The Epistemological Vocation of the Christian University

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"We will never encourage bright and talented students to fear God and serve him in humility until we put aside piety that is sentimental and man-centered and bend all of our mental gifts to understand the riches of the Christian faith that we profess."

–Nathan Hatch[1]

Faithful education requires clarity about what education is and what the educator's faith is directed toward. If the focus is *Christian* education then that idea needs to be made particularly clear. When Christian colleges and universities ascend to this difficult definitional task, they can properly direct their institution's faithfulness, even as they support instructors seeking a meaningful match between their respective disciplines and the vocation of Christian higher education.

Colleges and universities are unique among the spheres of society. They engage undergraduates, graduate students, and doctoral students for a short period of time in concentrated study. This privileged space in a person's life is focused on learning and, for most, learning about

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1 Nathan Hatch. "Evangelical Colleges and the Challenge of Christian Thinking" in *The Reformed Journal,* September 1985, 15.

something specific. In truth, there is no other time in life like the years intentionally and intensely invested in pursuing a degree.

When families, or individuals, choose a Christian education they do not always know what that means. For some it simply means that their 18-year old will be in a Christian "environment," protected from non-Christian influences and ideas. Others think a faith-based education is equated with chapel attendance, mission trips, and discipleship groups. Some attend a Christian school because they want the Bible/Theology classes that come with the package, expecting reinforcement of family convictions and youth group teachings. For others, within and without the institution, moral formation, perhaps highlighting issues in Christian ethics, or mentoring relationships, meets their expectations.

For some, this faithful education is primarily viewed as job preparation (which it is, of course, in most professional programs). However, for others university is thought to provide a Christian welcome into "the life of the mind" which is grounded in general coursework purportedly intended to groom liberally educated human beings.

In his helpful comments on institutional intelligence, university president Gordon Smith argues that "missional clarity is about a distinctive sense of the vocation of the institution: a deep and nuanced understanding of what this organization is called to do, at this time and place, within this economic, social, political demographic." Christian universities need to move past the "ambiguity and uncertainty about their actual purpose or vocation."[2] While each of the proposals noted above makes a valuable, and potentially adaptable, offering to the discussion of the vocation of the Christian university recommended here, they are still unfocused. To sharpen courses, academic programs, even marketing and faculty development, missional clarity is key. In the brilliant words of educational philosopher Neil Postman: *The school that has no end will come to an end*.[3]

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[2] Gordon Smith, *Institutional Intelligence: How to Build an Effective Organization* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2017), 19.

[3] Neil Postman, *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School* (New York: Vintage, 1996).

Our Epistemological Vocation

I propose that faithful education, institutionally and in the work of individual faculty (to whom this essay is primarily addressed) is a broadly epistemological one. During these few, special years, students need to be deeply engaged, focused, and developing themselves in the business of *knowing*. Students are investing time and money in learning that leads to *knowing* and their faculty are seasoned knowers who facilitate knowledge acquisition. Because the larger society knows that schools are "the institutions most affiliated with knowledge and learning,"[4] Christian universities must live up to this basic perception. Faithfulness to that task keeps the public promise regarding the brand called "school".

But Christian universities have an added dimension that is consistent with, while also magnifying, this brand promise. Along with the knowledge acquisition promised by any school, Christian universities must incorporate (but not exchange) meaningful discourse between inherited knowledge and the knowledge of the Christian faith. This is complex and crucial work that seemed so instinctive to our forebears. In preparing to expose the evangelical spirit as complicit in the anti-intellectual impulse of the American mind, historian Richard Hostadter notes that "the founding fathers of colonial education [in places like Harvard College] . . . intended their ministers to be educated side by side and in the same liberal curriculum with other civic leaders."[5] In early America it did not matter whether students were being prepared for service inside or outside religious settings, they received the same integrated education. In America today, however, the vocation of the faith-based university appears fractured. Stanley Hauerwas says "In truth, we must say that as Christians we have not thought hard about what intellectual difference Christian convictions might make for what is considered knowledge. As a result, our universities and colleges increasingly look like any other."[6] Faithfulness requires that we revive this task in earnest.[7]

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[4] Adam Hill, "Here's How Higher Education Dies," in *The Atlantic*, June 5, 2018, accessed July 12, 2018, https://www.theatlantic.com/education/ archive/2018/06/heres-how-higher-education-dies/561995/.

[5] Richard Hostadter, *Anti-intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), 55, 60.

[6] Stanley Hauerwas, *Christian Existence Today: Essays on Church, World, and Living In Between* (Brazos Press, 1988), 239.

[7] In his book *The Twilight of the American Enlightenment*, historian George Marsden hopefully notes "in the past generation, evangelicalism has been experiencing an intellectual renaissance notable especially for the cohort of excellent younger scholars." (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 177.

My friend and colleague, APU philosophy professor Steve Wilkens says *Many believe that the Christian university offers a narrower perspective, a narrower education. But actually, we offer a bigger education*. Wilkens is describing a robust education that integrates Christian knowledge, understanding, and wisdom with the best content of an excellent traditional curriculum, preparing students with what they need to faithfully engage their vocational roles. Of such an education Richard Hughes explains "As Christians, we are committed to a highly particularistic tradition. Yet, as scholars, we are also committed to a radical search for truth that simultaneously embraces particularity and ambiguity, knowing and not knowing, affirmation and investigation. We are called to honor our Christian faith, but we are also called to take seriously the diversity of perspectives that abound in the modern academy. It is not our job to trump those perspectives with our Christian convictions. Instead, we are called to engage those perspectives, really engage them, and bring them into dialogue with the Christian faith."[8]

Like other schools, our work is *knowing* (my title means to use the philosophic moniker "epistemological" broadly, with apologies to colleagues who are true-blue epistemologists). Our particular work as Christian schools is to reasonably and discerningly incorporate the vast and impressive knowledge of our faith into our learning environments while also appropriating forms of *knowing* that are peculiarly Christian.[9]

To build my case, I will offer comments on how faculty embedment in academic disciplines offers opportunities and challenges to the vocational task I am proposing. I follow this with a word about the priority of integrated knowledge after which I present illustrations of the instructor's task and by raising questions about educational expectations. Finally, I will zero in on a simple paradigm, a faith-informed "trivium" of sorts, for Christian educators to consider as they design courses for the "bigger education" that Wilkens advocates.

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[8] Richard Hughes, *The Vocation of the Christian Scholar: How Christian Faith Can Sustain the Life of the Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), xvii, xviii.

[9] In the original outline of this paper I had planned to discuss some of these forms, for example, the praxis model found in the literature of Practical Theology, embodiment-incarnational pedagogy, contemplative reading, service learning, etc. Space limitations require me to discuss forms such as these at another time.

Faithful Engagement in the Christian University's Epistemological Calling

The Pros and Cons of Academic Disciplines

The "we" Nathan Hatch is referring to in the epigram are Christian university professors who are contained in, and also trapped by,[10] their respective academic disciplines. The emergence of academic disciplines[11] has aided in the efficiency of research through their narrowed focus in the advancement of knowledge. Bounded, as they are, by distinct language, particular topics, methodologies, and objectives, academic disciplines provide a rationale for both internal loyalty and the systematic exclusion of other regions of reality. In the university, faculty membership, requirements for a degree, and individual courses, can all be clearly defined and directed because of disciplines. If there were no such parameters, it would be hard to clearly articulate what a student received when they have finished their time at the university.

However, there is another side to the efficiency advantage. Because disciplines are turf that is brazenly protected, they are, at least in terms of perception, protected from outsiders whose ignorance is inadmissible or, worse yet, whose presumption may adulterate disciplinary purity. As a result, most faculty outside a discipline know [or believe] they cannot infiltrate academic areas that are not theirs. If they do not have formal training, let's say, in Bible, Theology, or History, they assume they are not welcome to engage these subjects. In my experience, most faculty are further convinced that they *are incapable* of interacting with

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[10] Elizabeth Hall notes "Every discipline has a set of epistemological assumptions and methodological practices that govern the practice of the discipline. . . . Many of these assumptions and commitments are in conflict with Christian beliefs about ontology, epistemology, and ethics. Consequently, in some disciplines, Christian scholars have challenged the very rules by which the disciplinary game is played, noting the presence of these pre-theoretical commitments and suggesting alternatives consistent with Christian commitments." ("Structuring the Scholarly Imagination: Strategies for Christian Engagement with the Disciplines" in *Christian Scholarship in the Twenty First Century: Prospects and Perils* (ed. Thomas M. Crisp, Steve L. Porter, & Gregg A. Ten Elshof, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 105,106.

[11] See Stephen Toulmin, *Return to Reason* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), esp. chapters 3 & 9 and Jerome Kagan, *The Three Cultures: Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and the Humanities in the 21st Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

these subjects.[12] Yet "the pursuit of wisdom, sacramentally envisioned through the lens of an integrative habit of mind, rethinks the connection between religious and other forms of inquiry. The aim here is to reflect on and decipher how insights from various fields of knowledge . . . hang together in light of one another."[13] What is perceived as an incapacity, needs to become a strength, first for university faculty and, consequently, in their classrooms and their scholarship.

The Cons and Pros of the Theological Disciplines

Christian schools (and others) rightly recognize Biblical Studies, Theology (perhaps divided into Systematics, Historical, and Practical Theology), and Church/Christian History as disciplines in their own right. Defined degrees, assigned numbers in the Library of Congress, and a myriad of academic journals in these areas reinforce their identity as distinct areas of knowledge. It is – in part – because they have been specialized, however, that connective knowledge is difficult to procure and deliver. That these are disciplines, in and of themselves, sends the message that Christian knowledge is distinct from so-called "non-Christian" knowledge. Along similar lines that denote Sunday mornings at church is *the place* to learn the Bible (from *the man*), while the rest of the week is for real-world learning, the Christian university's separation of Theological knowledge from the knowledge of Sociology, Literature, and Nursing communicates an erroneous message about the nature of reality, as well as the knowledge of reality. Inadvertently, even our believing students become dualists while the public contributions of our intellectual work are unimaginative and unconvincing.

In describing this problem, I do not mean to villainize these areas of Christian religious study. In fact, I am very grateful for these particular disciplines. In a way that is similar to the cloistered work of prayer engaged in by monks and nuns, the PhD in one of the Christian knowledge disciplines is pursuing "a way of paying attention to God, and to

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[12] One hopeful indication that this can be stoutly overcome can be found in Oliver D. Crisp, Gavin D'Costa, Mervin Davies, & Peter Hampson (Eds.) *Christianity and the Disciplines: The Transformation of the University* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014).

[13] Frederick D. Aquino, *The Integrative Habit of Mind* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012), 28.

everything else in its 'God-relatedness.'"[14] This is honorable work and necessary for the work of all Christian faculty being argued for in this paper. By investing their efforts in this way they have (for 2000+ years) been providing ways to make sense of God, his world, and his work in the world. As stewards of transdisciplinary knowledge, these are the scholars who have provided, and are working to provide, faith-focused scholarship. Thank God for them, for they are ambassadors, partners, and inter-locutors in the unique task of Christian education.

The Priority of Integrated Knowing in the Christian University

In spite of the challenges wrought by institutional design, values, and culture, *knowing* remains the main work of the university. It should be noted, furthermore, that this is an inclusive idea. Understanding and pursuing *knowing* links myriad themes, topics, practices, and methods within the broad family of epistemological aims. Suffice it to say that if *knowing* is the "end" of Christian education, then university educators must avoid being distracted by other worthy foci. In his book *The Idea of a Christian Society,* T.S. Eliot cautions that "The purpose of a Christian education would not be merely to make men and women pious Christians: a system which aimed too rigidly at this end alone would become only obscurantists. . . . A Christian education would primarily train people to be able to think in Christian categories."[15]

It may surprise some readers (as it surprises me to say so) that Stanley Fish famously argues for something like what I am promoting. Fish is not interested in Writing instructors getting political, striving for the moral development of their students, watching movies, or navel gazing. Fish expects those students to learn writing from an instructor whose job is, simply, to teach writing. University professors are to introduce students to new knowledge and equip students to go further with that knowledge when the course is done.[16] I do not think he is wrong (students should

[14] Charles M. Wood and Ellen Blue, *Attentive to God: Thinking Theologically in Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2008), 3.

[15] T.S. Eliot, *Christianity and Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968), 22.

[16] Stanley Fish, *Save the World on Your Own Time* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 12, 13.

get a solid education for the course they are in and for the program they are aiming to complete), but his discipline-bounded worldview keeps him from recognizing that knowledge of writing is related to larger creational truths that are relevant to the work of good and bad writing. In fact, in the *The Idea of a University* John Henry Newman suggests this is true for any area of study: "Admit a God, and you introduce among the subjects of your knowledge a fact encompassing, closing in upon, absorbing, every other fact conceivable. How can we investigate any part of any order of Knowledge, and stop short of that which enters into every order? All true principles run over with it, all phenomena converge to it; it is truly the First and Last."[17]

To all educators Fish says "Do Your Job" and "Don't Try to Do Someone Else's Job." If Christian teachers did this, accompanied by the ontological conviction that all reality—and knowledge of it—is unified in Christ,[18] a truly unique and vitally important feat would be achieved in society and in the lives of students. Some worry that such a focus diminishes the fullness of Christian life. "If we ask questions about knowledge and knowing," inquires Locke Bowman, "Does this mean that we neglect affective matters? Does it mean that we cease to care about feelings and relationships, about openness to all the pains and joys of being human? Not at all! It is unfortunate that rigid dichotomies should have arisen between the affective and the cognitive."[19] Done well, faith-informed *knowing* can make direct and indirect contributions toward well-being and spiritual development.[20] And thankfully, many of our universities have an amazing, intelligent, and huge-hearted team of student life professionals who partner with us in the vital developmental challenges and opportunities that the persons we teach experience.

A note is important here, which will be further developed later. What kind of *knowing* are we most interested in? As Fish reminds us,

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17 John Henry Newman, *The Idea of the University* (ed. Frank M. Turner; New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1996), 29. Fish (p. 15) adds Newman to his "side.")

18 Colossians 1:15-17; See Newman, *The Idea of the University*, 45.

19 Locke E. Bowman, Jr., *Teaching for Christian Hearts, Souls & Minds* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990), 1.

20 Thomas Goodwin (1600-1679), President of Magdalen College, Oxford said "It is true that thoughts and affections are the mutual causes of each other, as it is written, 'While I was musing, the fire burned' (Psa 39:3)—the thoughts are the bellows that kindle and inflame the affections. And then when they are inflamed, they cause thoughts to boil." From Thomas Goodwin, *The Vanity of Thoughts*, (Chapel Library: 1999), 12 accessed July 12, 2018, https://www.chapellibrary.org/files /6513/7643/3398/voth.pdf.

developing disciplinary knowledge, and training in relevant skills, is both our institutional and ethical obligation. But, as Newman notes above, we cannot leave it there. Philosopher-Educator Alfred North Whitehead warns of what he calls "'inert ideas' – that is to say, ideas that are merely received into the mind without being . . . thrown into fresh combinations."[21] Newman expects university students to be "properly trained and formed to have a connected view or grasp of things."[22] In fact, he adds, "a truly great intellect . . . is one which takes a connected view of old and new, past and present, far and near, and which has insight into the influence of all these on another; without which there is no whole, and no centre."[23] With Whitehead, Newman suggests that such an intellect "possesses the knowledge, not only of things, but also of their mutual and true relations"[24] and, concludes Newman, "knowledge, not merely considered as acquirement, but as philosophy."[25] I can't be sure, but I take Newman to be suggesting that knowing truths and their combinations is a structural necessity for those who would love wisdom.

The Instructor's Task: Illustrations and Expectations

In the call to equip students to make these kinds of connections, however, only so much can be done in any given class or course. Forty-five semester hours puts limits on content, as long as a university is designed around disciplines, majors, and immersive preparation for particular professions. As already intimated, the *knowing* of the Christian university involves making theological-biblical connections because our view of reality "admits a God." As *ordinary theologians* (if not **professional theologians**) "our hope of attaining to a genuine integration will rest on the assumption that the world itself, as a single created

[21] Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1929), 13.

[22] Newman, *The Idea of the University*, 8.

[23] Ibid., 98.

[24] This correlates with what Jonathan Kvanvig defines as *understanding.* See his *"Understanding" in The Epistemology of Theology* (ed. William J. Abraham and Frederick D. Aquino; Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017), 175-189.

[25] Newman, *The Idea of the University, 98.*

reality, manifests an overall coherence and integration between its various aspects."[26] Because ours is a bigger standpoint and thus a bigger education, we draw on the extensive scholarship—the manifestations of reason—of our faith tradition(s). We certainly will not always agree with Athanasius, Abelard, Theresa of Avila, and Aquinas, but their commentary on our shared story provides faith-informed assessments to our disciplinary knowledge resulting in practical wisdom related to the sacred work to which our graduates are called.

Let me illustrate: Reason does not require faith to recognize that the earth is an orb. Such knowledge is publically available to any human. But understanding that a Creator made the earth-orb involves faith. The former belief requires nothing of the believer, but the latter belief, with its concomitant understanding of a Creator who has acted and spoken, entails a response. If there is a Maker then we must determine not if, but how we will love him, obey him, worship him, think about him, and act on his behalf in the world. Professors are typically committed to their discipline's many the-earth-is-round pronouncements. These truths can be distributed to students, (`a la Stanley Fish) with passion (which, of course, adds to the potential for student learning). The Christian professor, however, has more to say, and in doing so, confesses that she does not stand alone. Knowing that James Houston testifies *I Believe in the Creator,* the science educator invites Houston's insights into the learning.[27] Music theory professors will distinguish between *ritardando* and *rigenuto* with their young composers; the Christian music professor may also discuss the social power of music in light of Boethius' (ad 477-524) insights on the soul-transforming effect of music as found in his *De institutione musica*.

Interest in such things implies a prior faith-commitment on the part of the educator, something that professors in Christian universities are typically expected to have. But being aware that not every student may share this commitment, the Christian professor may want to adjust her expectations and her instructional disposition. While aiming to renew students' minds, expecting faith-informed learning to be transformative for every learner may be to expect too much. Sneaking faith-informed insights in one's teaching or, alternatively, to pronounce them

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[26] Trevor Hart, *Faith Thinking: The Dynamics of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove IL: IVP, 1995), 104.

[27] James Houston, *I Believe in the Creator* (Vancouver, British Columbia: Regent College Press, 1995).

in a sermonic way, may lead to resentment among some students and disappointment in the faculty member. The prudent teacher will seek to integrate relevant Christian wisdom, but not merely as a gratuitous "add-on" to the "real" content. Rather, it will be introduced in a way that resonates with the academic context and the particular academic content. James Houston contributes in the science class (or the art class), Boethius in the music education class. Perhaps the courageous work of Nancy Eiesland[28] will bring insight for Disability Studies students, while St. Francis[29] and Pope Francis[30] might weigh in during an environmental ethics class. As Hughes notes, the point is not to use the work of scholars like these as a religious club, trumping other perspectives. Rather, these people—thinking in theologically informed ways—help Christian professors to broaden the conversation in their respective areas of study. Students without a faith, with a different kind of faith, or a faith that is still taking shape will benefit from relevant inclusion of reasonable academic materials, informed by one or more Christian faith traditions, presented by an enthusiastic instructor whose credible commitment is to guide student efforts to deliberate well toward their own convictions.

Faith Informed Disciplinary Knowing: Aims and Approaches

Because the university and the Christian faith are often identified as being in pursuit of the same thing, *veritas* (or, truth), the rise of Christian universities has been logical. But claiming possession of truth can be a problem.[31] To "have" the truth may cause a subtle foreclosure on learning. Natural curiosity loses steam, intellectual effort seems point-

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[28] Nancy Eiesland. *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994).

[29] Ilia Delio. *A Franciscan View of Creation: Learning to Live in a Sacramental World* (The Franciscan Heritage Series, Vol. 2 (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2003).

[30] Pope Francis. *Laudato Si – On Care for our Common Home* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015).

[31] Provocative, perhaps, is Jonathan Kvanvig's suggestion that "there is a plurality of epistemic values and goals, and that though truth is an important epistemic goal, it has no claim to being the primary such value or goal." Jonathan Kvanvig, "Truth is not the Primary Epistemic Goal," in *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology*, (ed. Matthias Steup & Ernest Sosa; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 286.

less, and healthy debate around different perspectives, even Christian perspectives, may seem an exercise in futility. *Pursuing* the truth, via a widened view of *knowing*, gives our vocation an additional dimension.

2 Peter 1:5-8 suggests that knowledge (*gnosis*) is a virtue, that along with goodness, brotherly love, godliness, self-control, and love, should be added to faith. Yet "it is not a goal in and of itself . . . [Rather, when it is] divorced from faith and virtue, knowledge might be detrimental." Therefore, what virtuous learners "do with the knowledge imparted to them is decisive. In the present context [of 2 Peter] *gnosis* signifies a practical manifestation or application of what is known to be true."[32] To grow in knowledge—across a variety of university courses—that increases faith and contributes toward good character requires particular kinds of effort. A number of epistemic tools, therefore, are called for: discernment, practical reason, worldview frameworks, reflective judgment, critical thinking, intellectual humility, and other classic intellectual virtues. These are tools that university professors can offer students who are acquiring a growing body of knowledge in their pursuit of truth.

However, the goal is not to teach *about* these things. Rather, the instructor is called to (1) demonstrate how he has used these tool(s) in his own pursuit of faith-informed understanding and, consequently, informed obedience and (2) provide scaffolding for students so they can practice using these tools in course-related learning. The instructor's job is to guide students to foster intellectual virtue and critical capacities in working toward a connected view, or an integrative habit of mind.[33]

While utilizing the specialized methods, metrics, and meanings of their discipline, disciplinary experts must avoid the reductionist, absolutist, dogmatism that often comes with thinking that fails to take into account the integrated nature of reality and of knowledge. Aquino frequently notes Newman's call for training the intellect: ". . . teachers and researchers who cultivate a connected view within themselves become adept at (1) grasping how various pieces of data fit together in light of one another, (2) discerning what others have failed to perceive

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[32] J. Daryl Charles, "The Language and Logic of Virtue in 2 Peter 1:5-7" in *Bulletin for Biblical Research,* 8 (1998), 67. Jesus makes a similar point at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. (See Matthew 7:24-27.)

[33] Frederick D. Aquino, *The Integrative Habit of Mind* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012). Here too the Christian faith makes a vital contribution. As St. Paul teaches, "knowledge puffs up" (1 Corinthians 8:1). The virtue of intellectual humility then becomes a vital partner to knowing (See Robert C. Roberts and W. Jay Wood, *Intellectual Virtues* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007]).

and understand, and (3) rendering a skillful application of these insights to a particular context."[34] Perhaps three English words from the Bible's wisdom literature can sum up the Christian educator's task over the duration of a semester-long course[35]:

- As educators, we identify and organize the requisite **knowledge** needed to provide foundations for further learning.
- As experts in a field of study, we design student learning to create connected **understanding** of key curricular issues.
- As Christian disciples, we incorporate the **wisdom** found within our faith tradition(s)[36] and guide students to shape practical wisdom to relevant disciplinary issues, professional practices and situations, and the virtuous life.

In this way, "the pursuit of wisdom, sacramentally envisioned through the lens of an integrative habit of mind, rethinks the connection between religious and other forms of inquiry."[37] Knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, drawn from interlocutors in both the discipline and the faith, as well as from those working at their intersection "are crucial to the pursuit of informed judgment. They are especially important for equipping people as much as possible to acquire truth and to see beyond their own perspective, thereby making the crucial connections among diverse ideas and resources."[38] To make wisdom, which is practical, dynamic, situational, and context specific, the end goal—rather than tidy truth—invites humility, intellectual agility, and the opportunity to make a difference beyond merely giving the right answers on the exam.

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[34] Aquino, 73, 74.

[35] Readers may note some resemblance to the ancient Trivium which includes Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric. A more recent similarity can be found in Mortimer J. Adler, *The Paideia Proposal: An Educational Manifesto* (New York: Macmillan, 1982).

[36] All Christian educators know that the Christian faith holds together by means of the Triune God as described in the Bible. Yet that faith is expressed kaleidoscopically, through multiple traditions, or streams that have emerged over time and across many cultures. Savvy educators will find reasons and ways to introduce students to integrative Christian wisdom from various streams, not just their own.

[37] Aquino, *The Integrative Habit of Mind*, 28.

[38] Ibid., 38.

Conclusion

Fulfilling our epistemological vocation is the essence of faithful education. With all that we could do, this is what we must do. But the mature believer knows that faithfulness to God just might be accompanied by hidden rewards.

Researcher Daniel Pink calls the kind of *knowing* I've been focusing on "Symphony." He describes this as "the ability to put together the pieces. It is the capacity to synthesize rather than to analyze; to see relationships between seemingly unrelated fields; to detect broad patterns rather than to deliver specific answers; and to invent something new by combining elements nobody else thought to pair." This capacity, says Pink, "is fast becoming the killer app in business."[39] Perhaps by focusing on *knowing*—integrated *knowing* in which disciplinary knowledge and the wisdom of the Christian faith encounter one another—engaging dialogues will lead to wisdom that prepares our students to make a difference in their vocations. In this way, we'd be continuing the legacy of early Christ-followers. Yale historian Robert Wilken describes their profound contribution: "Christian thinking," he says, "while working within patterns of thought and concepts rooted in Greco-Roman culture, transformed them so profoundly that in the end something quite new came into being."[40] Perhaps, again, this will be one reward that results from being faithful to the distinct vocation of the Christian university.

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[39] Daniel Pink, *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* (New York: Riverhead Books: 2006), 130, 140.

[40] Robert Wilken, *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2003), xvii.

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