow their calling from God to pursue the life of the mind. Second, review of the literature will indicate that Christian scholars also pursue the hard work of constructing and being faithful to a biblical worldview, as well as of integrating faith and learning, whatever their setting: public or private, large or small, Christian or non-Christian. Finally, research will show that Christian scholars must not forget the importance of practicing the intellectual virtues and the intellectual disciplines. The essay will conclude by suggesting practical ways that institutions and individuals can encourage and pursue Christian scholarship.

Christians who work in an academic setting face a double challenge: that of being a faithful Christian and that of being a reputable scholar. At times, these aims do not conflict, yet
at others, they do. How ought Christian scholars to think of their callings? How can they bridge the faith-learning gap? What practices should they cultivate in their line of work? Christian scholars early in their careers have these questions and are still trying to figure out the answers. Veteran scholars have had more practice and, thus, can mentor the younger generation; still, even they lose focus and need encouragement. After defining some terms and introducing some concepts, this essay will attempt to answer those questions and offer helpful suggestions.

**Defining Terms**

In the New Testament and throughout Christian history, *faith* has referred to myriad phenomena. Saving faith is a gift God gives to those who place their hope and trust in him. Faith is also “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1, NASB). Still further, it refers to the orthodox beliefs of the universal church through space and time (Jude 1:3). The Christian faith is the bedrock of the Christian scholar’s work.

*Scholarship*, on the other hand, has reference to the student. In fact, *scholar*, related to the word *school*, means “student.” Insofar as people are students, they are scholars. For this reason, the Christian disciple is a scholar by definition, since the disciple is, to use Robert Picirilli’s (2003) expression, “a student in the school of Jesus” (p. 163). In a very real manner, Christian scholarship is the calling of all Christians. As several have stated, all Christians are theologians (Grenz & Olson, 1996, p. 12; Sproul, 2014). Teachers do well to remind their students of this fact.
Even so, the scholarship of lay Christian scholars and that of professional Christian scholars will look different. For the former, it refers to the application of the believer treasuring God in their whole being in whatever vocation he has called them. “The burgomaster is God’s burgomaster,” said B. B. Warfield (1995, p. 184). For the latter, scholarship refers to the same, except that professional Christian scholars’ vocations tend to regard the life of the mind, such as the academician, author, and professor. What are the theological foundations for this calling?

**Theological Foundations**

The Christian faith teaches that the object of all Christian scholarship is God himself. He is the ultimate *telos* to be desired. This is a foundation attested to throughout Christian history. Augustine (2008) wrote: “The things which are to be enjoyed, then, are the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” (p. 10). John Milton (1895) commented: “The end then of Learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him” (p. 4).

Immediately, however, people face a problem with pursuing this object of worship. Finite humans cannot know anything about infinite, transcendent God, except that he reveal himself to them and that they, in some meaningful way, understand God’s revelation. God has revealed himself through the incarnate and written Word of God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures (John 1:14; 2 Tim. 3:16). Although human beings do not *know* as they ought due to original sin, God offers epistemic rescue to those who would accept his free gift of salvation. The Spirit of Christ, who is the *logos* of
God, dwells within God’s children, making God’s words intelligible to them (Nash, 1982). For this reason, Christian scholarship can be meaningful. Christian scholars can know truth, and they can pursue full-orbed Christian scholarship. True scholarship does not displace faith in Christ but is consistent with and subservient to the revealed truth of God.

The Christian faith also teaches a robust theological anthropology that views human beings as thinking-feeling-willing-acting beings (Forlines, 2001, pp. xiii-xvi). God created human beings with minds. Although the fall has perverted its use, God in Christ by his Spirit is redeeming the mind unto right thinking for his glory (2 Cor. 4:4-6; Rom. 12:2). Thus, Christianity does not bid men and women to put their brains in their pockets. It enjoins them to use their minds (Mark 12:30; Rom. 7:25; 8:5-7; Eph. 4:23; Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:7). “Thinking,” writes John Piper (2010), “is indispensable on the path to passion for God” (p. 27). The mind and its operation of thinking are integral in Christian anthropology and in Christian discipleship.

**The Christian Scholar**

Having defined the terms faith and scholarship, as well as having laid several theological foundations, Christian scholars can ponder their calling more meaningfully. In sum, they are intellectuals who seek to integrate their faith and learning in a manner that is faithful to a Christian worldview and reflective of Christian intellectual virtues and disciplines.
An Intellectual

Intellectual, in this sense, is not a moniker describing someone who is unspiritual. Christian scholars love their God with their whole beings (Mark 12:29-30). They pursue intellectual and spiritual fitness (Warfield, 1995, p. 182). “To many minds,” quips Garrett DeWeese (2011), “philosophy and spiritual formation are like aardvarks and carburetors—the words hardly belong in the same sentence. . . . I want to suggest that not only are spiritual formation and philosophical work compatible, but in fact they are closely related—as means and end” (p. 309). DeWeese’s point applies to all Christian intellectuals: Intellectual formation and spiritual formation go hand in hand.

Additionally, intellectual is not intended to describe someone who is unsocial. Christian intellectuals are not “cold intellectual[s] without the warmth of the spirit” (Gaebelein, 1968, p. 105). While Christian scholars will often work in solitude because they have to read, write, think, and study, they also resolve to stay connected to the real world. Antonin-Gilbert Sertillanges (1998) wrote that the Christian scholar aims to “find the right balance between the life within and the life without, between silence and sound” (p. 62).

Finally, intellectual should not designate someone as unfeeling. While Christian scholars take the mind seriously, they also recognize that God creates human beings not simply with minds but also with hearts. The interconnectedness of these two organs is not easily disentangled, for while the mind thinks and the heart feels, the mind also feels and the heart also thinks (Rom. 10:9-10). Christian scholars recognize that God created them with a heart, and with
that they seek to love their neighbors as themselves through their disciplines (Mark 12:31). Thus, Christian scholars are intellectuals, who are spiritual, social, and sensitive. They work not to fit that stereotype of the cold, distant eccentric. Certainly, they are genuinely the person God made them to be yet with the charm and winsome of Christ.

In addition, Christian scholars view their pursuit of the life of the mind as more than an interest. It is a vocation in the truest sense of that word which God has given to them. It is a “sacred calling” (Sertillanges, 1998, p. 3) to which God has called that person, whether by virtue of their gifts, talents, interests, and/or circumstances to steward with excellence unto his glory (1 Cor. 10:31; Rom. 4:8). James Sire (2000) defines the vocation of the Christian intellectual in a fun, even playful manner:

An intellectual is one who loves ideas, is dedicated to clarifying them, developing them, criticizing them, turning them over and over, seeing their implications, stacking them atop one another, arranging them, sitting silent while new ideas pop up and old ones seem to rearrange themselves, playing with them, punning with their terminology, laughing at them, watching them clash, picking up the pieces, starting over, judging them, withholding judgment about them, changing them, bringing them into contact with their counterparts in other systems of thought, inviting them to dine and have a ball but also suiting them for service in workaday life.

A Christian intellectual is all of the above to the glory of God. (pp. 27-28)
God calls Christian academics to pursue scholarship. Practically, this means they take seriously the duty of stewarding the ideas, theories, and developments of their discipline. When an important publication releases, Christian scholars will read and interact with it. In addition, a commitment to excellence suggests they seek to contribute meaningfully to their fields. Perhaps this means they resolve to contribute one article proposal for publication each quarter or half year, or that they make a conference or even book proposal once a year; not all proposals will be accepted, but some will. The point is that Christian scholars should reflect on what being a good steward means in their field and context. Hard intellectual work is a holy calling, set apart for God’s purposes. It is not in addition to spiritual work; it is spiritual work. Writing and teaching are as much acts of worship as are Bible intake and prayer.

*Worldview and Faith-Learning Integration*

Being thus called, Christian scholars believe God is the author of all truth and that the human being is capable of knowing this truth, even if imperfectly and incompletely. All knowledge has a single source: God.

Although the fall has disordered knowledge, Christian academics aim to unify knowledge in their thinking and discipline. While they may pursue scholarship in a given field to a greater extent than that of some other field, they do not work in a silo. They recognize that their field is but part of a greater whole and work to integrate their part into that whole. Just as God brought order from chaos (Gen. 1:1-2), so the Christian scholar, being made in the image of God and being conformed to the image of his Son (Gen. 1:26-28; Rom.
8:29), works to bring order to knowledge (Sire, 2000, p. 65). “[A] ll branches of knowledge,” exclaimed John Henry Newman (1905) in *The Idea of a University*, “are connected together, because the subject-matter of knowledge is intimately united in itself, as being the acts and the work of the Creator” (p. 99). This means that Christian scholars pursue their work in a distinctly different manner than the non-Christian.

Christian intellectuals cannot pursue their work of integration except that it is based on some coherent view of life and of the world. Most commonly, this is referred to as *worldview*, which is a “commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false),” explains Sire (2015), “which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being” (p. 141). People such as Charles Taylor and James K. A. Smith have criticized the term *worldview* for focusing too heavily on intellectual apologetics to the apparent exclusion of spiritual formation and embodied affections. Thus, Taylor (2004; 2007) has referred to social imaginaries, and Smith has popularized the notion of cultural liturgies (2009; 2013; 2017).

However, notions of Christian worldview are not exclusive to these concerns. As seen, Sire frames worldview as “a fundamental orientation of the heart.” Simply, one’s worldview describes their view of the world; undoubtedly, heart, mind, and will factor into this. In addition, Christian worldview and scholarship form a symbiotic relationship. Not only does the work of Christian scholars
contribute to Christian worldview, but Christian worldview also guides scholars in their work and guards them from error. In the Reformed tradition, this worldview assumes shape by a creation-fall-redemption-consummation rubric.

For Christian scholars, this will mean they aim to filter all they learn and know in their field of study through a Christian worldview; numerous books exist that apply worldview thinking to particular disciplines. It will also mean they work to integrate their work with their worldview. Francis Beckwith and J. P. Moreland (2011) explain: “[O]ur theological beliefs, especially those derived from careful study of the Bible, are blended and unified with important, reasonable ideas from our profession or college major into a coherent, intellectually satisfying Christian worldview” (p. 9). Similarly, George Marsden (1997) recommends “faith-informed” scholarship (pp. 10, 67).

Although Christian scholars are often familiar with the concept of worldview thinking, they are less likely to have actually applied it in scholarship. William Lane Craig (2004) laments of being “scandalized by the lack of the integrative thinking on the part of Christian colleagues” (p. 20). Yet Christians must pursue integration with courage and with wisdom. Beckwith and Moreland (2011) offer seven apologias for the importance of faith-learning integration (pp. 10-21), as well as five models of integration (pp. 24-25). Suffice to say the particulars will depend on any number of factors, including the nature of the discipline and of the institution in which a given scholar works. As a general guideline, David Dockery (2008) suggests the following: first, perception of an idea; then appreciation of the idea; third, engagement with it; and, finally,
and only if necessary, confrontation with the idea (p. 83). For most people, integrative thinking will not challenge the “nuts-and-bolts” of the discipline but rather its underlying philosophy (Craig, 2004, p. 22).

At the same time, incongruity will invariably arise between the knowledge of God and that of the world (1 Cor. 1:18-25). For example, this is evident in the fields of literary criticism, history, mathematics and physics, psychology, sociology, and the sciences, among others. In such circumstances, Christian scholars must remain true to God’s self-disclosure, allowing it to inform and to transform their vocation as it can. The particular shape this takes in practice will vary according to the application of Christian wisdom to the vocational circumstance: Where do they work? What is their discipline (Jas. 1:5)? Alvin Plantinga (1984) offers this memorable advice to Christian intellectuals in the academy:

First, Christian philosophers and Christian intellectuals generally must display more autonomy—more independence of the rest of philosophical world. Second, Christian philosophers must display more integrity—integrity in the sense of integral wholeness, or oneness, or unity, being all of one piece. Perhaps “integrality” would be the better word here. And necessary to these two is a third: Christian courage, or boldness, or strength, or perhaps Christian self-confidence. We Christian philosophers must display more faith, more trust in the Lord; we must put on the whole armor of God…. In sum, we who are Christians and propose to be philosophers must not rest content with being philosophers who happen, incidentally, to be Christians; we must strive
to be Christian philosophers. We must therefore pursue our projects with integrity, independence, and Christian boldness. (pp. 297, 315)

Christian academics must recognize the importance of their vocation. Integration failure has serious repercussions. Vacuums will be filled, and where Christians do not speak up and defend their worldview, non-Christians will, and they will influence generations. That is the story of much of higher education in the modern era (Gushee, 2002, p. 121). Allan Bloom (2012) and Ronald Nash (1990) expressed grave concern in discussing the closing of the American mind and heart: The closing of the American mind has resulted in functional and cultural illiteracy, and the closing of the American heart has resulted in moral illiteracy (Nash, 1990, pp. 45-59). Today, knowledge of first principles and of the permanent things (Eliot, 1940) is no longer remembered, resulting in what C. S. Lewis (1940) called the abolition of man. Thus, Christian scholars must work to integrate faith and learning.

At stake is more than higher education; at stake are the souls of people. Charles Malik (1980) pointed to two vital tasks for Christians: the spiritual task and the intellectual task, evangelism and education. “At the heart of all the problems facing Western civilization,” he wrote, “lies the state of the mind and the spirit in the universities … Responsible Christians face two tasks—that of saving the soul and that of saving the mind” (pp. 293, 295). Christian academics should stand to reclaim the lost soul of the American university (Marsden, 1994) and to “create a culture” in the academy “that honors God and enables people to thrive” (Keller & Alsdorf, 2012, p. 21). In letting the Christian worldview shape their practice of a given discipline,
Christian scholars will contribute positively to that field.

The Intellectual Virtues and Disciplines

In contending for the mind, Christian scholars must not neglect the spirit. Christian worldview reminds scholars to form intellectual virtues and disciples. Intellectual virtues go beyond the four cardinal virtues (prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice) and the three theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity), though they include them. They also consider the virtues of the mind. Christian scholars have written widely on this topic. Among the most popular are autonomy, carefulness, courage, curiosity, humility, integrity, and tenacity (Baehr, 2011, pp. 140-190; Dow, 2013, pp. 25-76; Roberts & Wood, 2007, pp. 151-324; Sire, 2000, p. 110; Wood, 1998). Christian intellectuals should seek to follow these and others.

However, virtue does not fall from the sky like manna. It is not easy to find but results rather from persistent work, specifically intellectual discipline. As with the intellectual virtues, many scholars have written on the disciplines as well. These include, but are not limited to, solitude, silence, meditation, and prayer (Sire, 2000, pp. 126-146). Christian scholars must never lose sight of their spiritual formation. The fruit of Christ and of his Spirit should grow in them (Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 5:9). As with the intellectual disciplines, they should practice the spiritual disciplines, such as Bible intake, meditation, prayer, fasting, submission, service, and worship (Whitney, 1991; Foster, 1978). Christian intellectuals do not divorce what they do from who they are, orthodoxy from orthopraxy, faith from practice, knowing from doing, believing from obeying (Sire, 2000, p. 37). Instead, they pursue a life of character in Christlikeness.
by the grace of God. They do not simply know the truth. They live it. They are not workaholics but respect the Sabbath rest.

In addition, Christian scholars are not given to sloth, sensuality, pride, envy, or irritation but rather to character, love, goodness, and physical and spiritual health (Sertillanges, 1998, pp. 17-40). They are not negligent but studious, and studious but not unto vainglory (Gal. 5:26). Christian scholars order their time carefully and they recognize they must sometimes sacrifice otherwise good pursuits. Sertillanges (1998) wrote: “There is a luxury tax to be paid on intellectual greatness” (p. 42), and, “[B]y choosing one road I am turning my back on a thousand others” (p. 121).

Practically speaking, how can Christian scholars achieve and Christian institutions encourage the aims set forth in this essay on top of all the other responsibilities at work and at home? This is where the rubber meets the road, as they say. First, Christian establishments of education should work to create a culture of scholarship at their institutions. They should encourage their faculty, and in some cases their administration, to pursue the life of the mind through reading, writing, teaching, and publishing. This can take place explicitly by word of mouth in faculty meetings and other such settings; it can also occur implicitly by celebrating the achievements of those who have received an invitation to speak at a conference or have published an article or book. In addition, Christian institutions should work not to overburden such persons with administrative and other responsibilities but to create space, if even a little, whereby Christian scholars can pursue these aims.
Second, Christian intellectuals must work not to waste such opportunities but to capitalize on them as their place of employment may provide. Even if responsibilities at the institution make scholarship difficult, they should still pursue it and work at it. This will mean they establish good “boundaries” (Cloud & Townsend, 1992), both with people and with gadgets. Certainly, there is a time and place for play on the Internet or at the water cooler. But at some point, intellectuals have to close their email tabs on their Internet browser and put their telephones out of sight and on silent so they can pursue what Cal Newport (2016) calls “deep work.” Distraction is the killer of scholarship.

Such aims may seem impossible. Because beginning scholars want to seem eager and capable, they quickly accept more responsibility than they can handle, and veteran scholars are already weighed down with responsibility and fatigue. However, if Christian scholars really work at it, they can carve out an hour or two each day of the workweek. That may not seem like much, but over the course of weeks and months it adds up. If the person who feels they have no time could simply find one hour a day five days a week, then that would amount to more than 250 hours of scholarship; that is not insignificant. And for many academics, the summer affords even more freedom. However Christian intellectuals may choose to pursue the practice of these principles, they should resolve not to let the tyranny of the urgent keep them from the otherwise sacred calling of Christian scholarship.
Conclusion

William Lane Craig (2004) offers three pieces of advice to the Christian professor: (1) “Engage intellectually, not just with your chosen discipline, but with your Christian faith” (p. 16); (2) “Strive to integrate your Christian faith with your discipline” (p. 18); and (3) “Be mindful of your personal, spiritual formation” (p. 24). These three statements summarize the points considered above.

How should Christian academics conceive of their scholarship in relation to their faith? They should remember, first, that scholarship is a sacred calling from the God of heaven and earth, a good and noble work, which is based in and deferential to the revelation of God. In addition, Christian academics are intellectuals but are neither pompous nor stuffy. They aim to love God with their whole being and to love neighbor as self. They steward their vocation, relating their scholarship to worldview and their learning to faith, and they practice good disciplines and reflect good virtues. Finally, Christian scholars make time to pursue their callings with commitment and with earnestness. In the end, the life of the mind does not exist for its own sake. Thinking well and thinking rightly for the sake of God and man is a holy disposition of worship unto the glory of God, now and forever. Amen.
References


Endnotes

1 See, for example, Gordon Clark (1952), *A Christian View of Man and Things*, which gives attention to history, politics, ethics, science, religion, and epistemology; David S. Dockery (2012), *Faith and Learning*, which gives attention to philosophy, linguistics, language, history, political philosophy, sociology, the arts, music education, communication and media, and math, physics, and engineering; David S. Dockery and Gregory Alan Thornbury (2002), *Shaping a Christian Worldview: The Foundation of Christian Higher Education*, which gives attention to literature, natural science, the arts, music, the social sciences, media, teaching, health care, social work, business, study life, and campus ministry; and Gary North (1976), *Foundations of Christian Scholarship: Essays in the Van Til Perspective*, which gives attention to psychology, history, economics, education, political science, sociology, mathematics, apologetics, philosophy, and theology. In addition, Crossway has published a series of books about faith-learning integration entitled Reclaiming the Christian Intellectual Tradition, including titles such as the following: art and music; history; the liberal arts; literature; media, journalism, and communication; the natural sciences; philosophy; political thought; and psychology.
BOOK REVIEWS
Baker and Bilbro’s patient and compelling text presents the reader with a careful meditation on the work of American farmer, author, poet, and agrarian activist Wendell Berry as it applies to the world of higher education. The subtitle of the book, “Cultivating Virtues of Place,” provides an insight into the prescription the authors offer for the various maladies they see afflicting American higher education. The most critical of these maladies is a kind of “rootlessness” in which the purpose of education is seen as job preparation for “upward mobility” and lucrative employment. This sickness, they argue, is in contrast to Berry’s holistic vision of place and being-placed in a particular community, a particular tradition, and a particular time. The authors propose that a “rooted” education “could begin by teaching students how to trace the interconnections of wisdom and health through an emphasis on language, imagination, and narrative; such an education might cultivate in students the affections they need to care about the health of their places” (p. 10).

The book proceeds in two parts. In the first part, “Rooting
Universities,” Baker and Bilbro develop the contrast between a “rootless” education and one in which students are well-formed by their universities to be members of their communities and stewards of their places. In Chapter 1, “Imagining the Tree of Wisdom: The Recovery of the University,” they argue that rather than educating students to get “good jobs” and pursue placeless careers in the market economy, the purpose of the university should be educating students for health and wholeness in the pursuit of wisdom. For “without the ability to imagine what a healthy, placed life looks like, students will be at the mercy of the standard narrative of success; they will be drawn by the vision of an upwardly mobile life, and they will always be on the lookout for better opportunities in better places” (p. 28). In “Standing by Our Words: Learning a Responsible Language” (Ch. 2), the authors focus on the crucial role language plays in higher education and the essential need to cultivate responsible language in students, “which is a prerequisite for the kind of imaginative judgment” they will need to steward their places (p. 53). In the third chapter, “Doing Good Work: Enacting Our Imagination,” the authors propose that the home and local communities “are the best settings for young people to learn how to work toward the health of their places” (p. 83). In these chapters, Baker and Bilbro advocate a vision of the essential purpose of higher education, namely, effectively preparing students for the hard work of citizenship, parenting, homemaking, and responsible membership in local communities, rather than for upward mobility in the market economy.

In Part 2, “Cultivating Virtues of Place,” Baker and Bilbro explore four virtues taken from the work of Wendell Berry: memory, gratitude, fidelity, and love. In order to put imagination, language, and work into action, these values must be deeply rooted in the
culture of the university and in cultivation of virtues and practices in students. In each chapter, the authors put forward a practical vision of what this could look like on college campuses. Chapter 4, “Tradition: Remembering Our Story,” addresses the role of tradition and institutional memory, focusing on understanding the place and role of institutions of higher education in serving their communities and traditions. A “rooted” vision of purpose and place is key to helping students develop a sense of themselves as placed people, reducing their unhealthy dependence on technology, and cultivating a faculty of memory that can lead to a lifelong pursuit of wisdom and knowledge. In Chapter 5, “Hierarchy: Practicing Gratitude and Respecting Limits,” the authors encourage educators to practice gratitude and humility within the limitations of a given tradition, place, or community, becoming effective models of these virtues for students to do the same. Chapter 6, “Geography: Reaping the Fruits of Fidelity,” emphasizes the critical role of place and prescribes “an educational culture that values local places and local knowledge and encourages graduates to return home, settle down, and meet the needs of their places” (p. 153). The authors highlight the Work Colleges Consortium (www.workcolleges.org) as an example of higher education that embodies the relationship between place, rootedness, and meaningful work. Chapter 7, “Community: Learning to Love the Membership,” begins with a reflection on 1 Corinthians 13 and the relationship between knowledge and love. Baker and Bilbro argue that “education without love lacks a healthy telos and is adrift in a sea of competing moral and amoral ends” (p. 167) and correlative, following Augustine in his De Trinitate, that different kinds of love result in different kinds of learning and different kinds of knowledge. Biblically minded educators may ask themselves the question, “What are we teaching students to love?”
Written for a broad audience, the authors are not shy about their commitment to their faith or the Christian tradition. Perhaps too obviously, the critical perspective offered by Baker and Bilbro depends significantly on a familiarity with the work of Wendell Berry. Each chapter begins with a critical engagement with one of Berry’s short stories or novels and concludes with one of Berry’s poems. This lends a kind of artistic and non-discursive harmony and beauty to the overall critical work of the project, which is saturated with references to Berry’s fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. However, the authors (who are professors of English at Spring Arbor University) do an admirable job providing the essential context of Berry’s fiction in particular, so that readers who are unfamiliar with Berry’s work can gain a sense of his agrarian and Christian values as they apply both directly and indirectly to higher education. Moreover, the authors offer their own experience as educators at Spring Arbor University to inform the vision, virtues, and practices they recommend—in good faith, they practice what they preach. As an additional bonus, the text contains a foreword by Berry himself in the form of a previously unpublished, 1978 commencement address to the graduates of Centre College in Danville, Kentucky.

Baker and Bilbro’s analysis is replete with challenging, critical questions and potential applications for administrators, faculty, and student leaders working in biblical higher education. As educators themselves, they recognize that “higher education is under immense economic and cultural pressure to prepare graduates for upward and lateral mobility, regardless of the costs to our ecosystem, communities, and souls” (p. 191). In view of these pressures, the book is powerful for its holistic vision of what university education can (and perhaps ought to) be. The concrete suggestions offered by the authors for
cultivating virtues and practices of love, community, fidelity, memory, gratitude, and hope should come as welcome inspiration to faculty and administrators seeking to navigate these pressures while at the same time remaining faithful to their institutional identities, traditions, and constituencies, that is, to their places.

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Reframing Academic Leadership

Lee G. Bolman and Joan V. Gallos
Jossey-Bass
San Francisco, California, 2011

Reviewed by Rob Lindemann
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Leaders in higher education face a combination of goals, staffing and governance structures, legal incorporation, and histories that require a distinct set of leadership understandings and skills. In *Reframing Academic Leadership*, Lee G. Bolman and Joan V. Gallos adapt the classic leadership text *Reframing Organizations* by Bolman and Deal (first published in 1984, most recently in 2017), now in its sixth edition, to fit the academic context. The authors are experienced deans and professors of leadership who have worked together for many years on teaching, training, and consulting projects, but this is their first book together.

The central problem Bolman and Gallos hope to solve is the lack of solid preparation for administrative leadership experienced by many deans and department chairs. Academic administrators tend to complete a formal degree in a teaching and research discipline, but when they become administrators it is as though they must master a second discipline on the job. The authors point out that leadership in these contexts often goes awry for two reasons: (a) leaders view their situation with a limited or inaccurate lens, causing them to miss important cues and clues, and (b) leaders
often move too fast with unilateral decisions or inadequate consideration for cultural norms and traditions, resulting in failure to gain the necessary buy-in from others. Bolman and Gallos hope to reduce the risk for the reader to fall into these traps by expanding the ideas and understandings they bring to administrative roles and the self-awareness necessary for using these effectively.

The book is structured into three parts with the first introducing the four frames of academic life. Bolman and Gallos suggest “it is easier to understand colleges and universities when you learn to think of them simultaneously as machines, families, jungles, and theaters. Each of those images corresponds to a different frame or perspective that captures a vital and distinctive slice of institutional life” (p. 11). The image of the machine captures the necessary structural and task-related facets of institutional life. The family image considers the powerfully symbiotic relationship between people and their workplace. The jungle metaphor acknowledges that colleges and universities are environments composed of enduring political differences. Finally, the theater frame recognizes the storied and symbolic nature of higher education as part of an ongoing drama. The authors’ thesis is that “strong academic leaders are skilled in the art of reframing—a deliberate process of shifting perspectives to see the same situation in multiple ways and through different lenses” (p. 13). In sum, when you understand, you know what to do. Bolman and Gallos admit that the work of academic leaders is too diverse and an institution’s purposes are too important to take a more simplistic approach. This constitutes sensemaking, which the authors claim is at the heart of academic leadership.

Bolman and Gallos elaborate on each of the four frames in Part II
of the book with solid conceptual descriptions coupled with several vignettes that illustrate the inherent leadership challenges. The reader will realize that what the authors offer here are, in fact, tools for leadership hermeneutics and worldview. Hermeneutics refers to the ways people interpret life, texts, and events; it is the study of how we make meaning out of these contexts. Worldview often goes with discussions on hermeneutics because the latter pays attention to the details while the former provides the frame. It is a harmonizing relationship between the interpretation of details and the big picture that emerges when you lift your eyes off the minute features. With this book, the authors hope that academic administrators develop skills and confidence across multiple leadership frames so they are prepared for the range of situations they will face.

The authors use Part III of the book to address a series of recurrent issues “that often impede the ability of academic leaders to sustain their energy, focus, and hope in the face of the seemingly endless vicissitudes of administrative life” (p. 127). These include ways to keep conflict productive, managing the conflicting pressures of educational environments, mitigating the effects of toxic people and academic bully culture, influencing those in authority over you, and practicing the self-care that sustains an administrator’s faith and spirit.

The book is especially valuable for administrators in biblical higher education who will attune with the revised frames. The original terminology of Bolman and Deal’s work might feel a bit too clinical, while the language in this book suits the Christian context with familiar images and values such as family, the struggle of managing enduring differences, and the appropriateness of viewing our environments as
part of an ongoing drama in God’s purposes. Therefore, the translation necessary for readers in Christian higher education should prove easy.

The problem of inadequate preparation also affects the career paths of deans and department heads in Bible colleges and seminaries. Yet theological reflection reminds us that these roles serve a noble purpose and the Holy Spirit can and does gift people with the abilities necessary, including administration (cf. 1 Cor 12:28). While this book offers an excellent conceptual perspective to academic leadership, readers that are new to the academic dean role may prefer Behring’s (2014) more extensive handbook. Nevertheless, the book will help readers to view their leadership opportunities through the lenses of “an analyst and architect, a compassionate politician, a servant and coach, and a prophet and artist” (p. 127). This book is a valuable resource worth revisiting during an academic administrator’s tenure.
References


Diversity, including religious diversity, has long been touted as an essential value of democratic societies. That said, truly appreciating and interacting positively with religious difference can be a challenge in lived practice. The tensions and outright conflicts that exist, both currently and historically, between various faiths can make it tempting to tolerate other belief systems, while isolating ourselves within our own religious communities or campuses. “Perhaps I can avoid the difficulties and discomfort of relating to the Other by retreating to a closed community made up of those most like myself,” we may be tempted to think. However, if we want to effectively present the love of Christ in a religiously diverse world, we must learn how to go beyond our “bubbles” of safety and comfort in order to build meaningful connections with people from all faiths. This effort will require humility, openness, and willingness to learn, as the authors of the book *From Bubble to Bridge* point out.

*From Bubble to Bridge: Educating Christians for a Multifaith World* by Marion H. Larson and Sara L. H. Shady proposes a model of interfaith dialogue based on principles of inclusion rather than
“mere tolerance or complete acceptance” (p. 11) of other faiths. The emphasis throughout is on civic pluralism rather than theological pluralism. The authors, professors at Bethel University, describe interfaith engagement as both a civic and religious imperative, a practice that can enable us to address challenging social issues and to live out the law of love preached in Scripture. In other words, engaging with individuals from other faiths, as humble learners as well as givers and receivers of hospitality, can make us better citizens and stronger believers. Larson and Shady address the concerns many evangelicals may feel towards interfaith work—that it will require a dilution of their own faith or mean the loss of Christian privilege, contributing to a sense of embattlement and fear. Using the parables of the prodigal son and the good Samaritan, the authors demonstrate “that interfaith partnerships and interactions don’t compromise our identity as Christians. Rather, they flow directly from our faithfulness to Christ” (p. 68).

While recognizing the benefits of both religious tolerance and affirmation, the authors suggest that tolerance does not go far enough to promote healthy interaction and understanding of difference, while affirmation may elide real religious difference and obscure, or even limit, personal belief. Instead, they argue for a middle ground of inclusion where meaningful dialogue allows participants to recognize the value and humanity of the other’s lived experience, while still maintaining one’s own personal identity and beliefs. Inclusion provides the opportunity to both listen and be listened to. Three virtues are identified as essential to the path of inclusion: “receptive humility, reflective commitment, and imaginative empathy” (p. 97).

Larson and Shady recognize that the “bubble” of a Christian
campus is a wonderful place for students to learn and practice the sorts of skills that they will need for interfaith engagement in a safe, nurturing situation, and they offer guidelines for professors and facilitators to create such an environment. The text provides a number of resources and activities that might be used to prepare students for multifaith interactions or events. The book ends by affirming the importance of off-campus opportunities for learning, serving, sharing stories, and practicing hospitality in order to truly build bridges between committed believers from different faiths.

*From Bubble to Bridge* encourages readers to examine their assumptions about personal spiritual practice, evangelism, and attitudes towards those who hold to different faiths. Importantly, the authors emphasize that believers need not diminish their commitment to their own faith in order to practice love, openness, and humility in their interactions with Buddhists, Muslims, Jews or anyone else, including non-believers. Nor do Christians need to sacrifice a belief in the exclusivity of the gospel. Essentially, believers are encouraged to practice the Golden Rule in their interactions with those of other faith traditions. If we want to be treated respectfully and known as individuals rather than caricatures of our religion, then we must extend the same courtesy to others, instead of assuming a paternalistic attitude of moral superiority.

One challenge with this text is that the topics under discussion are fairly abstract. I believe most thinking adults would acknowledge that love, peace, solidarity, respect, and mutuality are values worth espousing and striving for in our interactions—with Christians and non-Christians alike—but what does that look like in our day-to-day lives? How do we move beyond idealism to pragmatic practice? The
stories and activities shared throughout do help to promote application, but I think there is room for even more. Also, it would have been nice to see stronger scriptural and theological support levied to support the authors’ claims; such incorporation might help to overcome the resistance they seem to expect from some Christians, particularly evangelicals. Perhaps the omission is purposeful in order to make the book more broadly useful and accessible for those who may approach interfaith engagement from other religious backgrounds. But given the book’s clearly targeted audience ("Educating Christians for a Multifaith World"), it seems like more appeals to scriptural authority could only serve to bolster their arguments.

This book is particularly aimed at Christian educators/faculty because of the opportunities they have to teach and promote these skills among their student populations. However, the ideas and stories shared in the text would also be beneficial for students, administrators, and staff to encounter. The end-of-chapter discussion questions and sample learning activities in chapter 7 lend themselves to using *From Bubble to Bridge* as a class textbook or as a course development or professional development resource.

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Darkness Falls on the Land of Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth-Century New England

Douglas Leo Winiarski
University of North Carolina Press
Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2017

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Winiarski proves the possibility that a statistical study can yield a rollicking read.

While the publisher places great stock in the analysis of “letters, diaries, and testimonies” used in the writing and presented as tables early and late in the book, Winiarski states “Provincial New Englanders were dutiful and committed Protestants; and it was precisely their diligence that incited the attacks of zealous Whitefieldarians during New England’s era of great awakenings” (p. 534).

So as the familiar tale of the antecedents, effects, and aftermath of the revivals unroll from the principal primary sources, Winiarski peppers his narrative with little-read resources. Highlighting the cream of deep dives into historical archives, the author draws statistical significance and disarming detail from hundreds of written lay testimonies (“relations” as they once were called) to buttress his argument. Over the 500-page length of his book, Winiarski spirals like a hungry hawk above the conspicuous movements of the unifying
portrait for his subject: the perilous path of Jonathan Edward’s hearty embrace of, and passionate pushback against, the revivals. Edwards is emblematic of the New England culture as a whole in his quick acceptance and resounding retreat from the movement; but the liberated laity who stayed close to its fire first flayed their affirming congregational host churches, then fell fracturing into new identities outside their former denomination. What freedom for Baptists and Methodist was gained came at the cost of unity for culture and Congregationalism. In building churches where saints were visible, Whitefieldarians diminished both their numbers and their influence in the immediate wake of the revivals. From these upheavals, Congregational Churches as a body never recovered their strength or success. Such is the fall of dark on the lighted land.

There is little to fault in the presentation. The author makes clear his is a work of “early American social history” (p. 533) and interacts with scholars such as Brooks B. Hull, Susan Juster, and Edmund S. Moran; yet readers must wait for this, as Winiarski postpones this literature review for use in his first appendix. The author occasionally privileges contemporary over period perspectives. Winiarski expects “Modern readers” to “detect the sublimation” of psychological issues in contrast to the “rumors and accusations of witchcraft . . . of many in 1740” regarding the behavior of Martha Robinson (pp. 211-12), and even while praising Ezra Stiles as “ideally positioned to comment on religious developments in New England,” Winiarski considers the analysis Stiles derived from his demography “implausible, even naïve” (pp. 486, 498). In these and other instances, Winiarski considers the modern viewpoint more adequate than that of the historic past. But even this may be charitably described as trust in work done to this
date and confidence that time has passed on to clearer perspectives. This reviewer has more confidence in Winiarski’s assessment of Stiles than of Robinson, but if these be faults, they are minor ones.

Winiarski sustains his story with lifelike miniatures, bringing to life women and men, enslaved and free, minority and majority to embody the movement in a spectrum from the unconverted, to the convinced, and finally to the regretful. One finds the author has enabled his readers to find the forest and the trees of his subject, and he rewards the time of his readers.

*Darkness Falls on the Land of Light* will stand confidently among the best books on the *Great Awakening*. It is highly recommended for academic libraries, historians, and undergraduates seeking a coherent and detailed overview of the time and context of the First Great Awakening.
I recently attended a gathering of pastors for fellowship, a meal, and discussion about what was working or not working in our churches. Interestingly, most of the conversation revolved around praxis, about what programs or technology we were using to facilitate growth. I found it curious that there was practically no discussion on the biblical/theological implications of what we were doing. Finally, at the end of the discussion each pastor shared what he or she was reading and gave a brief synopsis. As expected, most of the books dealt with the practice of ministry, that is, programs and processes that were effective in growing churches. As the pastor of a church of 200, sitting among pastors leading churches of 1,000 or more, I was tempted to think that maybe I need to change, maybe I need to be a little less theological and a little more pragmatic. However, when it was my time to share, I recommended *The Pastor Theologian*, expressing my concern that too often pastors are guilty of asking whether or not “it works,” while failing to explore the larger theological implications of what we are doing. The nonverbal response from my colleagues suggested that my comments were not well received.
Nevertheless, I stand by my comments and recommend *The Pastor Theologian* to pastors and institutions of higher education alike.

Hiestand and Wilson cover much ground in 172 pages, both from a historical perspective and a theological perspective, as they lay out the case for the need for theological depth in the local church. They note that every pastor is by default the chief theologian of the local church; therefore, the depth of theological insight in a congregation will be profoundly influenced by the pastor through his or her role as preacher and teacher. Further, in a culture where foundational theological truths are challenged on a daily basis, there is an acute need for theological reflection in the church, yet Hiestand and Wilson observe that something of a mutually exclusive dichotomy exists between theologians in academia and practitioner pastors in the local church. However, they note that early in church history this dichotomy did not exist. They cite early church fathers, such as Origen (c. 184-254), Irenaeus (c. 140-202), Cyprian (c. 200-258), Augustine (354-430), and others, who served local congregations but were also accomplished and influential theologians of their respective eras. Later, with the rise of universities and monasticism, there was a shift away from “clerical theologians” to “nonclerical theologians,” such as Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274).

The thesis of the work is that, while the church should appreciate and benefit from the contributions of nonclerical theologians, the church can ill afford for pastors to divorce themselves from their role as the chief theologians of the congregation. While the authors concede that pastors cannot immerse themselves in theological pursuits to the exclusion of pastoral care, pastors need to reclaim a theological role that is too often surrendered to academia, or worse,
to unchristian ideologies in various media (e.g., movies such as *Life of Pi* or, more recently, *The Shack*). The solution they propose for the dilemma is “a recovery of the pastor theologian” (p. 79), which they define as pastors within the larger pastoral community “who have unique theological interests and gifting” (p. 80).

The authors propose three levels of “pastor theologian,” to include local, popular, and ecclesial theologians. The *local theologian* is responsible to the local church, drawing connections “between biblical truth and lived experience” (p. 81). The *popular theologian* is “a local theologian, yet with a broader range of influence” (p. 83). This person helps to make the connection between academic theologians and pastors and laity of local churches. Finally, the *ecclesial theologian* is a theologian who also bears the responsibility of pastoral care while maintaining conversation with other theologians “with an eye to the needs of ecclesial community” (p. 85). The ecclesial theologian provides leadership to the church, yet “is a theologian in the fullest sense of the word” (p. 86).

The authors focus on the ecclesial theologian as key to the effort of bringing theological depth back to the local church and the larger community of pastors and lay leaders. These individuals are adept at working across “guilds,” which is to say that they can cross denominational lines with universal theological truths and in so doing facilitate unity without diminishing theological depth. This focus by Hiestand and Wilson is followed by case studies providing examples of ecclesial theologians, exploring how they view and exercise the role in their individual ministry contexts.
The authors do a good job providing a historical overview of the movement from clerical theologian to nonclerical theologian, and then they provide a roadmap for recovering the theological role of pastors as pastoral theologians. Their caution concerning the danger of “theological anemia” in the contemporary local church is well taken. Too often the question revolves around whether a program works at growing a church rather than what the long-term theological implications of a program may be for the faith community. This is also a very important consideration for Christian schools and seminaries that are preparing future pastors and faith community leaders. I would encourage the use of this work as a way of making connections among courses in the history of Christian thought, theology, and applied theology, in that it can help address the question of young potential ministers as to why theological preparation is important for long-term pastoral care and leadership.

One thing that could have strengthened this work would have been more specific examples of theological reflection from the perspective of practical pastoral application. The work provides a great argument for the need, and a great framework for the development of, the ecclesial theologian, but a few solid examples (such as the theological implication of current gender confusion issues or a theological reflection on the church during election cycles) could have provided more explicit and tangible examples of the theory at work. Still, this is recommended reading and provides a solid approach to the topic that the authors address.

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ABHE | Biblical Higher Education Journal
Vocation across the Academy: A New Vocabulary for Higher Education

David S. Cunningham, ed.
Oxford University Press
New York, New York, 2017

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This volume is edited by David S. Cunningham, professor of religion at Hope College. The essays in the volume seek to pioneer a significant attempt in redefining vocation as “calling” for higher education. This admirable attempt is pursued by a collection of writers representing a multiplicity of disciplines (doctors, lawyers, health-care professionals, computer scientist, engineer, musician, psychologist, sociologist, theologian, etc.). Such a laudable effort is made even more so because the contributors are interested in interdisciplinary dialogue. This dialogue is perceived as a collegial effort in which a new vocabulary is being proposed that will enable disciplines across the academy to communicate to fellow professors, administrators, and students the notion of meaning, purpose, and calling regarding the role of higher education in training young adults for life.

The basic concept of vocation and calling is recognized by several contributors as having a religious history and foundation. This makes the purpose of the book a real challenge, since Mark U. Edwards, Jr., notes that research has shown that only 51.5
percent of all professors self-identify as religious believers at some level (p. 276). Practically, this means that 48.5 percent of this intended audience needs to be convinced of the fundamental need for a common vocabulary that the contributors argue for.

This volume joins a surge of interest in this area. Attention has been directed toward profession and education joining forces to help young adults pursue meaningful and purposeful choices regarding their life’s vocation/calling. Accordingly, the current work is divided into four main sections: Part I: Calling without Borders: Vocational Themes across the Academy; Part II: Calling in Context: Fields of Study as Resources for Vocational Reflection; Part III: Called into the Future: Professional Fields and Preparation for Life; and Part IV: Vocation at Full Stretch: Overcoming Institutional Obstacles. This short review cannot do justice to how well written each chapter is. The evenness of depth and clarity of thought in each chapter makes the book a wonderful read.

The thirteen chapters exhibit serious research and a passionate call for an interdisciplinary language that communicates meaning and purpose. The writers take seriously the formative role of education in preparing young adults for life careers. Seeing career as more than just a job to pay the bills, they attempt to ground this formative process in meaningful community and self-awareness. The chapters are written against the backdrop of the recognition that higher education is being attacked on several fronts at once: financial return, purposeful preparation for a lifetime vocation, epistemological foundations, and philosophical relevance.

Though the editor’s hope is that students will be as informed and
motivated by this volume as professors are challenged to be, this is probably the greatest weakness of the book. What is now needed is a second volume written expressly for college freshmen who are in the throes of such agonizing search for their callings, vocation, and future careers. This book is primarily written for the educator who is in the role of helping young adults discover their vocation and calling. It is so well written for that immediate audience that it would seem appropriate for faculty groups to read, digest, process, and challenge their own academic community with the proposals in this book.

The extraordinary aspect of this work is that there are so many fundamental theological assumptions behind many of the proposals that it is a good and exciting read for the Christian educator. For example, responsibility, the will, story, singing, covenant community, wisdom, conscience, being, and character formation represent key concepts with biblical backgrounds that are utilized by many of the contributors. What one wonders is how ready and willing the “secular” academy is to join the conversation with these assumptions in the background. Thankfully, one entire chapter is devoted to the recognition of this reluctance.

One also wonders if one more chapter needed to be included. This would come from the perspective of a curricular or occupational educator who has to engage in the agonizing process of counseling, encouraging, and empowering students to make wise choices for the future. This reviewer has functioned in the past as assistant academic dean, senior tutor, chaplain, professor, and registrar in different academic contexts. As such, he recognizes the extreme value of this monograph. So, it is with great enthusiasm and anticipation of what this volume has the potential of accomplishing that I heartily recommend
it. Whether or not “secular” academies are ready to join hands in the conversation, attempting to create a new vocabulary that speaks to young adults preparing for their life’s work, remains to be seen.
Stratford Caldecott’s beginning words set the premise for his book: “In the modern world, thanks to the rise of modern science and the decline of religious cosmology, the arts and sciences have been separated and divorced. Faith and reason often appear to be opposed, and we have lost any clear sense of who we are and where we are going” (p. 11).

Caldecott’s book eloquently describes how God’s beauty is found in his creation. His order is found throughout nature, art, music, science, and language. We have caused these disciplines to be separated into different subjects within educational institutions. The author suggests that “the re-enchantment’ of education would open our eyes to the meaning and beauty of the cosmos” (p. 17). Caldecott challenges us to open our eyes to God’s power and grandeur and to see how the various subjects taught through our educational system are interrelated and fit into the bigger picture: “It is not too late to seek the One who is ‘before all things’ and in whom ‘all things hold together’” (p. 18).
Caldecott refers to *education* in the broad sense as one’s engagement in the world and identity as a lifelong learner. As mentioned above, subjects such as science, math, and the arts have been taught separately in the U.S. educational system since its beginning. Much of the foundational education system was based on a list of skills and content that students were to master. Since subjects were taught independent from each other with few, if any, connections, the subjects became isolated, and studying each subject independent of other subjects did not challenge students to experience the “enchantment” of learning about God and his nature. The author states that the isolation of subjects come from inadequate understanding: “In particular, our struggle to reconcile religious faith with modern science is symptomatic of a failure to understand the full scope of human reason and its true grandeur” (p. 12). With a better understanding of and appreciation for the grandeur of God’s creation, people will see how that creation is connected and interdependent.

One of the reasons that young people often fail to see the connection between subjects is that they have very little “down” time, very little time to be bored or to think. The majority of young people’s time is scheduled or filled with entertainment. Silence is sometimes seen as the enemy when, in fact, silence may be the very thing people need to encourage deep thinking and problem solving.

Further, we live in a fragmented world full of chaos. We are pulled in a myriad of directions; our modern existence is often driven by materialism and getting more and being more, believing that “more is better.” But what is this approach to existence doing to our souls, our minds, our bodies? Have we, as Caldecott suggests, “gained much, but . . . lost our way in the shadows” (p. 11)? This fragmentation
of our existence and specifically of our education is taking its toll.

It is obvious that Caldecott believes that each of us must be engaged in God’s world as a lifelong learner. He states “to be alive is to be a learner” (p. 12). The strength of his book lies in his ability to show how the arts, science, music, and language are connected, which illustrates God’s patterns and power. His discussions describing the connection of music, science, and literature to the cosmos appear in such chapters as “Rediscovering Poetic Knowledge,” “Beyond Pythagoras,” “Geometry as Prophecy,” and “An Education in Beauty.” The discussions in this book may better be understood by experts in each area of study. Caldecott makes clear, however, that the patterns in nature, the rhythms in music, and the beauty in language are interrelated and are from God. Caldecott believes that faith and reason go hand-in-hand and we, as students of God’s creation, must find that enchantment once again.

Caldecott’s book is a wonderful resource for Christian teachers. It is not a “how-to” book, but in the author’s words, his book is “not just about education, although if taken seriously they [chapters in the book] would change the way we teach” (p. 16). He wants his book to encourage teachers and students alike to search for beauty in God’s creation—in art, science, music, and language—and to appreciate how God’s creation is woven together.

How does this relate to Christian professors in higher education? You are an expert in your subject, but do you look for ways to integrate other subjects into yours? Do you give your students “think time” or time to explore and discover on their own? Or do you lecture and tell them what you think
they need to know? Do you help students find God in all their subjects so they in turn can strengthen their moral compasses?

Stratford Caldecott has given us much to ponder in *Beauty for Truth’s Sake*. With his understanding of and love for God and his cosmos, Caldecott encourages us all to do our part to “re-enchant” education and to discover the truth and beauty in the cosmos, thus encouraging students to discover how God’s beautiful creation is interconnected.

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