

Toward a More Biblical (and Pneumatological) Model for Integration, Teaching, and Scholarship

By R. Scott Smith

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In 2013, Amos Yong surveyed the status of evangelical higher education, in part with a focus on integration.¹ As he observed, the dominant model amongst many, if not most, faculty in evangelical institutions “fuses scholarship and teaching under the label of faith-learning integration.”² Yong suggests that due to the influence of some key Reformed philosophers, such as Nicholas Wolterstorff, and Reformed institutions, like Calvin College, “the integrationist project articulated in these venues remained by and large an intellectual exercise.”³ As part of the result of this focus, the integrationist task emphasized an intellectual, worldview orientation. Yong explains that “each discipline needed to be interrogated to determine when secular assumptions were prevalent and also to identify what are the more appropriate Christian presuppositions needed to foster and sustain authentic Christian inquiry.”⁴

But as Yong also notes, other kinds of models of Christian higher education have been developing. For instance, there are Wesleyan, Anabaptist/Mennonite, Lutheran, and Catholic varieties. While in a broad sense, all are concerned with integration, there are variations in the “what and how” of that process. For instance, Wesleyans and Pentecostals “are as interested in the formation of the heart and the hands, alongside that of the mind.”⁵ More broadly, Christians in higher education are realizing that in addition to the formation of the mind, “Christian education cannot neglect, and has historically almost always emphasized, the heart and the hands.”⁶ In theory and practice, educators need a holistic focus to help form the whole person.

Regardless of our discipline(s), and whether in our teaching or scholarship, the task of evangelical education often involves integration with God’s revealed truths, particularly in Scripture. What does revelation have to say about our disciplines and how we should practice them? This overall process seems to involve at least two tasks, or dynamics, which fit with Yong’s observations. One is epistemology: how does (and should) the Christian tradition contribute knowledge and wisdom to our disciplines and other aspects of life? Another is praxis: how should

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scholars live (embody, practice their profession) under the lordship of Christ, and in conversation with other Christians, both past and present, and their findings?

Though attention has been given to the role of the Holy Spirit in these tasks, still it seems more can be surfaced.⁷ The goal of this paper is to help flesh out more contours of a biblical theology of the Spirit, with a view toward the roles and work of the Spirit in integration, teaching, scholarship, and formation in Christian higher education. I will start with a development of that model. Then, I will shift to survey, as well as assess, how our understanding of the Spirit's role in our profession has been shaped by the influences of modernity and postmodernity. Finally, I will apply this model to real-life issues and case studies, to help show how it works in practice.

Toward a Biblical Theology of the Spirit in the Task of Integration

While God is intent upon redeeming for himself a people who are to become like his Son, nevertheless this process still reflects the condition of humans after the fall. But before the fall, Adam and Eve lived in an intimate relationship with God, such that they enjoyed a deep unity with him in terms of their hearts, minds, and spirits. That is, their hearts were in a deep unity with his heart, and so were their minds with his mind; and, his Spirit lived in them. Adam and Eve also enjoyed a deep unity with each other in terms of their hearts and minds. Even within themselves, their own hearts and minds were working in harmony.

But, after the fall, this threefold unity with God was ruptured. No longer did the Spirit live in them, and they died spiritually. Moreover, their hearts and minds were severed from God's, being united instead with Satan's, such that they became like their "father" the devil (John 8:38, 41-44), being intent on usurping God's rightful place (Gen. 3:5; see also Is. 14:13-14).⁸

This background helps explain the significance of the "greatest commandment" (Mark 12:30), to love God with all our hearts (the core of our being, from which we will, desire, and hope); souls (our whole person); minds (intellectual

¹Amos Yong, "Whence and Whither in Evangelical Higher Education? Dispatches from a Shifting Frontier—A Review Essay" *Christian Scholar's Review* 42.2 (2013): 179–192.

²*Ibid.*, 185.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*, 185-186.

⁵*Ibid.*, 186.

⁶*Ibid.*, 187.

⁷Yong (188) references J. P. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007). Murray Rae comments on the interrelatedness of the Spirit in bringing theological knowledge in conjunction with our engaging in practices of worship and prayer, in attitudes of humility and acts of obedience. So, mind, heart, and hand are engaged in such knowing. See his "Incline Your Ear So That You May Live: Principles of Biblical Epistemology," in *The Bible and Epistemology*, eds. Mary Healey and Robin Parry (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2007), 163.

⁸All Scripture references are from the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB), © 1995, The Lockman Foundation (Anaheim, CA: Foundation Press Publications, 1995).

capacities); and strength (all our abilities). Though God created humans to be deeply united with his heart and mind, and for his Spirit to live in them, now the default bent of our hearts is to usurp God and not “to have God in knowledge” (Rom. 1:28, literally).

Thus, Scripture keeps calling people back to these core needs, particularly to commands addressed to our hearts and minds. For instance, Solomon wrote that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, which requires a proper, reverential attitude toward God as the Lord, and thus a deep humility in ourselves (Prov. 9:10a). It also requires repentance of any evil in our own lives, so that we turn from it and love God (which shows itself in obedience to his commands; John 14:15). James Beilby calls the fear of the Lord “the centerpiece of Israel’s religious epistemology.”⁹ Moreover, knowledge of God is understanding (Prov. 9:10b). Ultimately, our own best insights are inadequate to the tasks of acquiring knowledge and insight, for not only are we finite, but also fallen.¹⁰

Moreover, when Solomon asked God for wisdom and understanding, to discern good and evil, he asked for a “hearing heart” (1 Kings 3:9, literally). This request reflects one of the core needs of humans, to be united with and follow God’s heart, lest, due to our fallenness, we follow our hearts’ own objects of desire, which then can become idols. For the heart is that from which we are to trust God (Prov. 3:5-6; Rom. 10:9-10) and love him. Yet, if we live from our sinful propensities, it is “more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick” (Jer. 17: 9).

So, insight, understanding, and knowledge are related to our attitudes toward, and trust in, the Lord. And, we cannot obtain such knowledge merely by our command or willfulness. Rather, we must come to God on his terms, with the proper respect and attitudes, including dependence. So, a key implication for Christian higher education is to not stress simply intellectual acquisition. While important, nonetheless an important co-requisite is that our hearts must bow before the Lord. Otherwise, our hearts can tend to make an idol out of our knowledge.

These biblical portraits of our hearts reinforce why it is necessary for humans to be born from above. As described in Ezekiel 36, the new covenant involves God’s giving us a new heart, one that is alive to him, and a new spirit. Indeed, Ezek. 36:27 states that he will put his Spirit in us and cause us to walk in his ways. The new birth addresses two of the core needs of our fallen condition: we are given a new heart, which is created by God; and God lives in us. We now have the capacities for a heart that hears God – that lives in deep unity with God’s heart and Spirit.

Thus, the mind can become renewed (Rom. 12:1-2). Mere intellectual assent to truths in Scripture never would be sufficient to effect the deep heart-and-mind change that God wants. But in light of having the life (and thus the availability of

⁹James Beilby, “Contemporary Religious Epistemology,” in *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2016), 820.

¹⁰Merold Westphal, “Phenomenologies and Religious Truth,” in *Phenomenology of the Truth Proper to Religion*, ed. Daniel Guerrière (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 121.

the power) of the Spirit in believers, as well as a new heart, Christians can have their minds transformed as they are informed of revealed truths and then put them into practice. Thus, Paul's letters to churches start with teaching (such as in Eph. 1-3) and then move to application (chs. 4-6).

But this renewal of the mind, or any other aspect of the Christian life, is not something we do simply by our own resources. Believers are to "abide" in Christ, so that his life, through his Spirit, lives in them, so that they draw their life and sustenance from him, just as the branches do from the vine (John 15:4-5). But, apart from him, we can do nothing – we cannot bear any fruit, for they come from his life. By abiding in him, we can experience the deep unity of our hearts and minds with his.

So, consider how Jesus lived. J. P. Moreland observes that though fully God, "Jesus' public ministry was done as he, a perfect man, did what he saw his Father doing in dependence on the filling of the Holy Spirit."¹¹ Thomas Oden underscores these observations: "As a man, Jesus walked day by day in radical dependence upon God the Spirit, prayed and spoke by the power of the Spirit. ... He did not walk or speak by his own independent human power, but by the power of the Spirit."¹² Thus he lived in the same three ways that God wants for all humans – to live in the Spirit, and be deeply united with God's heart and mind (John 14:23). He constantly enjoyed intimate relationship and communion with the Father (John 14:10-11; 17:11, 21, 23), always listening to and obeying him (John 5:19-20; 8:29; 17:4, 8), and abiding in his love (John 15:9-10; 17:26). In this way, he experienced the beauty and fulfillment of the Father's love.

Thus, I think it is accurate to say that Jesus would define the "mind of Christ" by his love for the Father. His mind is shaped from a heart that desires passionate, loving commitment to the Father. And, since Jesus is our exemplar and our *telos*, we are to become like him in all respects (Eph. 4:15), including these three ways. Put differently, we are to live in the same kind of unity with the Lord, bound to him by this threefold "cord." This is like what Paul tells Timothy, that God has given us a spirit of power, love (from the heart), and sound judgment (2 Tim. 1:7). This suggests that as Christians, our higher educational goals should not be merely to form our students intellectually; it also must include moral formation (becoming like Christ in our characters, such as in Gal. 5:22-23); volitional transformation (aimed at the heart, such as in Ps. 37:4; Matt. 6:33); and spiritual formation – in relationship with God. That is, we develop hearts and minds that desire God and his kingdom – all done in the Spirit.^{13,14}

So far, we have seen through various Scriptures, as well as ones specifically

¹¹Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle*, 174.

¹²Thomas Oden, *Life in the Spirit*, Systematic Theology 3 (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1992), 47.

¹³On desiring the kingdom, see also James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, World-view and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009).

¹⁴Notice here too the involvement of the members of the Trinity.

about the life of Christ, that the Spirit of Christ plays an essential, ongoing role in the way God intended for us to live. This includes that if we do not live in the deep unity he intends for us, we simply will not be able to understand truly and embrace the thoughts, desires, and plans of God. But, perhaps we can explore further what is involved in having the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16), particularly in relation to scholarship, teaching, intellectual formation and integration.

As a preliminary observation, it seems clear that Scripture's primary purpose is to reveal truth to us about God, ourselves, and his purposes in relation to humanity and creation. Indeed, I think a dominant theme throughout all of Scripture can be phrased as follows: "I will be your God, you will be my people, and I will dwell in your midst" (see, for example, Ex. 6:7, 29:46; Lev. 26:12; Jer. 7:23; Ezek. 36:28; Zech. 2:10-11; Rev. 21:3). Scripture addresses how God seeks and wants to save fallen humans (Luke 19:10), and then how they can live in relationship with him as he extends the rule of his kingdom. But, this means (as many have observed) that Scripture is not a textbook or encyclopedia of knowledge for the many disciplines and professions.¹⁵ While on what it teaches, it teaches with authority, Scripture is not intended to be a textbook on disciplines such as epistemology, science, English literature, or art; or professions, such as plumbing, accounting, and so on, even though it has important things to say to all of them.

At the same time, Scripture constrains and warns us against leaning on our own understanding. Since Jesus is our exemplar, and we are to imitate him (Eph. 5:1), we need to live as he did. As a human, Jesus was careful to listen to the Father in everything, and so must we.

Now, surely wisdom is found in the written word of God, but Scripture also tells us that in Jesus, the living Word of God (John 1:1), are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3). Furthermore, just as no one can know the thoughts of a person except the spirit of that person (for that person alone has first-person access to his or her own thoughts), so no one can know the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:11). Yet, Paul then tells us that we have been given the Spirit of Christ (v. 12, and thus the mind of Christ, v. 16), so that we might know the things freely given us by God. While all people have immediate, first-person access to their own thoughts, as Christians we also have access to the mind of Christ, who lives in us, and communicates to us his thoughts and desires, which can be present in our conscious awareness. This requires we learn to listen to his voice. It also helps show that, as James Beilby puts it, "knowledge of God is divinely instigated."¹⁶

Moreover, Jesus Christ is Lord of all. Thus, in the building of his kingdom, he must be Lord over all aspects of life, including our disciplines and professions. In his mind, they already are in fact integrated with his complete knowledge, but

¹⁵See, for example, Brian McLaren, *A New Kind of Christianity* (New York: HarperOne, 2010). See also Rae, "Incline Your Ear So That You May Live," 163: "we do not often discover an explicit epistemology in the biblical writings."

¹⁶Beilby, 820.

until his return, we (through his Spirit, not our own fleshly efforts) are to submit everything, including these disciplines, to his lordship.

Since 1) Scripture is not an encyclopedia of all knowledge, and 2) apart from our living in deep communion with his heart and mind, in the fullness of his Spirit, we can do nothing, it seems Scripture strongly sets the expectation that to integrate well with God's revelation (special and general) will require that we hear from the Lord in ways beyond what is included in Scripture. We will need to do our scholarship, integration, and teaching under the guidance and lordship of the Spirit of Christ, hearing what more he would have to share with us.

This finding fits with James 1:5: if we lack wisdom, we are to trust and ask God for wisdom, which he will give us. Now, surely we need good training in our disciplines; otherwise, we are working in a void. Even so, we are not to lean on our own understanding. A primary way to avoid that trap is to seek God for wisdom in them.

To stress, this knowledge that God can give through our deep union with him, in the power of the Spirit, is not something that is ours to demand. Though believers have been given the privilege of access to the very mind of Christ, we can know the things he has not disclosed already through general revelation or Scripture only insofar as he wills to disclose them. The mind of Christ is not like a database which we can search on our own terms, desires, or demands. He graciously shares these truths out of love for us, our needs to serve him, and for guidance.

This discussion helps touch on a distinction between kinds of knowledge in relation to God, of which I will examine two.¹⁷ First, there is knowledge of God as a person. That requires his self-disclosure, which is available to those who love him. That self-revelation should shape us in profound ways, including morally. In God's presence, we can become aware of his goodness and holiness, and thus our own sin, but also we can be drawn to know and experience him in his beauty and goodness, much like Moses did when he beseeched God to show God's glory (Ex. 33:17-23; 34:4-9). His self-revelation also should shape us volitionally, at the heart-level, so that we revere, repent, desire, and love him ever more deeply (see, for example, Ps. 16:11; 27:4-8; Is. 6:1-7; Dan. 2:19-23). In fact, Beilby observes rightly that the reverence for God "puts one in the appropriate position to understand creation and humans within their divinely given possibilities and limits and therefore as aligned with God's purposes in creation."¹⁸ It also can heal our wounds from the effects of our sin, as well as others' sin against us, thereby drawing us closer to his heart in devotion and love (see, for example, Luke 7:36-50; Mark 5:25-34).

The Daniel 2 passage illustrates a second kind of knowledge: propositional knowledge, or knowledge of truths with cognitive content.¹⁹ Since in Jesus are

¹⁷In addition to those discussed here, there is knowledge of how to do things (know-how).

¹⁸Beilby, 820.

¹⁹A proposition is the content "expressed in declarative sentences and contained in people's minds when they are thinking. Propositions are also the things that are either true or false

hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and yet he has given us access to his mind (on the conditions described above), he can share these truths with us through his Spirit. Of course, biblically, there are many examples of such disclosure, such as what Saul would do in regards to David, even given what the people of Keilah would freely choose to do (see 1 Sam. 23:10-12). Prophecies are prime examples, too, with their disclosure of God's plans for human events (such as in 2 Sam. 7:11-13; Is. 7:14). In terms of academic work, it seems propositional knowledge would be a key kind of revelation that we would need in order to do good scholarship and integration under the lordship of Christ. But here, it is important to remember that while seeking God's insights into our scholarship, the "intellectual dimension is never divorced from a practical dimension in which God's commands are followed and one's life is changed."²⁰

But even as Scripture seems to set expectations that God would give insights into our scholarship and integrative work, it also reminds us that our knowledge is partial (we are finite), and it is something God gives to us to serve and love him. God gave his prophets insight and knowledge of many things, but they were not given to see the whole picture (see, for example, Daniel 12:8ff). Yet, they humbly served him with what he had given them, just as we are to do.

With this model in place, now we will consider in survey fashion how our understanding of the roles and work of the Spirit in integration and formation in evangelical higher education have been shaped by some key influences. Here I will look at modernity and postmodernity in survey fashion. Then I also will consider the influences of a particular theological view that arose in the States during that same historical framework. Along the way, we can assess these influences in light of the model, as well as by some additional considerations.

The Role of the Spirit in Light of the Shaping Influences of Modernity and Postmodernity

Modernity's Influences

To help develop these surveys, I will draw upon several theologians and philosophers who write as Christians, including Nancey Murphy, James K. A. Smith, Merold Westphal, Stanley Hauerwas, Alasdair MacIntyre, the late Stanley Grenz, and John Franke. While we will explore various facets of modern views, this survey cannot be exhaustive. So, I will focus on aspects that seem most relevant for the model developed above. To help organize our thoughts, I will use Murphy's three broad categories for understanding modern (and postmodern) kinds of views, and then draw upon others to help flesh out some details.

and that can be related to each other by means of the laws of logic (e.g., 'if, then,' 'if and only if')." See J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 184. See also 135.

²⁰Beilby, 821.

The first category is epistemology, in which modern views tended to embrace human reason, even apart from the aid of divine revelation, to know universal truths.²¹ At the same time, there also was a strong appeal to empirical knowledge, especially in the sciences. By using an empirical approach, scientists like Copernicus, with his heliocentric model, and Galileo, Kepler, and Newton demonstrated great success in giving us a better understanding of the universe. Moreover, by focusing on efficient and material causes (and not Aristotle's formal and final causes, which would not be empirically observable), Francis Bacon developed an empirical, inductive scientific methodology.²²

Amongst evangelicals in the United States, Bacon's method became so revered that all disciplines, including theology, were thought to be best conducted as sciences using Bacon's method.²³ Murphy observes how Charles Hodge appealed to inductive, scientific reasoning:

The Bible is to the theologian what nature is to the man of science. It is his store-house of facts; and his method of ascertaining what the Bible teaches, is the same as that which the natural philosopher adopts to ascertain what nature teaches. ... [T]he duty of the Christian theologian is to ascertain, collect, and combine all the facts which God has revealed. ... [I]n theology as in natural science, principles are derived from facts, and not impressed upon them.²⁴

Following Descartes, modern views also tended to stress the need for having certainty in our beliefs, some of which could be grounded in reality itself, and knowably so.²⁵ Such beliefs would be "basic" and provide the foundation for an "edifice" for knowledge; hence the name "foundationalism" for this view about how our beliefs should be structured so that these basic beliefs' justification can be transferred to, and used to support, other beliefs. But, on foundationalism, to *know* that these beliefs are grounded in reality itself seems to require direct access to reality.²⁶ According to Murphy, the empirical, foundationalist appeal was to

²¹For example, see Stanley Grenz and John Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 32-33.

²²See William Dembski, *Intelligent Design* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 123; see also Francis Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, <http://www.philosophy-index.com/bacon/advancement-learning/ii-vii.php>, accessed April 12, 2016.

²³George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 14, 16; hereafter *FAC*. See also Mark Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994), 178. And, see Reuben A. Torrey, *What the Bible Teaches: A Thorough and Comprehensive Study of What the Bible Has to Say Concerning the Great Doctrines of which it Treats*, 17th ed. (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1933), 1, in Marsden, *FAC*, 60.

²⁴Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1940), 10-13 (bracketed inserts mine), in Murphy, *Beyond*, 33-34.

²⁵See, for example, Murphy, *Beyond Liberalism & Fundamentalism*, Rockwell Lecture Series, ed. Werner H. Kelber (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1996), 12-13; hereafter *Beyond*; also Grenz and Franke, 30-32.

²⁶See, for example, Merold Westphal, "Postmodernism and Religious Reflection," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 38 (1995): 128-130; Murphy, *Beyond*, 15-19; and R. Scott Smith, *In Search of Moral Knowledge* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), chs. 9-10.

universal experience, while the rational, foundationalist appeal was to universally accessible “clear and distinct” ideas.²⁷ The stress was on universal truths that were knowable by all people, which tended to treat these “knowers” abstractly, apart from their contexts. Often, people think such knowledge would require access from an unmediated, naked, objective, neutral standpoint.²⁸

Amongst evangelicals in the States, Thomas Reid’s Scottish Common Sense Realism also tapped into this these mindsets. Murphy remarks that the name “common sense” “comes from his [Reid’s] view that God has implanted in all human beings certain beliefs, such as the existence of the external world and other minds, the uniformity of nature, and the existence of God.”²⁹ Moreover, nature was thought to be perspicuous.³⁰

So strong was this confidence in a universal common sense to know truth of all kinds, especially from the Bible, that in 1903 B. B. Warfield asserted that

It is the distinction of Christianity that it has come into the world clothed with the mission to *reason* its way to its dominion. Other religions may appeal to the sword, or seek some other way to propagate themselves. Christianity makes its appeal to right reason, and stands out among all religions, therefore, as distinctively “the Apologetic religion.” It is solely by reasoning that it has come thus far on its way to its kingship. And it is solely by reasoning that it will put all its enemies under its feet.³¹

Indeed, evangelicals’ confidence, which Warfield exemplifies, was so high that, as Marsden observes, “by 1859, evangelicals, both scientists, and theologians, thought they had discovered an impregnable synthesis between faith and reason. Scientific reasoning, the kind they most respected, firmly supported Christian faith.”³²

A second category is religious language. In modern views, Murphy sees a stress upon individuals who use individual propositions.³³ These uses can be either to assert a proposition (or refer to something), or to express one’s experiences.³⁴ For the more conservative theologians, Murphy explains that the modern focus was what the individual meant, or intended, with a proposition asserted in language, versus what that person did in a given social setting.³⁵ So, language is used primarily to express a person’s meaning about something in the real world.³⁶

Third, metaphysically, Murphy sees modern views mainly as reductive and

²⁷Murphy, *Beyond*, 13, 91.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 93; Grenz and Franke, 30.

²⁹Murphy, *Beyond*, 32.

³⁰On the perspicuity of nature on “common sense,” see Marsden, *FAC*, 16.

³¹Benjamin B. Warfield, “Introduction,” in Francis R. Beattie, *Apologetics, or The Rational Vindication of Christianity*, vol. 1 (Richmond, VA: The Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1903), 26.

³²George Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), 135; hereafter, *UFE*.

³³See Murphy, *Beyond*, 112-114 for her critique thereof.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 37.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 38, 51.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 38. According to Grenz and Franke, on this view, each statement in the Bible is “true in its own right” (37).

atomistic, with a focus upon the lowest levels of parts and properties.³⁷ That is, on this understanding, things (including people) are composed of many parts, which often are considered atomistically, rather than seeing them holistically. This interpretation of modern metaphysical patterns is mainly materialistic and follows the pattern we see in broader philosophy of the time, too.³⁸ Though Descartes was a kind of dualist, nonetheless many in the modern period were not, including Thomas Hobbes, David Hume, Immanuel Kant,³⁹ the utilitarians, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, and then the naturalists who arose thereafter. Indeed, the pattern that developed over time denied a need for souls and other immaterial things, including essences, following Darwin's naturalistic evolutionary theory. Instead, the universe was understood to be like a machine in a closed system, on which it and living things are treated more or less as being composed of physical stuff that operates mechanistically according to natural laws.⁴⁰

What then are some key implications of these modern, shaping influences for how Christians in higher education would understand scriptural teaching on the model we have developed above? First, if our noetic faculties are as good and reliable as those who embraced Common Sense philosophy believed, it seems that it would tend to mitigate the felt need to rely deeply upon the Spirit to give us wisdom and understanding. For if nature is as perspicuous as it seemed on this mindset, then there could seem to be little felt-need to humble oneself before the Lord and go to him for knowledge. Indeed, the doctrine of human depravity, and the extent of its impact upon human knowers, was given a more nuanced understanding in light of Common Sense philosophy. Though evangelicals still held to the orthodox doctrine of depravity, nonetheless Marsden argues that on Common Sense, that everyone has the ability to know God's truth was more pronounced.⁴¹ As he suggests, what came more to the surface was a mindset that humans' intellect suffered only from a "slight astigmatism."⁴² Also, it seems we could (even should, perhaps) expect that on "Common Sense," people can read Scripture and make sense of it. There is truth to this, and offhand it may seem to fit well with the doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture. But, it also speaks highly of our abilities to understand and discern truth, biblical and otherwise, that easily we can think we do not need to rely self-consciously on the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us into all truth. Rather, since our faculty of reason is quite good in many respects, subtly this mindset can suggest that we do not truly need to depend utterly upon

³⁷Nancey Murphy, "Nonreductive Physicalism: Philosophical Issues," in *Whatever Happened to the Soul?*, eds. Warren S. Brown, Nancey Murphy, and H. Newton Malony (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 129.

³⁸Smith, *In Search of Moral Knowledge*, loc. 1700, Kindle ed. See also Murphy, *Beyond*, 64.

³⁹For Kant, all knowledge comes by way of the five senses, with *a priori* contributions from reason. While we can sense a physical body, we cannot know that we have souls. We have to act as if it is real, to make full sense of morality. See his *Critique of Practical Reason*, preface.

⁴⁰George Marsden, *UFE*, 130.

⁴¹See Marsden's discussion of this attitude in *FAC*, 111-113.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 16.

the Spirit for understanding and knowledge (Prov. 3:5-6). In this light, I believe we need to take John 15:5 to heart, that apart from him, we can do nothing.

Second, it seems the strong emphasis upon humans' abilities to know clearly universal truths does not really do justice to the need we have seen to be shaped by Christ. We are not simply cognitive machines, which process inputs and produce clearly known outputs. As we have seen, our minds not only need to know, but our hearts need to bow. Apart from our surrender and being in a threefold unity with the Lord, we will seek (even subtly) to elevate our hearts and minds over his, which is deeply arrogant and idolatrous. So, we must be shaped volitionally, morally, and in relationship with him (spiritually).

Third, there is another aspect of the threefold unity with the Lord yet to be considered. By the Spirit's living in believers, and through the new heart and a mind that is being renewed, the Lord can communicate with us his passions, desires, plans, and thoughts. Yet, at the same time, these various influences from the modern period can tend to make God seem distant from us. For one, conceiving of the universe as a closed, mechanistic system can easily lead to a deistic understanding of God's relationship to creation, including Christians, for they too would be mechanisms. So, as Marsden observes,

Probably it is safe to say that even many of those who were theologically orthodox adopted a worldview that, in effect, had Deist tendencies. They viewed the universe as a machine run by natural laws, and *in practice* distanced the Creator from their understandings of the everyday operations of creation.⁴³

So, while evangelicals officially held to orthodox doctrines, which would deny deism per se, still they embraced other ideas that in practice gave an impetus toward deism. We might call this a "functional deism," for how it would operate in practice.

In that light, it becomes harder to conceive that God could communicate personally and be intimate with the members of his body. Moreover, it can be hard to conceive that God would do this, for it seems he would have to intervene into a closed system to do that. Yet, in our model, I have argued we need to go to the Lord expectantly, to receive from him wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, lest we have to rely on our own understanding in our integration, teaching, and scholarship. This implication gives us opportunity now to consider a particular theological view that arose (again) in this context, particularly in the States, and how it too has shaped our understanding of the biblical teaching on integration and scholarship. After that, we will consider briefly the influences of postmodernity.

A Particular Theological Example

In the 18th and 19th centuries, evangelicals in the States held a strong preference for what is objectively true and empirically known. This position, along with the

⁴³Marsden, *UFE*, 130 (emphasis mine).

Protestant Reformation's strong appeal to *sola scriptura* as God's special revelation and final authority for orthodox teaching, led these evangelicals to prefer the Bible strongly over religious experience.

Of course, for evangelicals, this position enjoys much truth. Scripture is our final authority for all to which it speaks, and (I would argue) it is inerrant too. But it also seems to be universal in that it is intended for all people. This is why it is important for all people to have the Scriptures available to them in their own languages. Its teachings apply to all of us. So, its teachings should be the final authority to help us assess (and shape expectations for) putative experiences of God, including of what some may claim God told them to do.

So, in the 19th century, when followers of new religious movements, such as Mormons, theological liberals, and Pentecostals, put much emphasis upon religious experience and offered some challenges to received, evangelical views, American fundamentalists, having been shaped by these effects from the modern period, appealed to the theological doctrine of cessationism to preserve orthodox teaching and the authority of Scripture over experiences.⁴⁴ Roughly, cessationism is the view that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit (including prophecy, working of healings and miracles, and tongues) have ceased after the canon of Scripture's closure, or the end of the lives of the apostles. It still is held today as doctrinal truth by many evangelicals.

The cessationist Richard Gaffin argues that at the heart of the Reformation "is the discovery of the self-interpreting clarity of Scripture."⁴⁵ The Reformers used that principle against Roman Catholic appeals to church tradition, and Radical Reformation appeals to "extrabiblical revelations."⁴⁶ Gaffin argues that the Reformers "contend[ed] for the inseparability of word and Spirit ... the unbreakable bond between the Spirit's working and the inscripturated word."⁴⁷ Thus, the "Reformers were resolved to hear nothing but 'the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture' (Westminster Confession of Faith, 1:10)."⁴⁸ So, nothing should be held on par with Scripture, and nothing should be claimed apart from Scripture. They also held we are not adequate in ourselves to understand, discern, and apply Scripture accurately apart from the illumination, conviction, and empowerment of the Spirit, for they did not think highly of our powers of unaided reason. Calvin even commented that "no darkness is more dangerous for quenching the light of the Spirit than reliance on our own sagacity."⁴⁹

⁴⁴On the rise of these new religious movements, see Craig J. Hazen, *The Village Enlightenment in America* (University of Illinois Press, 2000).

⁴⁵Richard Gaffin, "A Cessationist View," in *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today? Four Views*, ed. Wayne Grudem (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 63.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 63-64.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 64. For the full text of ch. 1, sec. 10, see http://www.reformed.org/documents/wcf_with_proofs/, accessed April 20, 2016.

⁴⁹John Calvin, commentary on Luke 24:45, in *Commentary on Matthew, Mark, Luke*, vol. 3, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom33.ii.1.html>, accessed April 20, 2016. Alternatively,

The concern raised by U.S. fundamentalists in the 19th and 20th centuries is that if God continues to speak to us in ways that are not given in Scripture, then in effect the canon of Scripture is not closed; instead, more is being added to Scripture with every such “word.” Frankly, this is an important concern, especially as we have many challenges today to the authority of Scripture, including what books belong to the canon and why. But cessationism also poses a challenge to our model. And, from our heritage that has shaped us as evangelicals, it can be easy to be resistant to ask, much less expect, God to speak into our scholarship.

But is cessationism correct, that if God were to give us new propositional guidance today, it would be tantamount to adding to Scripture? I do not think so, but for brevity’s sake, I will address only two considerations. First, Scripture itself indicates that the canon is closed (for example, see Heb. 1:1-2; Rev. 22:18-19; Jude 3). Therefore, there is no need to appeal also to cessationism to secure the canon’s closure. Second, this conclusion implies that if God had anything else to communicate with us propositionally, in principle it is not part of the canon. And this is what we find; there are examples in Scripture that strongly indicate that God had more things to say than were included in Scripture.

For example, Jesus prayed often, but not all his words are given in Scripture (see, for example, Luke 6:12). Likewise, he surely spoke more words in his ministry than the four Gospels’ writers recorded. For instance, Mark states Jesus was “speaking the word” to people in Capernaum (Mark 2:2) and taught a crowd (10:1), but Mark does not tell us what Jesus said then. Yet, since he is God, his words would be God’s words. Moreover, Moses spoke face-to-face with God many times, but it does not seem all God said then is reported in Scripture (see, for example, Ex. 33:11). These are but a few examples, but they help make the point that since these words of God were not included in Scripture, it follows that not every word God speaks (even today, in our scholarship) would be canonical, thereby preserving canon’s closure. So, God is free to speak into our scholarship today, just as the model suggests.

Now, more briefly, let us turn to shaping influences of postmodernity upon our understanding of our model for the Spirit’s role in our scholarship, teaching, and integration.

Postmodern Responses to Modernity’s Influences

In general, postmodern approaches tend toward a holistic emphasis. Murphy demonstrates this holism in her postmodern alternatives to modern views regarding epistemology, religious language, and metaphysics.⁵⁰ In epistemology, knowledge is not found from neutral, ahistorical, individual vantage points; rather,

“there is no worse screen to block out the Spirit than confidence in our own intelligence.”

⁵⁰Here, my focus will be on epistemology and language. But, in Murphy’s case, her holistic, metaphysical views lead to viewing creation as basically physical stuff, such that humans are basically their bodies. See Murphy, *Beyond*, chs. 4-6.

they are found in a holistic context of the beliefs (and story) of a community.⁵¹ No one has a gaze directly into reality itself; rather, all our access is mediated, like "lenses" we wear which affect how we experience and interpret reality. But, unlike eyeglasses, we cannot take off these lenses. Still, we can grow in understanding and knowledge, and we can undergo paradigm shifts by learning to see under different framing stories.⁵²

Instead, all our access requires interpretation, which is tied integrally to the language and formative story of one's community (in our case, the church).⁵³ As James K. A. Smith explains, the world we inhabit is "always already *interpreted* within a framework of signs or a semiotic system."⁵⁴ Put differently, since humans do not share identical languages or thoughts, "interpretation is inescapable."⁵⁵

Similarly, language cannot be pruned off of reality. Our use of our language shapes our interpretation of reality, and we cannot escape language's pervasive influences.⁵⁶ Moreover, there is no language-as-such; there are only particular languages of particular communities, even though many local communities (such as churches) can be part of a larger "tradition" (such as Christianity).⁵⁷ In MacIntyre's sense, a tradition is "an historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition."⁵⁸

There are many things that can be said about these postmodern kinds of views, but I will give just a quick synopsis in terms of how they do align with our model. First, they emphasize our situatedness, especially attending to how we (as knowers) are shaped by a wide variety of factors, which can help remind us of the way we are shaped as whole beings. That is, we are not mere "cognizers" who somehow shed the influences of our upbringings, historical location, and much more. Second, they draw helpful attention to our finitude, thereby emphasizing our limitations to have knowledge. We are not blind-to-nothing, and it is helpful

⁵¹Murphy, *Beyond*, ch. 4. See also Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 351, 357; Stanley Hauerwas, *Vision and Virtue* (Notre Dame: Fides Publishers, Inc., 1974; repr., Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 20; Grenz and Franke, 16, 21-22; Westphal, "Postmodernism and Religious Reflection," 128-129; and James K. A. Smith, *The Fall of Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 172.

⁵²For example, John R. Franke, *Manifold Witness: The Plurality of Truth, Living Theology series*, ed. Tony Jones (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2009), 66. Also see James K. A. Smith, "Who's Afraid of Postmodernism? A Response to the 'Biola School,'" in *Christianity and the Postmodern Turn*, ed. Myron B. Penner (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005), 218. On undergoing conceptual transformations and shifting to other "traditions" or communities, see MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* ch. XIX.

⁵³Regarding the church, see Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 72.

⁵⁴Smith, "Who's Afraid of Postmodernism? A Response to the 'Biola School,'" 222.

⁵⁵Smith, *The Fall of Interpretation*, 150-51.

⁵⁶MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* 357-358.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 373.

⁵⁸Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 222.

to draw upon the perspectives and insights from others in the body of Christ (past and present) as we do our scholarship. Moreover, they remind us of our fallenness and its effects in epistemology. Thus they help reinforce the roles of both the mind and heart in knowledge. Additionally, their holistic emphasis upon the human being can help remind us of the importance of not just intellectual, but also volitional, moral, and spiritual factors that need to shape us so that we are a people with whom God will be intimate and share his counsel.⁵⁹

But, by way of criticism, I will focus on one main idea that seems most appropriate for our model – all our access to reality requires interpretation; there is no direct access to reality.⁶⁰ If all this view attempts to do is to highlight the importance of interpretation, it would be fine. But, it goes further: even to have an experience requires interpretation. But this seems problematic, for at least two main reasons. First, if it is true, it seems that logically we never can get started and know anything. Why? Suppose I see something on the desk; only, I am not seeing it directly, per the theory; I am interpreting it as a computer. But, what then is it that I am interpreting? A reasonable person's answer would be a computer; only, the view presses us further because I never can access it directly. So, it seems what I am interpreting is another interpretation of something; only, what is this? And off we go, on an infinite regress on which it seems impossible in principle to even get started and know anything.

Second, descriptively, it seems false that we do not ever access anything directly. Suppose I read a passage of Scripture (Rom. 1:16, 17) during my church's worship service: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the love of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'But the righteous man shall live by faith.'" Suppose I say the passage exactly like that. Now, some people may look at me in puzzlement. Then, the pastor whispers to me that I read it incorrectly, that I substituted "love" for "righteousness" in the last verse.

How would people there know if what I read was correct or not? It seems they have to hear the sounds I made for what they are. They also need to see what the word in the passage actually is, then compare the two, and finally express their thoughts properly in language (for example, "you misspoke"). I have done this in a class intentionally, to force students to pay close attention to what was before their minds in conscious awareness – what they heard and read, their comparison, and their judgment. Indeed, how could we ever correct someone if we do not have access to things as they really are, and that we each can see what

⁵⁹There are other positive factors that could be considered generally about postmodern influences in relation to Christianity. For example, see R. Scott Smith, "Non-Foundational Epistemologies and the Truth of Scripture," in *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2016), 856-857.

⁶⁰There are other possible criticisms of these kinds of views, too; see, for example, Smith, *In Search of Moral Knowledge*, ch. 11. See also R. Scott Smith, "Finitude, Fallenness, and Immediacy: Husserlian Replies to Westphal and Smith," *Philosophia Christi* 13.1 (2011): 107-128.

is indeed the case?⁶¹

Moreover, does this mean our situatedness somehow does not matter? Not at all; how we are shaped by various factors plays a part in how we interpret reality. But, from the fact that we are situated in this sense, it does not follow that we cannot access reality directly. I think Moreland draws a helpful distinction in this regard, that our situatedness does affect how we pay attention. Calling this phenomenon “attentive influence,” he argues we have abilities (as a descriptive matter of fact) to compare our concepts with things as they truly are, just as in the example above, and we can adjust our concepts to fit better with reality.⁶² And, we can be aware this is the case, if we pay close attention to what is before our minds in conscious awareness.

Moreland also suggests that over time, people can develop patterns in terms of their attentive influence: “people fall into ruts and adopt ways of seeing things according to which certain features are noticed and others are neglected.”⁶³ For example, what I notice when walking through the apple section in the grocery store largely may be a reflection of the expectations I have of seen in the past. But, I can direct my attention to something new that I had not noticed before, such as a new species of apple that this store never had carried. I think Moreland is right, then, when he suggests that “situatedness functions as a set of habit-forming background beliefs and concepts that direct our acts of noticing or failing to notice various features of reality.”⁶⁴ But if that is the case, we can be shaped by our past’s various influences, and yet we can (perhaps with much effort) adjust how we pay attention and become aware of other aspects of reality.

Does this mean that the importance of interpretation is negated? Not at all; to list but a few examples, we need to interpret data from scientific experiments which then are used to help falsify or support a given hypothesis. Also, to adjudicate between rival theories (or conceptual frameworks) requires interpretation. How a person should live as a Christian also will involve interpretation of the texts.⁶⁵

Practical Applications of the Model

Now that we have developed a model, yet also seen and assessed how our understanding thereof has been shaped by modernity, postmodernity, and a specific theological belief, I will use the remainder of this essay to try to sketch how the model might work in practice. Here I take as given our studying Scripture informs our scholarship and integration. We also need to bring our knowledge

⁶¹This is just one example, for illustration only. For more samples, see Smith, *In Search of Moral Knowledge*, sections 4898-4969, Kindle ed.

⁶²J. P. Moreland, “Two Areas of Reflection and Dialogue with John Franke,” *Philosophia Christi* 8.2 (2006): 305-312.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 311.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*

⁶⁵For more, see Smith, *In Search of Moral Knowledge*, locs. 4611-4635, Kindle ed.

from our various disciplines, for God does not seem to work in a vacuum.

With that in mind, how might it look to see God speak into our scholarship, teaching, and integration, even in ways not specifically given in Scripture? Here, I will draw upon some examples of how I have experienced the Lord intersect me in these ways which I think will help reinforce the model. First, in terms of teaching and integrating the Lord's ideas into it, I was to interview by phone a leader of the emerging church for my class in September 2006. Various people and I asked the Lord if there was anything specific he would have me ask this leader. One person approached me with a prophetic "word" that she said God told her. Now, my book on the emerging church had been published in November 2005.⁶⁶ But, the question given to me to ask had not previously crossed my mind. It was about how this leader's view of the body of Christ finds its place in the suffering and compassion of Jesus, and it had Gal. 3:1-9 and Phil. 3:9-10, 19-21 given to accompany, confirm, and interpret it.

As I prayed about this "word" and considered those passages, I became convinced that God wanted me to ask him that question. When I did, he paused and then said that those in his home church had been discussing this very topic. As he talked, he made connections to Jesus' death on the cross, stating that it is the greatest example of humility for us. Now, during the rest of the class, we discussed that and other points, and it became apparent that he was suggesting that Jesus' death basically was a moral example for us to follow, and not a substitutionary atonement for our sins. That point would not have surfaced in my class if I had not asked that question; I had not yet seen that doctrinal "development" in his or other emergents' thinking. But it became abundantly clear, especially to me, as we made many connections, including how this view affects emergents' views of sin and thus our need, our status in terms of relationship with God now, and more. That result opened up more angles to explore in that class, and many new vistas for ministry and research for my students, and especially for me. But those results likely would not have happened if I had not prayed, trusted him, and asked that question.

Second, as an example of integration with my scholarship, I had been studying and giving conference presentations out of concern about the views of an influential Christian philosopher, concerning an issue at the intersection of philosophy and theology. He had argued that a particular metaphysical position popular amongst many evangelical philosophers actually is incompatible with a core Christian teaching. Now, from other work in related topics, I already had seen reasons why his position has serious implications, undermining issues like our personal identity, our abilities to have knowledge of reality, and how language can relate to reality.

Having already presented a couple papers on his views, from which I had received encouraging and helpful feedback, I sensed the Lord wanted me to address his views again. But I also realized that I wanted to be able to offer more insights that would help the people being influenced by his views. So, I turned to

⁶⁶R. Scott Smith, *Truth and the New Kind of Christian* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005).

a trusted, mature Christian who has given me many prophetic “words.” I asked her to ask the Lord for any specific insights he wanted to give me as I seek to serve him in this project. I too prayed for such insight. The answer she gave me was stunning: this “word” indicated a specific philosophical problem that this scholar, given his commitments, could not comprehend. But, it made sense to me that he would have trouble in light of my studies of his views. I gave this “word” to a trusted Biola colleague, who agreed that this interpretation and application made sense to him. The result was that I developed my paper, devoting a key section therein to this issue, explaining why it was a problem for him, and why he was mistaken. Later, that portion of my paper became part of a peer-reviewed publication.

Now, let me briefly speak to prophetic “words.” While controversial today amongst evangelicals, I have given some *prima facie* reasons why we should not think God would not have anything more to communicate with us today. Plus, I have argued that on our model, we should expect (biblically) that God would have more to say to us in our roles as Christian educators. So, putative words from him should not be dismissed *a priori*, I think. However, that does not mean we simply take them for granted to be his words to us. While we should not despise prophetic utterances, we must test them, as Paul instructed (1 Thess. 5:19-22), and that will be against the final authoritative, universal, objective standard he has given us – Scripture.

Last, I had been working diligently on a paper on the views of three key physicalists. Yet, they granted some of the most important points that body-soul dualists like Moreland, Dallas Willard, and others have been arguing. Yet, I had come to believe that naturalism also collapses into a view like that of postmodernism, that everything is interpretation, so that we cannot know reality as it is. That basic suggestion arose in a class I had taught about two years earlier, and if I could make that point stick, it would take away the perceived strength of naturalism – that we can know reality on its basis, and it is all physical, without any God, souls, etc.⁶⁷

But due to the many things these naturalists granted, I was confused and felt like I was beginning to lose the forest for the trees. They clearly had some core problems in their views about knowledge, but showing that was difficult. I was working hard and not procrastinating, yet I also was to read the paper at a conference, just a few days away. I was working one day at a coffee shop and during lunch break, I kept seeking the Lord, beseeching Him to give me insight where I was stuck. Then I returned to write more. Over time, I felt like some things were starting to fall into place. Suddenly, while writing, I stopped and sensed I needed to read a sentence I had just typed. Now, normally when we write, we can be aware of what we meant, if we pay attention. But when I re-read this sentence, I realized that there was much more meaning and insight to what I had written than what I had in mind when I typed it. I do not know how else

⁶⁷See also *Naturalism and Our Knowledge of Reality*, ch. 5.

to account for that, so I believe that additional meaning was from the Lord, who used my sentence to communicate more than I had in mind at the time. Maybe an hour later, a second such experience occurred. And, all these claims have been tested by myself and peer reviewers.⁶⁸

Similarly, in another writing project, I was stuck after much work over a few months, and I was praying (once again) while driving. Suddenly, I had an idea clearly come to mind: “Why don’t you look at it [the issue] the other way around?” The idea had not occurred to me at all before, and when I pondered it, it seemed very reasonable to consider. When I did, suddenly all my confusion lifted; the problems with this person’s argument that did not make sense suddenly became clear, and that essay too became published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Conclusion

These examples help reinforce the model, that if we abide in him in the ways discussed, I think we can expect him to share insights (as he sees fit) with us, even beyond what is given specifically in Scripture, as we serve him in our profession. In this process, we can integrate insight and understanding from the Lord in our teaching and scholarship. Moreover, it seems these insights can be tested in the ways described (and most of all by Scripture). But, the model is not a formula to be followed. It is not a mechanistic process we can use to extract needed insight from God. Instead, we must humble ourselves before the Lord and listen to his voice. We must live in deep unity with his heart and mind, all in the life and power of the Spirit of Christ. God reveals his secret counsel for those who are intimate with (Ps. 25:14), and are serving, him.

Nevertheless, there also is a danger to be heeded. If we do not go to him, on his terms, for his insight and wisdom, including for what is not given directly in Scripture, then a danger of idolatry looms. For I think it would be all too easy to act (even unconsciously) as though we are our own god. How? Since Scripture does not give us detailed knowledge about all the various disciplines, then just like Adam and Eve in Gen. 3:5, we too would be tempted to think we could define reality in all these disciplines, without having to depend utterly upon, and listen closely to, the voice of the Lord. That means that at least to some extent, we would be elevating their own hearts and minds over his, which is our default sinful mindset, an attitude that opens us up to the suggestions from Satan and cannot please God.

But, if we do seek and abide in him in the ways Scripture indicates, then I think there is a rich, bountiful treasure we can receive from the Lord as we allow him to mentor us in our disciplines in evangelical higher education.^{69,70}

⁶⁸See the final results in *Naturalism and Our Knowledge of Reality*.

⁶⁹A brief comment on my use of “I”: I believe it is important to report my own experiences in the “practical applications” section by using the first-person pronoun. Elsewhere, I have

tried to stress my ownership of my ideas by my uses of "I." Still, it does not follow that these statements (or this whole essay) are just my "personal reflections." Instead, I have used these experiences to illustrate, and provide evidence for, the model I have developed. I believe that epistemology, and thus knowledge, is primarily a first-person matter, which I have tried to emphasize by the importance of paying close attention to what is before our own minds in conscious awareness. I do not want simply to theorize about Spirit integration from a third-person point of view. Since we are involved in an interpersonal relationship with the Lord, we need to pay close attention to what is before our minds as he communicates with us, just as we need in any interpersonal communication.

⁷⁰My deep thanks to Joe Gorra for his help on earlier versions of this essay.