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A Word  
from the Editors  

Last year’s issue of Carson-Newman Studies began with the following statements:

This forty-third issue of Carson-Newman Studies reflects a wide range of ideas held by the faculty, staff, and students, as well as a rich variety of ideas presented by various lecturers. An academic community requires both the development of thought on campus and the infusion of ideas from off campus. This diversity of thinking keeps alive the central mission of the college’s academic program—the consideration, development, and refinement of the life of the mind. The academic community withers without such activity.

This forty-fourth issue reasserts these thoughts.

The academic year 2004-2005 began with the shared insights and compassionate urgings of Mark A. Heinrich, recipient of the 2003 Distinguished Faculty Award. His address, printed in this issue, reminds us of the common responsibility to nurture relationships in order to share more effectively in this close-knit community of learning. Dr. Heinrich has not only taught us by words, but also by actions.

The lectures presented here by Joe Bill Sloan, David Crutchley, Robin Thomerson, and Fisher H. Humphreys remind the readers that a place continues to exist for the public presentation of challenging ideas. The faculty, staff, and student articles demonstrate the depth of research and thinking that support the principal task of the teaching enterprise.

The editors thank all the contributors. We renew the invitation to other faculty, staff, and alumni to offer their intellectual efforts in future issues of Carson-Newman Studies.

Don H. Olive, Editor  
Michael Arrington, Managing Editor
How Are the People Around You Doing?

[Distinguished Faculty Award Address, 2004]

Mark A. Heinrich

In fall of 1994, Dr. Michael Carter unexpectedly summoned several of us to his office. We quickly learned the reason for this rather urgent unplanned meeting. Earlier in the week, Dr. R. Lofton Hudson, now in failing health, called Dr. Maddox to inquire about Carson-Newman’s interest in his life’s work. Dr. Carter also informed us that we were one among five or six colleges and universities under consideration. All of this suggested that Carson-Newman was now positioned to permanently hold the most pioneering work in the area of pastoral counseling. We all agreed that securing Dr. Hudson’s collection would further strengthen programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Over the next four years, CN worked closely with Dr. Hudson and his family. In the end, the Hudson family chose Carson-Newman. After the decision was final, Dr. Hudson said that he chose us for the following reasons: Our firm commitment to academic integrity, Our clear sense of purpose and direction as an institution, Our unwavering commitment to open intellectual inquiry, and Our sound stance with reference to denominational politics.

Dr. Hudson published, preached, taught, and lectured on many intriguing aspects of counseling, the family, effective communication, and religion. Realizing the enormity of his life’s work, trying to efficiently summarize even one aspect of it for this event would simply not do him justice. But after further thought, I recalled an early and somewhat embarrassing conversation I had with Dr. Hudson. And so, it is this early conversation that will serve as the central theme for my talk today. Furthermore, I believe it is this conversation and its contents that outline the most important threads running through all of Hudson’s work.

So, for the time remaining let me share the Whitman Sampler version of my initial meeting and conversation with this wise, humble,
and loving man. As I recount the story to you, listen for my ignorance. It pops up quickly.

A year or so after Dr. Hudson contacted us about donating his life’s work to CN; I was fortunate to visit with him in Omaha, Nebraska. After arriving in Omaha, Dr. Hudson served as a personal tour guide showing me around the city while we chatted or while I asked him my top 1000 burning questions. You know—it’s not everyday you have an opportunity to speak with a legend. After the tour, we freshened up and then headed to his favorite local restaurant for supper. On the way to the restaurant, Dr. Hudson ask, in his ponderous questioning voice “Mark, now I have a few questions for you.”

Mark, how are you doing?” to which I was a bit surprised since we had already exchanged the standard polite disingenuous niceties. (I remember thinking to myself, why is he asking me this again—maybe he’d forgotten—or maybe his memory is failing—boy was I ever wrong). So, I said, well Dr. Hudson, I’m doing fine – and am especially grateful to be here with you today. Dr. Hudson smiled as only Dr. Hudson could and said “I’m sorry I wasn’t very clear with my question”—“let me ask it in another way—how are things going in your life Mark!?” Now I’m reeeally wondering what he’s wanting from me—sounds like he’s really checking me out (which I would later realize was all wrong).

Taking another shot at his question I said, “I’m really living a storied life. I have a great wife, a supportive family, many wonderful friends, a fulfilling career, and more hobbies than time. Things are good.” About that time our food arrived rescuing me from an uncomfortable conversation or so I thought! We began our meal and Dr. Hudson almost immediately continued, “Mark, let me ask my question one other way—how successful have you been in your life?” I thought to myself, “I’ve finally got it—he wants to hear about my degrees, awards, publications, previous jobs, and what a wonderful person I am.” SIGH, Haaa! I was feeling immediately better as I launched into a verbal summary of my more than eleven page vita. “He’ll be impressed,” I said to myself!

He did listen carefully as he always did and apologized once more saying, “I’m not communicating my questions very well tonight. Let me try to explain what I’m asking in my question. When I speak with close friends or family members or meet with practicum students or interns for supervision, we regularly discuss this question of success, personal success. Mark, you know as well as I that the popular beliefs about success and happiness (lots of money, power, status, position,
etc.) simply are not supported in the literature or for that matter in real life.

“So, when I was asking you about success, I was asking what I believe to be one of the most fundamental and important, if not the most important, life skills. What I’m asking is, ‘How are the people around you doing’—how are the people in your life doing—the people with whom you have regular contact—how are they doing?” How are they doing emotionally, physically, spiritually, and, most importantly, how are your actions, how is your behavior impacting them? These people are employees, bosses, coworkers, husbands, wives, sons, daughters, grandparents, friends, and on and on—How are they doing because of your contact with them? —**How are they doing because of your presence in their life?**

“*Mark, self-centered people are emotionally and intellectually incapable of accurately responding to this question.*” It was at this point I recall saying to myself—well, I just blew the Hudson collection for Carson-Newman College. After silently beating myself up I stopped and said, “What a healthy, progressive, and threatening approach to success! I’m sorry! I completely missed your question and point!” I guess that says a lot about my definition of success at this point in my life.

So, I ask you Dr. Hudson’s important question: **“How are the people around you doing?”** How are those with whom you work, with whom you play, with whom you live—how are they doing? How does your presence in their life impact them? How has your relationship with them influenced their development as a human being? Now, while, you are not responsible for their well being, you must be sensitive to the impact you have on them—you must remain empathically connected with them.

Dr. Hudson followed-up his piercing dinner questions with a verbal sketch of basic relationship skills. These words, his words about relationships heard through my ears will remain with me all of my life. Dr. Hudson said, “Literature strongly suggests that people tend to hold overly favorable views of their abilities. People typically see and thus rate themselves as being much more proficient socially and intellectually than in fact they are. Overestimations occur, in part, because people who are unskilled suffer a dual burden. Not only do these people reach erroneous conclusions and make unfortunate choices, but also their incompetence robs them of the ability to realize it. So, one essential feature of such social or relational incompetence is that persons so afflicted are incapable of knowing that they are incompetent. Such
individuals believe that they are competent socially when in fact their skills are dreadful.

“Let me give you an example. In 1995, McArthur Wheeler, a college graduate walked into two Pittsburgh banks and robbed them in broad daylight, with no visible attempt at disguise. He was arrested later that night, less than an hour after videotapes of him were broadcast on the 11:00 p.m. news. When police later showed him the surveillance tapes, Mr. Wheeler stared in disbelief. “But I wore the special cream advertised on television,” he mumbled. Apparently, Mr. Wheeler was under the impression that rubbing one’s face with a particular type of cream rendered it invisible to videotaping cameras. He really believed with all of his heart and mind that he would be unrecognizable to cameras when wearing this specially advertised cream—thus explaining his brash and irrational behavior.”

As humorous and almost unbelievable as this true story seems, the very same lack of relational awareness plagues all of us to some extent. In other words, we mistakenly and uncritically believe in our relational skill set when in reality those skills may be no more effective than Mr. Wheeler’s special cream. How many times do your personal relationships suffer because you fail to recognize that you are relying on something just as false as Mr. Wheeler’s cream? But unlike Mr. Wheeler, we usually have no means for feedback and thus remain unaware and ignorant of our relationship errors, only to repeat them over and over again.

Dr. Hudson went on to say, “Healthy relationships are not things that just happen to us. Good healthy relationships are things we create.” Good healthy relationships are things we create! Each of us here must work daily at improving our relationship skills. As we develop insights into relationships, we are then able to more competently respond to my question “How are the people around you doing?” Good relationships are made and remade daily. We will go through slumps, experience crises, and run into problems. But, if we do not keep growing, if we do not keep practicing good healthy relational behaviors, we will lose relationships.

How are the people around you doing? How are your actions, your attitudes, and your behaviors impacting the people around you? And as important, how are you providing the people around you healthy feedback opportunities. How are you improving your relation skill set because of what you learn from the people around you? Hudson paused at this point and then said—You know, Mark, what I’m talking about is love. I recall that there was someone in the Bible, I
believe in the New Testament, who suggested that loving one another might be a good thing!

The ability to Love one another and the competence of our relational skill set are irrefutably linked. These are skills all human beings need—and they are learned—they are not innate. So, how do we grow relationally? Well, let me mention three key areas. Learn and practice relationship building and maintenance skills, regularly assess your relationship skill set and have the courage and persistence to put what you learn into practice. Like any skill, you will improve it if you practice it correctly.

First, relationship building and maintenance skills are life skills that we must learn and more importantly practice daily. These skill sets fall into two very different but highly related categories—Relationship Sustainers and Relationship Destroyers.

If you would prefer to destroy or end a relationship; boy, do I have some ideas and techniques for you. Ending even the most near and dear relationship can be easily accomplished by just utilizing these behaviors or actions: Criticize, Blame, Complain, Nag, Threaten, Punish, Bribe (to Control), and Love Conditionally. Now, many of you may be saying to yourself, “You’ve just mentioned all of my favorite techniques. I know they work and without them, I’ll never be successful. Plus, when you deal with certain people, you must use some of the destroyers. You’ve got to be tough!” No way, destroyer breath. These eight destroyers will always, always, always weaken relationships. And weakened relationships will lead to breakdowns in friendships, work relationships, marriages, and institutions.

Hudson continued by saying, “Let me give you a great example of what practicing relationship destroyers will get you. Early in my career I began seeing an increasing number of couples seeking relief from what they often described as having “fallen out of love.” In one specific instance I clearly recall, I had been working with a couple who just two years earlier described their relationship as blissful, full of love, and God ordained.

“On this day, the wife was attending the couple’s regular appointment time because her husband had unexpectedly been called out-of-town. Almost immediately, she began crying which surprised me since she had been very reserved and almost uncommunicative each previous session. Now, in the absence of her husband, she said, we never talk any more. Oh, we talk but never about the important matters. He makes all of the significant decisions without ever including with me. And then, I’m never allowed to express any anger or frustration about anything.”
She said, “Dr. Hudson, how could our relationship have fallen so far in such a short time? And then she said, let me try to express how frustrated I really am about this relationship and marriage. My greatest relief and satisfaction in recent months comes when I swish my husband’s toothbrush in an **unflushed** toilet only to watch with great eagerness each morning as he brushes his teeth. That’s my level of anger and frustration. And, that’s the kind of thing that happens when we fail to learn, practice and develop healthy relational skills.”

Now, if the relationship destroyers aren’t working for you—or helping you toward your relational goals, here’s a set of relationship sustainers, which will help. **Listen, Support, Encourage, Trust, Respect, Accept, Negotiate, and Love Unconditionally.**

The second step necessary to develop our relational skills is an accurate understanding of how others see us. And in order to do this, we must give others permission to honestly share how they see us and our relational skill sets. This is often a painful process which is the major reason most of us simply resist doing it. We would rather avoid the pain and remain blissfully ignorant than examine our self and grow. Assessing current relational skills is the first step followed closely by practicing the sustainers and avoiding the destroyers.

Let me suggest a couple of assessment questions that can yield valuable answers provided you’ve given your responders genuine permission to speak their minds. Say to your responder—

- Describe how I behave when I’m in a “bad mood.”
- Describe what I’m like as a coworker.
- Describe what I’m like as a boss.
- How can I become a better coworker or boss?
- What can I do to improve the relationship?
- What is it that you need from me?

Many of you are saying, “I don’t even share on that level with my family—I’m certainly not going to do anything like that with friends or coworkers.” And almost without exception, you’ll never fully realize the joy and satisfaction that comes with deep and fulfilling relationships.

Finally, have the courage and persistence to put what you learn into practice until this becomes a part of your natural style. If you are struggling, ask for help as hard as that might be for many of us. Now you know that I’m a teacher. So, I have an assignment for you. You’ll find a portion of your homework assignment on the table in front of you. It’s a business sized laminated card on which you will find a list...
of the destroyers, the sustainers and the assessment questions. Here’s the assignment:

1. All of us here are aware of many within the Carson-Newman College Family in need of the relationship sustainers. I’m asking each of you here today to identify one person among our 405 employees needing support and encouragement. It does not take long. Simply practice the sustainers.

2. Commit to assessing your current relational skill set. Don’t take the blissfully ignorant route! Take the questions and statements I’ve suggested, sit down with those individuals you interact with regularly, and discuss the appropriate ones. Remember, you must grant your responder(s) permission to be honest prior to beginning. You have nothing to lose and a whole bunch to gain.

Let me also encourage you to incorporate these assessment questions into campus meetings. Each time you meet, set aside some time to address a few of these assessment questions and statements. For instance, I might ask my department members, “How am I doing as your chair? What do you need from me as your chair? What do I do that really angers you?” And in return, each member would be given the same opportunity to be reviewed. Open honest dialogue builds relationships and forms the basis for success. So, assess your present skill set, avoid the destroyers, learn the sustainers, practice, practice, practice these new healthy skills, and continue this process all of your life.
Spiritual Androgyny in the Works of Constanza de Castilla

Mary Elizabeth Baldrige

Although traditionally women’s writing from medieval Spain has received little critical attention, in the past few years an increasing number of critics have begun to examine the extant works written by medieval Spanish women with the intent of understanding the Middle Ages more fully. A result of this increased attention has brought to light works of literature written by previously unknown authors. Among these authors is Constanza de Castilla. Born around 1397, Constanza was the granddaughter of King Pedro I (“el Cruel”) who had been assassinated by his half-brother.

Due to her status as a legitimate descendant of a deposed royal line, Constanza’s existence posed a threat to the sovereignty of the reigning royal family. Probable, in order to eliminate this threat, Constanza was “encouraged” to enter the convent and did so around 1408. By 1416, she was the prioress of that convent. In that role, Constanza wrote a book of prayers and devotions intended for daily use by the nuns in her convent.

This book was first published in 1998, under the title *Libro de devociones y oficios*. As I began to examine this work, one aspect of Constanza’s spirituality began to stand out—the way that she emphasizes Christ’s “feminine” qualities in order to make Christianity more accessible to women. However, I soon realized that this element of Constanza’s work was just one aspect of a larger trend, which I will call spiritual androgyny.

Spiritual androgyny is what Marilyn Farwell describes as an androgyny as balance, in which

one quality does not incorporate or transform the other; each moves back and forth, partaking of the other at leisure while still retaining its individual validity. It is important, here, that there is no identifiable One or Other; rather each member of the pair is the Other and each is the One... Neither side is reduced to the other in
defeat, but each contributes to dynamic tension that defines the unity. (441-42)

This type of androgyny closely parallels the concepts of gender that we see developing among Christian women authors from the Middle Ages such as Constanza de Castilla. Caroline Walker Bynum has long recognized that medieval women represent gender very differently than do men. She states that

when describing self as when describing God, women used imagery more androgynously than did men. . . .Women did not have a strong sense of binary opposites grouped around the male/female contrast. They did not associate specific personality characteristics or roles—such as authority, rationality, nurture, emotion—with one or the other sex. (270-271)

The use of ungendered and cross-gendered imagery by medieval women reflects the way that these women interacted with their faith and negotiated meaning for themselves in their religion. It is for this reason that I am convinced that this tool will be particularly instructive in the examination of Constanza de Castilla’s Libro de devociones y oficios.

Spiritual androgyny as depicted by medieval women authors consists of two very different but closely related interactions between “masculine” and “feminine” constructs of gender. In the first phase, these women “feminize” Christ by emphasizing his feminine characteristics. This change gave women a special connection with Christ and, by extension, made Christianity more feminine. In the second phase, the women authors ascribe to themselves masculine characteristics or roles.

While some critics view this phase as opposed to the first phase, viewing the first phase as a step forward for women in a type of early “feminism,” and the second phase as a step back into submission to patriarchal values, this second phase is actually a natural offshoot of the first. Women could imitate Christ in their own femininity without having to become Other, but their special “Christlikeness” authorized them to take on “masculine” roles that had previously been denied them and to acknowledge masculine traits that had previously been ignored in them. The masculine, therefore, was not Other, but rather an extension of self.

In spite of the fact that Spiritual androgyny is made up of several different gender strategies, only the first has received much critical
attention. This phase is frequently referred to as the “feminization of Christianity” (although it is more correctly a feminization of Christ). While it was fairly popular in the late Middle Ages for men to follow Christ as the ideal example of masculinity, it was also becoming more and more popular for women, and particularly for nuns to look to Christ, rather than to Biblical women as an example of femininity (Bynum, “. . . And Woman His Humanity” 259). The image of Christ’s femininity was developed in several different ways. Probably the most prevalent of these is the idea that women, by virtue of their very femininity, had a connection with Christ’s “feminine” humanity. Another popular strategy is the depiction of Jesus as a mother figure. Both of these strategies are present in Constanza’s works.

Constanza de Castilla’s original prayers all have the humanity of Christ as the major theme. Her opening prayer focuses quite explicitly on Christ’s life, with particular attention devoted to His passion and death. In addition, there are frequent references to Christ’s humanity throughout all of her prayers. She identifies this humanity as a “vestidura de omne” [“suit of humanity”] taken from Mary (Castilla 3). Christ’s humanity is “feminine” in that He inherited His earthly body from His mother, His only human parent.

The idea that Christ’s humanity is inherited solely from Mary is continued throughout Constanza’s prayers. Constanza refers to Christ’s body as: “la vestidura que della toaste” [“the suit that You received from her”] (Castilla 20). She then goes on to quote Christ as saying to His mother: “en la carne que de ti toaste los redimi” [“I redeemed them with the flesh that I took from you”] (Castilla 32). This “feminized” vision of Christ is a common theme both in Constanza’s work and in works written by other medieval women.

Another particularly interesting element of Constanza’s version of the Conception is that she states explicitly that Christ’s humanity was fashioned from Mary’s womb. Constanza describes Mary’s womb as: “santas entrañas,” “sagrario del tu vientre,” and “tálamo de tus entrañas” (Castilla 82). These terms all extend the metaphor of Christ’s feminized humanity. The word “entrañas” is, in itself, a very earthy term and suggests the deepest part of the human flesh. Constanza connects this aspect of Mary’s humanity with Christ when she

While referred to as a "feminization," the action involved is actually an androgynization. Although this strategy involves emphasizing the feminine aspects of Christ, the authors involved, in general, did not use exclusively feminine language to talk about Christ, nor did they deny his physiological masculinity.
emphasizes that “dellas tomó [Cristo] vestidura de omne” ["from them (the entrails) Christ took on a suit of humanity”] (83). Christ is connected with His mother in a deeply human and intimate way.

In other chapters, while not explicitly reiterating that Christ took His humanity from Mary, Constanza continues to emphasize Christ’s humanity. She sees Christ’s suffering as a gift to humanity: “plógote padesçer fanbre e sed, ansi commo omne omne verdadero por mayor mérito quesiste ser tentado del enemigo” ["it pleased You to suffer hunger and thirst since You wanted the enemy to tempt You, like a true human, for the greater good"] (Castilla 6). Later on, she again states that “commo omne padeçías tan fuertes e soberanos dolores que non ay coraçón que pensarllos pueda” ["as a human You suffered such strong and supreme pains that no heart can imagine"] and that “fueste sacrificado por nos commo omne verdadero” ["You were sacrificed for us as a true human"] (Castilla 18-19).

The frequent references to Christ’s “gloriosa umanidat” ["glorious humanity"] (Castilla 23) and “sanctíssima humanidat” ["holy humanity"] (33) further emphasize the importance of Christ’s humanity in Constanza’s spirituality. In addition to these explicit references to Christ’s humanity and its origin, Constanza also makes repeated reference to Christ as “omne” ["human"], or as “Dios e omne” or “Deus et homo” ["God and human"]. The term “omne,” while it would eventually evolve into today’s “hombre”, originally comes from the Latin “homo” which implies humanity rather than masculinity. Christ’s humanity continues to play an important role in Constanza’s other original prayers both as the motivation behind the writing of the prayers and in their content. In one of these sections she lists the works that she composed and states that she wrote all of them in “memoria de tu encarnación e pasión” ["memory of Your incarnation and passion"] (Castilla 90).

The topic of Christ’s humanity is continued with the further identification of Mary’s womb as a “sagrario del tu vientre” (83). The word “sagrario” has two meanings. The first meaning is “sacristy,” which is the part of a church where the vestments and robes are kept. The vestment or clothing contained in the Virgin’s womb is that of Christ’s humanity. The other meaning of “sagrario” is “ciborium.” The ciborium is the covered cup or chalice used to hold the host for communion. The host is Christ’s flesh. Consequently, the Virgin’s womb is also a sacred container of Christ’s humanity.

The last word Constanza uses to depict Mary’s womb is “tálamo.” Christ proceeded out of the “tálamo de tus entrañas” (82). The word “tálamo” means “marriage bed,” which implies the union of the male and female for the purpose of procreation. If the end result of this
procreation is Christ, then the masculine and feminine participants would be God, the Divine, and Mary, the human. This brings us back to the “feminization” of Christ, and therefore, of Christianity. Ideologically, this “feminization of Christianity” enabled women such as Constanza to have access to Christ in a way that was not available to men, making Christ the ultimate “female” role model that all women should follow.

Another aspect of the feminization of Christ that can frequently be found in medieval women’s (and even in men’s) writing is the theme of Jesus as mother. The image of Jesus as the loving mother of the human race is one that gained some popularity in the Middle Ages, and was most fully developed as a theme by Julian of Norwich and Bernard of Clairvaux. Though Constanza never explicitly refers to Christ as mother, much of the imagery she uses to describe Him is maternal in nature.

The primary “mother” image for Christ that Constanza uses is that of the pelican. Constanza calls Christ “verdadero pelícano” [“true pelican”] several times through the course of her prayer book. The pelican was widely used as a Christological symbol due to the way that it supposedly fed its young. The red color of the breast feathers and on the tip of the pelican’s beak led to the assumption that the mother pelican fed its young by drawing blood from its breast.

One legend even said that a mother pelican could revive its dead offspring by feeding them its own blood. Constanza frequently makes reference to this idea. The association with Christ, then, is obvious. Since medieval medical theory held that all bodily fluids (including milk) were transmuted blood, the association between the pelican, Christ’s bleeding side and a mother feeding her young from her breast was not an inconsistent association to make. By pairing the image of the pelican with the image of Christ’s body and blood as the “manjar espiritual” [“delicious spiritual food”] which saves the world, we can see that Constanza did develop, at least to a limited extent, a Jesus as mother ideology. This is further supported by Constanza’s description of Christ’s role as one who reconciles the disobedient children with God the Father.

Though Constanza, like a number of other medieval women authors, feminizes Christ, her representation of gender does not end there. The feminization of Christ has important androgynous implications for both the women and the men who aspire to Christlikeness. Medieval women authors, who for the first time are able to recognize the Christlikeness of their own femininity, nevertheless recognize that Christ was also masculine. As a result, in order to be more fully like Christ they too have to take on “masculine” traits and
roles. Many critics have, to this point, seen the “becoming male” paradigm as a negative aspect of medieval Christian women’s writing and have not understood why otherwise “progressive” medieval women would think that becoming more “masculine” was a positive change.

What these critics have failed to recognize is that, rather “becoming male” through a rejection of their femininity, these women were empowered by their femininity (and by their sense of oneness with Christ) to embrace what were generally considered “masculine” traits and roles. If Christ was both male and female, then it was not only a woman’s right, but also her duty as a Christian, to embrace both masculinity and femininity. This spiritual androgyny was powerful in that it gave women the right to take on roles not traditionally open to them.

Constanza expresses this duty for women to embrace their “masculinity” in two ways. First of all she provides role models of women saints who had taken on masculine traits and roles. For this reason, the women saints mentioned in the prayers, all of whom are known for their spiritual fortitude and accomplishments, are very important. The women mentioned are representations of very strong women, both politically and spiritually.

Among the more contemporary saints, Catherine of Siena (1347?-1380) is an example of a woman who came to wield a great deal of political power. It was popularly believed that her influence “was decisive in bringing about the return of the papacy to Rome” (Farmer 93). Catherine of Alexandria (4th century) “promoted respect for educated women, drawing together the twin qualities of purity and female inspiration and preaching” (McNamara 329-30).

Saint Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine (c.250-330), supported roles in the public for women and “was the first of a line of empresses to use elements of Christianity to shape an active queenly office” (McNamara 48). All of these women were empowered by their religious convictions to take on roles that tradition would have denied them. These women, who were fully androgynous in a spiritual sense, represent the best of the female identity that Constanza saw as a model for herself and for the nuns in her monastery. In addition to these strong women, Constanza also gives male saints as role models, never doubting that she and her nuns can attain the same level of spirituality as any saint.

The second way that Constanza expresses the need for women to embrace their “masculinity” is through her own actions. Constanza was a writer, teacher, and leader, all traditionally seen as masculine activities. In addition to these activities, Constanza spearheaded several building projects at her convent, making Santo Domingo el Real one of
the most impressive convents in Castile; she secured royal patronage for her convent; she was in charge of the convent’s business affairs; and she was also fundamental to the restoration of her family’s honor. As the granddaughter of a deposed and vilified king, she was primarily responsible for having the bodies of her father and grandfather moved from relatively obscure burial sites to ones of prominence in the chapel of her own convent.

Although these were all seen as “masculine” roles, Constanza apparently felt completely authorized to take them on. This is evident from the fact that she never seems to see the need to defend or explain her actions to anyone. Her actions underscore her rejection of the idea that masculinity and femininity are binary opposites. As a woman, she was Christlike in her femininity; as a Christlike woman she was allowed and encouraged to embrace her “masculinity.”

The rise of spiritual androgyny in the late Middle Ages gave women a new way to interact with Christianity. It appears that medieval women did not see gender as binary opposites, but rather as moveable points on a sliding scale. According to many spiritual works written by medieval women, not only was Christ androgynous (in the sense that He embodied both the masculine and the feminine), but everyone that aspired to Christlikeness must also embrace both their masculine and feminine characteristics. Thus, by refusing to recognize their supposed debility, women like Constanza were empowered to become more fully actualized as humans and Christians, not just as women.

Bibliography


On July 2, 1982, Larry Walters, a TV production company driver, strapped himself into a Sears aluminum lawn chair to which he had attached forty-two helium weather balloons. He took on board a BB pistol to shoot out the balloons when he chose to descend. Things happened quickly after his friends untied the “craft,” dubbed “Inspiration 1.” He climbed to 16,000 feet and was spotted by two passenger airliners. A TWA pilot first spotted Walker and radioed the Los Angeles tower that he was passing a guy in a lawn chair at 16,000 feet. Shivering in the high altitude Walters shot out ten of the balloons with his gun and floated down to earth after accumulating ninety minutes of flying. At landing several of the balloons became entangled in a cluster of power lines blacking out a Long Beach neighborhood for twenty minutes. Later Walters claimed, “It was something I had to do to achieve inner peace.”

Life seems absurd. We are born, we live, and we die. Birth is the naked beginning, death the naked end. The fleeting moments of our lives are riddled with ambiguity. We shuttle back and forth along this aimless journey called life carrying in our hearts a cargo of naïve hope and realistic despair. We grapple with the tantalizing transience of life. The brevity of our vitality—perhaps three score and ten—and then the anonymity of our memory—for who of us will be remembered a hundred years from now.

Life is pervaded with tragic irrationality. The specter of death haunts every step we take. At birth we step on the mundane carousel and circle until we breathe our last and fall off back into the dust from whence we have come. The stuff of life to use the German word is weltschmerz—weariness and tedium. The sun rises, the sun sets. Nature holds its immutable course, but we are brief tenants on this planet
The Swiss philosopher, Henri Frederic Amiel, writes with melancholy in his journal on April 2, 1864:

All life is the shadow of a smoke-wreath, a gesture in the empty air, a hieroglyph traced for an instant in the sand, and effaced a moment afterward by a breath of wind, an air-bubble expanding and vanishing on the surface of the great river of being—an appearance, a vanity, a nothing.³

These sentiments sound like we are in the company of Friedrich Nietzsche or Jean Paul Sartre. The Ḫoheleth, the preacher in the wisdom material of Ecclesiastes, however, follows the same mood of philosophical nihilism. The recurring phrase that echoes through the verses of this pragmatic moral instruction is hebel hebelim—"vanity of vanities." This Hebrew superlative appears forty times in this philosophical treatise—only thirty-three times in the remainder of the Old Testament.

The Hebrew word for "vanity" assesses life as hollow, vacuous, a naught, zero, breath, evanescent, and ephemeral. If life is a random collision of circumstances with no purpose and meaning let's cut this chapel short and head outside. Not so fast! You need a Community, Life, and Witness credit! Besides the fact I have a postscript in my lecture notes that says see Philippians 1:21.

Paul’s epistle to the Philippians takes issue with this bleak worldview. He counters the skeptic’s sentiments with a shot across the bow, “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (1:21). The apostle writes these moving words from no retirement villa on the isle of Crete but from the confines of a Roman prison. These words are not some idle, casual remarks from a context of ease and sunshine but carefully measured as he awaits the outcome of Roman jurisprudence. An acquittal means life, a verdict of guilty means death.

Paul gives us his credo in a terse, symmetrical declaration. These words would have been a fitting epitaph carved into a tree or rock at the third milestone on the Ostian Road outside the city of Rome—the traditional place of Paul’s martyrdom.

Notice first that his credo resonates with a rugged individuality—“for to me.” The personal pronoun is in the emphatic position and draws attention to the way Paul translates the circumstances of his life—how he unfolds the drama of his journey with the risen Lord.
Whatever it may mean to others here is the apostle’s interpretation of his moment in history.

Second, Paul’s credo bears evidence of an uncompromising centrality—“to live is Christ.” “Live” is a present infinitive that accentuates the process of living. What is Paul stating in this pregnant phrase? The apostle is not highlighting the point that Christ is the source of his physical life. He is not reaching back to the creative dawn when the Creator bequeaths that intangible principle of life to humanity. Neither is this converted rabbi referring primarily to Christ as the source of his spiritual life—that moment when the individual cedes the citadel of will and autonomy to the Lord and becomes a “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17). The apostle to the Gentiles does not have his status and position in Christ as the dominant thought—“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2:20) Paul assumes the three possibilities above but his intent is much more.

The apostle states unequivocally that Christ is his raison d’etre—his reason for being. His life is summed up, wrapped up in Christ. He is Christ owned and filled. Everything Paul does echoes a single theme—Christ. Whether this ancient “Indiana Jones” is traversing the harsh terrain of the Mediterranean basin in his hippopotamus sandals on one of missionary journeys—whether he is setting sail on the perilous and unpredictable Mediterranean seas—whether he is stoned, flogged, almost lynched, and often the object of mob outrage or whether he is debating with the intellectual elite in Athens, his life is an offering centered in Christ. Whether he sits in a prison or under house arrest Paul has no conception of life without Christ. Take Christ out of Paul’s life and there is nothing left. Take Christ out of our lives and there is too much of self, left. To the apostle Christ was nothing less than life itself.

The relationship began with the transaction of grace on the Damascus Road. Paul had set out like a bloodhound on the scent of the Christians seeking to ravage and destroy these so called blasphemers of truth. (Gal. 1:13) On this mission of doom the risen Christ seizes the zealous Pharisee by the scruff of his neck and overpowers him with grace, forgiveness, and love.

Paul now kneels in the dust. Fidelity is transferred from the mentor and tutor Gamaliel, of the Hillel school, to a “rabbi” called Jesus from the backwater of Nazareth who had been crucified as a fraud with the complicity of Jewish malice and Roman political expediency. The distance Paul had traveled from that intercept of divine grace until this moment of house arrest in Rome was
stunning—from protagonist of Christianity to propagator of the Christian faith. Paul did not waiver. Christ owned he planted pockets of redeemed humanity in the arid, resistant soil of the northeast quadrant of the Mediterranean world for two decades.

Third, the apostle’s credo reveals a provocative reality—“and to die is gain.” The word for “die” is an aorist infinitive and denotes the act or event of death. It is the midnight hour, the moment that confronts our mortality when the sands of time have passed through the hourglass. Paul describes this time of death in his second letter to Timothy as “the time of my departure.” (2 Tim. 4: 6). The Greek word analuseos is rich in imagery. The metaphor may suggest a military image like that projected in the film Gladiator. The opening scene depicts a bloody battle as Roman might seeks to secure its borders against the Germanic hordes. Maximus, the Roman commander, knows victory will ensure that this is the last battle of the war and enable him to return to family and the fields he ploughed as an agricola. He will strike the tents and head home.

On the other hand, the metaphor may also yield a nautical image. Often Paul stood on a vessel swollen with grain loaded on at Alexandria Egypt, the breadbasket of the Mediterranean world. Before setting sail the moorings are loosened from the quay, the anchor hoisted—the winds gently caress his leathered cheeks, and the currents nudge the ship out of the harbor into the open sea and across the horizon. These two images of striking the tent and hoisting the anchor depict the moment of earthly disconnection and death. This event for Paul is gain.

The apostle is not echoing the sentiments shared by some Greek and Latin philosophers who tended to view life as a burden and weary battle. Death for them represented a great escape and release. The inscriptions on Greek graves indicate, however, that death signaled crossing a murky frontier. Hear Io’s lament as he considers the onerous task of life and suffering.

What profit have I in life? Why do I not hurl myself out of hand from this rude precipice, that broken on the plain below I may have speedy respite from my troubles? It were better to die once for all than to drag out my lingering days in anguish.4

Neither is Paul echoing the mood of Shakespeare’s Hamlet in the immortal lines of his soliloquy:

To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Whethet ’tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing, end them. To die, to sleep:

This disillusioned Danish prince balks at death and shrinks back from the precipice of suicide.

Paul stands looking into the jaws of death with equanimity. In fact, he describes death as gain. Death for the apostle is not a minus, not a subtraction, nor the lesser of two evils but a plus, the greater of two blessings. The word “gain” reflects a commercial metaphor and points to a credit on the balance sheet. To make sure that this truth is not lost on the reader Paul defines this moment of death with the only triple comparative found in the New Testament—“very much better” (1:23). Such a bold assertion is consistent with the apostle’s earlier claim “that neither death nor life . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8: 38-39).

Life for Paul represented an opportunity to serve Christ and death an opportunity for a fuller and deeper experience of Christ— to be in the very presence of God. In his Corinthian correspondence Paul wrote with daring “we are of good courage . . . and prefer to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8). Paul draws the conclusion that life may be encapsulated in one word “Christ,” death summed up in two words “more Christ.”

How would you sum up your life credo this morning? What is your life philosophy in a sentence? Perhaps, visualizing the day of our funeral—when our life is measured in the balances—would help us articulate what will the drive the pistons of our life engines. Publishers Weekly advertised recently that the best selling hard cover nonfiction book in American publishing history is Rick Warren’s, *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here for?* Twenty million copies have been sold in the last two years and it has been translated into thirty languages. The attraction of this simple book is that it wrestles with three fundamental questions: (i) Existence: Why am I alive? (ii) Purpose: What is my reason for being? (iii) Significance: Does Life Matter? Those are credo questions that haunt every step we take. Paul discovered the answers and lived them out without ambiguity.

How have you as a student crafted a credo for your life? Jesus words frame the template for a credo in three provocative invitations. The first invitation to discover your identity embraces risk. Following Christ is not for the fainthearted—hear the clear reference to risk and probable suffering in Jesus’ words, “Take up your cross and follow me.” His world knew well the brutal image of crucifixion that secured deference to Roman might and rule. The one who issued the invitation
to broken humanity staggered down the *Via Dolorosa* carrying his cross.

November 22, 2002, the air was crisp and snow clung to the shadows of the ground as I stood in a corner of the Sacred Heart Cemetery outside of Toronto. A simple wooden cross marked the grave of Henri Nouwen. This Roman Catholic scholar left the hallowed halls of academia, Harvard, Yale, and Notre Dame, in the later years of his life to found the Daybreak Center in Toronto. This home looked after the physically challenged and dysfunctional refugees of life. At this site of pilgrimage I began to reflect on Nouwen’s writings that penetrate our narcissistic and self-indulgent lives. His words came to mind, “When you leave the world to give yourself to God there is no return.”

Teaching is a wonderful gift to the teacher. My students “challenge the fire out of me.” In this last year I have witnessed the provocative credos of several that confront the authenticity of my life. Janelle Womack, a Baptist Mother Theresa, spent this past summer offering a cup of water amidst the suffocating heat and claustrophobic mass of humanity in a city of India. She carried her cross of *agape* love as she offered meaningful hope and life to women who had been forced into prostitution and were now dying with Aids.

At Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary twenty-nine year old David McDonnell heard the challenge to risk often in my New Testament class. In 2003, he left to digs wells of water in Iraq and to share the living water. On the Ides of March this year he was ambushed in Mosul that overlooks the ruins of ancient Nineveh while researching possible locations for a water purification project. He left behind a widow of one year. Alison Mclean, my past secretary at Southwestern, leaves the United States within a week to teach English in one of the most volatile cities in the world. Her alternate choices for her mission assignment were Phnom Pen, Cambodia or Darfur in the war ravaged Sudan! God still calls us to the Ninevehs of our day. Some like Janelle, David, and Alison, refuse to be swallowed by our culture or to shelter at a distance from the whispers of our God.

What is it that motivates these students? Is it not a passion for Christ that is not willing to play safe with their lives? Some have rediscovered the meaning of the invitation to follow Christ that often led to a cross in the first century world. Sacrifice and servant postures offer a different message to a world intoxicated with power and the pursuit of self. The “acids of modernity” (Amos Wilder) strangle our spiritual imagination and mock the commitment of our lives.
Barack Obama, Democratic senator and first African American editor of the Harvard Law Review, writes in his autobiography Dream from My Father of Billy, one of his civil rights workers who censured his people in Chicago—“well, Christ ain’t about comfort, is he . . . And he (God) cares more about whether I’m about the business of helping others than whether I’m straight on my catechisms.”

Calvin Miller reminds us of our tendency to “huddle in the cleft of the rock to avoid the storms, not to stand on the craggy heights and let them exhilarate us.” T. S. Eliot wrote with insight, “Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.” The invitation to the Christian is to push the envelope and to see where the line in the sand has been drawn. Life is not about playing safe. An anonymous author describes the daunting challenge of risk:

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool, to weep is to risk appearing sentimental, to reach for another is to risk involvement, to expose your ideas, your dreams, before a crowd is to risk their loss, to love is to risk not being loved in return, to live is to risk dying, to believe is to risk failure, but risks must be taken, because the greatest hazard to life is to risk nothing.

People who risk nothing may avoid suffering and sorrow, but they cannot learn, feel, change, grow, love, and live—these are the “hollow men and women” who walk the stage of life. Chained by attitude and slaves to safety they have forfeited their freedom. Only the person prepared to risk is free.

A second invitation that impacts the definition of a worthwhile credo is located in the Sermon on the Mount that profiles Jesus’ portrait of Jesus’ people—“you are the salt of the earth” and “you are the light of the world.” Difference marks the journey of the believer. The call is to cut the umbilical cords that entrap us within the common expectations of our society and to emerge from the cocoon of life predictability and safe passage.

Aung San Suu Kyi, born in the city of Rangoon June 19, 1945, and winner of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize, reflects difference and moral courage—a singular vision and sacrifice. Her father was the national leader of Burma until he was assassinated when she was two years old. Educated at Oxford University where she received a degree in economics, politics, and philosophy, her life has been a fight for peace, democracy, and independence for her country. Although she won the national election in 1990 in a landslide, the military junta placed her under house arrest until 1995. Her husband, Dr Michael
Aris, a senior research fellow in Tibetan and Himalayan studies at Oxford University, died of prostate cancer in London, March of 1999, without seeing his “exiled” wife. The Myanmar government denied his request to visit his wife and she could not leave the country for fear of being refused reentry into her homeland. In this postmodern world of deconstruction and labyrinth of existential truths it is difficult for us to admit that there are some cardinal points on the moral compass. Barack Obama shares how he sought to sear the conscience of the powers that be at Occidental College, outside Pasadena, as a sophomore in the 80s. Confronting the South African shame of apartheid with powerful rhetoric, he called for a policy of disinvestment:

It’s happening an ocean away. But it’s a struggle that touches each and every one of us. Whether we know it or not. Whether we want it or not. A struggle that demands we choose sides. Not between black and white. Not between rich and poor. No—it’s a harder choice than that. It’s a choice between dignity and servitude. Between fairness and injustice. Between commitment and indifference. A choice between right and wrong.

The call is to hold to a moral North Star in a day when violence mars our sports fields and chastity is a casualty of man and woman come of age. The mind and intellect is often the last stronghold of our personality to accede to the wooing of the Spirit of God. The postmodernist stands on the cusp of a wave flaunting with one hand technological brilliance that has ushered in a new Copernican revolution and the genome map with the blueprint to replicate life in the other. Our intellectual arrogance ignores Fydor Dostoevsky’s warning of the hell that is let loose when man comes adrift from his Creator’s moorings and himself becomes God. Moral difference is not applauded or in vogue today. The sanctuary of moral and spiritual conviction faces daily assault and the charges of intolerance, fundamentalism, and bigotry are leveled indiscriminately. We have drunk too deep at secular wells and consequently stagger around like the figures in Plato’s cave. The secular cry intimidates and too often there is a failure of nerve on moral issues. Our Lord demands a life that is morally distinct and pure that offers a poise and magnetism to a desperately needy world. The haunting words of the English Romantic poet Lord Byron, written on his 36th birthday in 1824 describe the fracture and loneliness of his mangled life. He mused
My days are in the yellow leaf, the flowers and fruits of love are gone
The worm, the canker and the grief are mine alone.\textsuperscript{15}

Jim Eliot martyred by the Auca Indians of Ecuador in 1956, drafted a different form of credo. He wrote in his journal in 1948, “God I pray Thee, light these idle sticks of my life that I may burn for Thee. Consume my life, my God, for it is Thine. I seek not a long life, but a full one, like you Lord Jesus.”\textsuperscript{16} In August 2000, Laird Hamilton had the opportunity to surf the ultimate wave in Teahupoo, Tahiti. At high noon in a lagoon of exquisite beauty above a razor-sharp barrier reef, Hamilton’s friend Doerner used a jet ski to place him high on a glassy mountain. In this death-defying feat he rode the barrel green tube until the fifty-foot wave collapsed and the pressure spat him out into the lagoon atop his board. (Another surfer, Briee Taera, had lost his life three months earlier attempting a similar feat.) It is time for us to live out where the waves break—in the foam and power of the surf. We may tumble and swallow some seawater, but the call to the Christian is not to play safe with life.\textsuperscript{17}

The final invitation this morning is to recast your life ambitions with integrity. Sadly, the inner peace that Larry Walters risked his life for was fleeting; and on October 6, 1993, after hiking to a remote area in the Angeles National Forest Walters he shot himself in the heart.\textsuperscript{18}

The one who died a death of ignominy and shame on a cross provides that ultimate peace and set out the curricula for life—“For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul” (Mark 8:36)? The cry of derision leveled at the rabbi from Nazareth hanging on the cross provokes contemplation. Their contemptuous scorn—“he saved others, himself he cannot save”—provides us with a clue to the innermost character of the man on the cross.

Golgotha is the suffering love of God on display. The cross is the universal disarmament of absolute power. It represents paradox and the ultimate clash of symbols. For the Roman imperial system of Jesus and Paul’s day began to deify the emperor after death. Caligula and Domitian, however, were interested in ascent in life—\textit{apotheosis}—becoming and being recognized as gods while ruling.\textsuperscript{19} The one called Jesus, however, chose descent—\textit{kenosis}—emptying of self. The stoop from heaven defies imagination—it ends on a brutal cross outside the city.

Jack London, flamboyant writer and adventurer of his day, set out his provocative and eloquent credo at the turn of the twentieth century:
I would rather be ashes than dust! Would rather that my spark
should burn out in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry rot.
I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent
glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet. The proper function of a
man [and woman] is to live, not to exist. I shall not waste my days in
trying to prolong them. I shall use my time.\textsuperscript{20}

The well known phrase carpe diem—“seize the day”—traced to
the Latin poet, Flaccus Horatio (Horace), needs to be transposed to
carpe deum—seize God.\textsuperscript{21} May each one of us discover the gift of
grace that calls our lives to embrace the journey with the one who at
the dawn of history kissed a handful of inanimate dust into life and
created humanity. May each one of us link our lives with the savior of
the cross who calls and invites us to walk with him today and
tomorrow.

Endnotes

\textsuperscript{1}Irving Shepard, *Jack London’s Tales of Adventure* (New York:

\textsuperscript{2}Americana, *Time*, 3 January 1983, 53.

\textsuperscript{3}See his entry in his journal on April 5, 1864 in *Amiel’s Journal*,
trans. Mrs. Humphrey Ward (New York: Macmillan and Company,
1890), 97.

\textsuperscript{4}Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 747-51 in *The Complete Greek

\textsuperscript{5}William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III.1.56-60 ed. Cyrus Hoy (New

\textsuperscript{6}Henri Nouwen, *Genesee Diary* (New York: Doubleday, 1976),
63.

\textsuperscript{7}A pseudonym is used for the student to protect her identity.

\textsuperscript{8}Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and


13 Obama, Dreams from My Father, 106.

14 Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, 1.4.6.


16 Jim Elliott’s words, recorded in his journal in 1948, were influenced by a poem Amy Carmichael gave to his wife Elizabeth on her college graduation. The poem was entitled *Toward Jerusalem* and the pertinent words of the final stanza follow:

Give me the love that leads the way,
The faith that nothing can dismay
The hope no disappointments tire,
The passion that will burn like fire,
Let me not sink to be a clod,
Make me Thy fuel, flame of God.


Jack London scholars debate whether he uttered all these words. Some contend that the statement mirrors his direct style, rhythm, and diction. What may be considered authentic without a doubt is drawn from an autograph book belonging to Australian suffragette Vida Goldstein of Melbourne. London’s entry on January 13, 1909 read: “Dear Miss Goldstein: Seven years ago I wrote you that I’d rather be ashes than dust. I still subscribe to that sentiment. Sincerely yours, Jack London.” (http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/London/credo.html)

Introduction

When Jesse J. Smith was librarian at Hiram College, Ohio in 1930, students competed for the student assistant positions one year before the positions became available. Interested students were required to enroll in a non-credit course that consisted of one class hour and two hours of supervised work per week for one full school year. The students were expected to work without pay and a $5.00 deposit was required to enroll in the program. If a student who was absent from class or work without being excused in advance, he lost fifty cents of the deposit each time. Only a few students received all of the $5.00 back at the end of the year. The students who lost all their money were “naturally” deemed too unreliable for staff positions. When David Gregory wrote about this fascinating program in 1995, he suggests that it should be adjusted for inflation (3-4). I am convinced that if this model was used today, it would alleviate many current concerns regarding student workers and there may not be as great a need for such a paper as this.

While library student workers are the main focus of this paper, these guidelines can apply to any department on campus. Standard policies and procedures should be a part of any job. Any employee of a company represents that company. Since colleges and universities are in the business of educating and developing students for future professions, a student worker whose main responsibility is answering the phone should show the same business-level of competency, courtesy, and accountability to the college as the student who assists departments in more complex roles.

With the wealth of current information available on library student workers or assistants, it would be impossible to cover every aspect in one paper, but my objective here is to give a general overview of some important past and current concerns on training library student workers in a way that will take them from what I have chosen to term a semi-
professional position in the library to the professional position in their chosen field of study. These concerns include but are not limited to reliability, accountability, motivation and reward, job performance and job satisfaction. The majority of these concerns fall within the following categories, hiring and training, staff development, staff appreciation, and evaluation.

During the 1970s, according to Keith Cottam, there was “limited published discussion of the role of the student employee in libraries.” He believed that library administrators need to capture the imagination and interest of the student assistants while taking into account their immaturity and lack of depth in understanding library management (246).

Immaturity and inexperience still plague the average college freshman. I agree with Cottam in this assessment, but it is the responsibility of the entire library staff, indeed the campus community as a whole, to go beyond capturing the interest of the work-study student to investing the time and energies necessary to develop them into productive professionals.

In her motivational article, Clarke states: “Like most employees, effective student workers are trained, not born” (Clarke 89). The semiprofessionalism of a work study student need not take away from the professional image of the library or other department employing the student.

A professional is someone who exhibits a courteous, conscientious, and general businesslike manner in the workplace and a paraprofessional is someone trained to assist professionals (Merriam Webster 930, 843). These are very basic dictionary definitions that do not begin to describe the work of librarians or trained specialists who assist them. Literature in the field of Librarian and Information Science literature classifies librarians as professionals and support staff as paraprofessionals. Following this logic, I asked a colleague what would be the next step on the organizational structure below paraprofessional and she suggested a word I had never heard, semi-professional.

I discovered that a semi-professional is someone engaging in an activity for pay or gain but not as a full-time occupation (Merriam Webster, 1065). In order to relate the role of the student workers to that of the overall mission of the library and their role in relating to the professional librarians as well as paraprofessionals in the library, I submit that the student worker can be classified as semi-professional.

Most organizations that utilize the labor skills of young people face unique issues and the library is no exception. A cover story in Inc. highlighted four key issues concerning young workers: their tendency to become bored easily, their lack of experience, their lack of depend-
ents or responsibility, and their lack of a strong work ethic. This article suggested a need for establishing a type of “quasi-parental relationship” with the young workers, in which the manager manifests concern for the worker as a person, but also clearly establishes the structure and boundaries of the position and the expectations it entails (Trouble with Kids 60).

This approach often works well with the college students, especially those freshmen away from home for the first time with their work study position being their first job. Here at Carson-Newman College, maintaining that type of relationship with our work study students is the most rewarding and most challenging part of my position as Access Services Librarian. Unfortunately, my desire to implement that type of relationship into the role of hiring, training and retaining good work study students has backfired a time or two as I became more focused on the human issue of helping the student rather than the personnel issue of staffing the library with good quality work study students. The obvious solution is to achieve a good balance.

**Hiring, Orientation and Training**

Michael Kathman discusses student workers as a “very real part” of the college library work force. As both part-time and short term employees, they have not always received the attention needed to be fully utilized. As early as 1986, student employees represented between 12% and 13% of library personnel budgets (3). There are over 117,000 libraries in United States (Morgan par. 2). Semi-professionals serve in these libraries as volunteers, pages and student workers.

In my five years of employment, our library staff of six professionals, six paraprofessionals and one part-time employee has had the honor of working with a semi-professional staff consisting of an average of 36 students per semester. There were several semesters when we had over fifty. Student workers currently represent about 70% of our total staff.

The work of the college or university library could not be accomplished without the support of student workers. Their assistance frees professionals and paraprofessionals for more complex duties (Benefiel 812). Good management and supervisory skills are important in order to make the best use of the student workers. Library administrators and department supervisors will need to set the standard in leading students toward professionalism by displaying a work ethic that exemplifies the importance of the library’s mission in relation to that of the college (Farmer 9). The students’ level of professionalism will follow that of the full time staff.
At Fisk University Library during the late 1920s, Louis Shores managed the library with one other full-time staff member and fourteen student assistants: “Shores’ own professional dedication is apparent in his continuous striving for a “personal touch” with the students, as well as in his organization of a library science class to produce additional staff members for the library” (White 95). Shores designed a mandatory session with student workers to create staff spirit among student assistants and to emphasize the importance of library work, stressing that library student workers are a unique group (Gregory 7).

Carson-Newman imitates this type of session each semester with a mandatory meeting of all student workers. This session gives the students a chance to meet and greet each other, as well as the library staff. We discuss general policies and procedures and students are free to question and comment as they desire. After the initial session, students are dismissed to their individual assigned departments for instructions on their specific job duties.

Policies and Procedures Manual and Student Handbooks are excellent training tools. In our Carson-Newman College Student Assistant Policies and Procedures Survey (Spring 2003), 72 of 82 libraries surveyed reported use of some form of a procedures manual and two were creating manuals at the time.

Since Circulation is my department, I compiled a Circulation Procedures Manual in 2002 and now use it as part of our training. New students are required to read through it during the first hour they are assigned to work the circulation desk following training. It is also kept under the desk for the students to use as a reference. This gives them the opportunity to review what they have learned at their own pace and ask questions as needed.

Because Circulation is usually the only department of the library open during all hours of operation, the greatest need for students is in this department. George Morgan views the well trained student at the circulation desk as not just a body there to check the library’s physical materials out and in, but someone who has an excellent grasp of the library’s resources and skills to location information of all sorts and provide you with access to it (Morgan par. 7). This may or may not be true of the average circulation student worker, but I have found that it is perhaps the average perception. Often in the college setting, the person at the desk represents the library to most patrons. They are often the first and last contact for the patron. If that person is to be a semi-professional, who represent the library and the college well; that fact alone justifies the time and effort required to train them well.
Staff Development and Staff Appreciation

A study by James Edwin Gaines in 1976 observed the selection and utilization of student assistants in 300 colleges and university libraries. This study showed that 72 percent of the respondents preferred the interview method of hiring and that only 20 percent investigated the academic records of the applicants. The survey showed no obvious signs that special efforts were made to place students in a role that they were best suited to (White 96).

While training and motivating is key; training does not end with orientation, it continues as long as the student works. It is a continual teaching and learning process by which the students become well-trained, motivated, thoughtful worker, who benefits from this additional knowledge while gaining confidence and professional skills (Boone 10).

It is a good idea to take the student’s personality and past experience into account when deciding which department to place the student and to monitor their progress. Not all students will enjoy the variety and constant activity of the circulation desk. Still, others would be uncomfortable in the quiet environment of another department where there is little or no patron interaction.

Placing students in the positions that they are most suited for increases the likelihood of their remaining in that position throughout their college career. Like professional and paraprofessional staff, semi-professional students are more likely to remain employed where they are content and feel appreciated as a vital part of the organization (Clarke 87). Our director’s opening statement at the beginning of each orientation session sets this tone for our students and we continue to show our appreciation throughout the year.

One staff development program that achieved a measure of success for several years at Carson Newman was called SALLT (Student Assistant Library Leadership Training). This was a mentor type program in which students were selected to be group leaders with the responsibility of getting to know the students in their group as well as possible and being a liaison between the student and the library staff. Students were trained at a retreat one weekend during the Fall Semester. The three areas we focused on were leadership, discipleship and librarianship. Surveys from these retreats as well as on the program as a whole were favorable for the most part. Our budget did not allow for the continuation of this program, but similar, less expensive alternatives can serve the same purpose. Efforts like these can pay off with good students who are content to work in the library for the duration of their college ca-
Students tend to take pride in their work and do a better job if they feel they are contributing to the success of the organization. As Clarke states, there is a definite link between morale and productivity (92).

Since the 1980’s libraries had begun looking for ways to retain, recognize and reward outstanding student workers. Clarke stresses the importance of every library developing such a program (Clarke 92). We give our students a Christmas party and an Appreciation Breakfast each year. At the Appreciation Breakfast, we give an award for Student Assistant of the Year. Each recipient receives a framed award certificate and a gift certificate to the college bookstore. We also give a Book Worm award to the student who has gone the extra mile in special projects, shelf-reading or other areas that deserve special recognition.

Texas A & M University’s Sterling C. Evans Library has created a successful scholarship program to reward some of the brightest and best work study students (Benefiel 812). Not all libraries will be able to afford such a program, but there are other less expensive things that can occur more than annually. Occasional parties, lunches, breakfasts, birthday cards, and or awards or thanks and accommodations following completion of an important project are low cost effective ways to reward students. Clarke suggests that today’s students become tomorrow’s donors and should also be considered as future career employees and that the best rewards program is one that recognizes all student workers while rewarding the most outstanding or those with seniority (91).

**Evaluation**

Evaluations are effective management tools because they benefit the library and the student. One scholar promotes designing the evaluation to help the students establish personal goals that will enable them to grow and develop as well as help fulfill the mission of the college and the library. Then students can not only assess where they stand in their job performance and skills but also use these assessments to develop better work habits and skills. The library can also use the evaluations to determine the strength of their training programs and gain a better understanding of the students’ capabilities and potential within the library (Boone 96).

Evaluations given during regular intervals of employment allow the supervisor to quickly assess individual understanding of policies and procedures and give the students an opportunity for additional training if needed (56). Evaluations given in the form of review quizzes
can be very effective. Because a test can make any student apprehensive, it is always a good idea to let the students know that the quiz is an assessment and training tool. Students need to be reassured that there are not repercussions other than making necessary changes in structure of test or in training methods if results show obvious misunderstandings or that the policies or procedures are unclear.

The performance evaluation for the student should be measured against a known standard, such as the student employee handbook, job description, code of conduct, etc. (Boone 56). Having a formal standard of expectations aids in discipline and promotes structure within the work environment.

Many supervisors, me included, make the mistake of not being consistent in the disciplinary process. This gives students a false sense of job security and a misconception of “real world” employment expectations. If we do not hold students accountable for their actions in their college work study position, this could become a work habit that follows them to their professional position.

Whatever evaluation plan you chose, it is imperative that you follow up with feedback to the student. In our rush sometimes, the evaluation form is breezed through and we do not allow time to let the students know how well they are doing.

In our Training Review Quiz, initiated this Spring 2005, the students with the lowest scores were the students who worked during the off peak hours. This let us know that we need to pay closer attention to the training of those students and make sure that they all of our circulation workers have an opportunity to train and work during the busiest times as much as their schedule permits. We discussed the results of the review quiz with each student individually and gave them the opportunity to ask questions. This quiz showed us areas where we need to strengthen our evaluation process.

It is also a good idea to give the students an opportunity to evaluate their supervisors. This may be the only way to get feedback from some students. One of our students suggested that the library staff should be evaluated by the student workers in the same way as faculty are evaluated by the students at the end of each semester.

Conclusion

The image of the library student workers has changed significantly in recent years. Historical descriptors such as “necessary evil”, “better than nothing”, and “tolerable in small numbers” have changed to contemporary descriptors such as innovative, creative and resourceful (Gregory 21). Standards for University Libraries promote staffing the
library with a “variety of personnel: professional, clerical, and student-assistant staff. (White 96).

Most literature supports that student assistants reap more benefit from library employment than mere financial gain. They also benefit from the knowledge, skills, and values of their professional and paraprofessional co-workers (Gregory 19). Experiencing firsthand a variety of practical applications of new information tools and technologies not only helps in their immediate academic pursuits but also contributes to lifelong learning (White 96).

I conclude that the current challenge of all library administrators, professional and paraprofessional staff is to embrace our “quasi-parental” role in the lives of these semi-professionals and teach them all that we can, as we continue to pursue our own commitment to life long learning by allowing them to teach us how to better serve them and prepare them for their chosen profession.

Works Cited


Lewis’ & Tolkien’s “Mythtery” of Godliness

Albert L. Lang

Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up to glory.—1 Timothy 3:16

All tales may come true; and yet, at the last, redeemed, they may be as like and as unlike the forms that we give them as Man, finally redeemed, will be like and unlike the fallen that we know.—On Fairy-Stories

What does a first century Jewish writer named Paul from the ancient city of Tarsus have in common with two twentieth century Oxford dons named Lewis and Tolkien? In short, the belief that mystery is at the heart of the gospel, and that the best way to comprehend it is through understanding the true nature of myth. Tolkien believed that “myths expressed far greater truths than did historical facts or events. Sanctified myths, inspired by grace, served as an anamnesis, or a way for a people to recall encounters with transcendence. . . .” While most modern critics view myth as synonymous with falsehood, Tolkien believed just the opposite. For him, “[i]t was the only way that certain transcendent truths could be expressed in intelligible form.”

Webster defines myth as “a . . . traditional story of ostensibly historical events that serves to unfold part of the world view of a people or explain a practice, belief, or natural phenomenon.” A second definition introduces an element of mystery: “a person or thing having only an

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2 Ibid., x.
imaginary or unverifiable existence” (italics mine). The unverifiable often leads to the question, “But what if it were real?” According to Lewis and Tolkien, though one may only see through the spiritual glass darkly, understanding the true nature of myth can help provide a clearer gaze into unverifiable eternal realities.

For almost as long as he could remember, C. S. “Jack” Lewis experienced a longing for something beyond the world around him. He describes in his autobiography three powerful, spiritual experiences as a child that inflamed that sense of longing. One day his older brother Warren brought into their nursery the lid of a biscuit tin on which he had fashioned a miniature garden from twigs, moss, and flowers. Lewis wrote: “That was the first beauty I ever knew. What the real garden had failed to do, the toy garden did. . . . As long as I live my imagination of Paradise will retain something of my brother’s toy garden.” The joy related to this garden was unexpectedly re-experienced one summer. “It is difficult to find words strong enough for the sensation which came over me. . . . It was a sensation, of course, of desire; but desire for what? . . . It had taken only a moment of time; and in a certain sense everything else that had ever happened to me was insignificant in comparison.”

A second memorable experience came later when Jack read Beatrix Potter’s The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin. It “troubled” him with the “Idea of Autumn.” “It sounds fantastic to say that one can be enamored of a season, but that is something like what happened; and, as before, the experience was one of intense desire.” He felt compelled to go back again and again, not to gratify but to re-awaken the desire. It had no comparison within ordinary life but was something from “another dimension.”

The third transcendent experience came after reading the following lines from Tegner’s Drapa in Longfellow’s Saga of King Olaf:

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5 Ibid., 16.

6 Ibid., 16-17.
I heard a voice that cried,
Balder the beautiful
Is dead, is dead—

Although Lewis knew nothing of Balder, he was “instantly uplifted into huge regions of northern sky, [and] desired with almost sickening intensity something never to be described (except that it is cold, spacious, severe, pale, and remote). . . .” The experience was unexplainable and its memory elusive.

While these three experiences appear to be rather random and unrelated, Lewis saw in them the common element of creating “an unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction.” He called this “Joy” and while he acknowledged that it is “never in our power” to achieve, doubted that “anyone who has tasted it would ever . . . exchange it for all the pleasures in the world.”

These experiences of “joy” that had at first been experienced at such a young age were valued above all else, and inspired a continual desire for more.

Colin Duriez notes that “[t]he young Lewis in fact increasingly made his own ‘religion’ out of his memories, experiences, and literary discoveries, out of his deepest subjectivity,” Sayer adds that “the most important experiences of his childhood, indeed of his whole life, were not literary. They were mystical experiences of the presence of God. . . .” These experiences of “joy” that had at first been experienced at such a young age were valued above all else, and inspired a continual desire for more.

Even though Lewis would not come to fully understand “Joy” until many years later, it proved inseparable from Christianity. Ronald W. Bresland explains that “[t]he effect this revelation had on his imagina-

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7 Ibid., 17.
10 Colin Duriez, Tolkien and C. S. Lewis: The Gift of Friendship (Mahwah: Hidden Spring, 2003), 14.
tion cannot be overestimated for it informs much of his later thought and cleared the way for his eventual acceptance of Christianity. . . . The religious significance of the toy garden . . . suggests that even at this young age he had absorbed something valuable from the Christianity of his upbringing."\(^\text{12}\)

A variety of circumstances however, led Lewis into atheism during his youth. His lifelong attempt to capture “Joy” eventually became a re-acknowledgement of God’s existence and by the age of twenty-two Lewis had abandoned atheism and accepted theism. Carpenter writes: “As long ago as 1920 his study of philosophy had led him ‘to postulate some sort of God as the least objectionable theory’, though he added, ‘of course we know nothing.’”\(^\text{13}\)

Lewis later wrote in _Surprised by Joy_ that in 1926, “the hardest boiled of all the atheists I ever knew sat in my room on the other side of the fire and remarked that the evidence for the historicity of the Gospels was really surprisingly good. ‘Rum thing’, he went on. ‘All that stuff of Frazer’s about the Dying God. Rum thing. It almost looks as if it had really happened once.’”\(^\text{14}\) However, he was still only ready to adopt “a benevolent but condescending attitude to Christianity,” which he believed was only a myth “conveying as much of the truth as simple minds could grasp.”\(^\text{15}\)

Despite this shift in belief Lewis faced a dilemma. Finding “his present state of simple Theism . . . inadequate,” he was leaning toward Christianity, finding other religions unacceptable. One major question lingered though. He could not understand the personal relevance of Christ’s death and resurrection.\(^\text{16}\)

It is here that Tolkien’s influence came into play with life changing effects. The two met at a meeting of the English Faculty held at Merton College on May 11, 1926. After the meeting Lewis wrote in his diary: “[Tolkien] is a smooth, pale, fluent little chap . . . thinks all literature is

\(^\text{12}\)Ronald W. Bresland, _The Backward Glance: C. S. Lewis in Ireland_ (Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies The Queen’s University of Belfast, 1999), 12.

\(^\text{13}\) Carpenter, _Inklings_, 39.

\(^\text{14}\) Lewis, _Surprised By Joy_, 223-224.

\(^\text{15}\) Carpenter, _Inklings_, 40.

\(^\text{16}\) Ibid., 41.
written for the amusement of men between thirty and forty. . . . No harm in him; only needs a smack or so.” 17 They shared a common love of the “northerness” Lewis encountered as a boy that ultimately sprang from deeper spiritual desires. By 1927 Lewis and a handful of others called the Coalbiters met under Tolkien’s tutelage to read the Icelandic Sagas and Eddas in Old Norse. 18

Tolkien was raised a devout Catholic and found answers to the myth related questions he had in Jesus Christ. He approached truth from the perspective of God as the ultimate storyteller. His understanding of God explained his views on myth and vice versa. “[Man] may pervert his thoughts into lies, but he comes from God, and it is from God that he draws his ultimate ideals. . . . Pagan myths are therefore never just ‘lies’: there is always something of the truth in them.” 19

This belief profoundly affected his writing. While he certainly had his critics in those who did not understand his spiritual views, Tolkien’s works expressed “a logically reasoned exposition of an aspect of truth which he had perceived and experienced.” Pearce further suggests that “Tolkien did not consider his sub-created myth [The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings] as ‘fiction’, as popularly understood, but as a figment of truth.” 20

On September 19, 1931, one of the most profound conversations affecting Christendom took place in Oxford. C. S. Lewis, Hugo Dyson, and Tolkien went for a for a late summer’s evening stroll around Addison’s Walk after dinner in Lewis’ Magdalen College rooms. Dyson was a lecturer at Reading University whom George Sayer describes as “volatile, exuberant, and eccentric, a quick-witted comedian.” 21 One of the first Inklings, he was a vital member of that group (along with Tolkien) who met informally in Lewis’ rooms from 1933-1949 to discuss and critique one another’s literary works.

The conversation turned to one of Tolkien’s favorite topics—myth. While also a favorite genre of Lewis, he saw myths as entertaining tales.

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17 Ibid., 22-23.

18 Sayer, Jack, 194.

19 Carpenter, Inklings, 43.


21 Sayer, Jack, 250.
of fiction that were “‘lies and therefore worthless, even though breathed through silver.’” Tolkien said quite the opposite. “[M]ythos originate in God . . . they preserve something of God’s truth, although often in distorted form. . . . [I]n presenting a myth, in writing stories full of mythical creatures, one may be doing God’s work.”

Lewis struggled with bridging the gap from theism to Christianity, mainly due to not understanding Jesus’ role as God’s son and the dying/resurrected savior of the world. Carpenter notes: “He declared that he had to understand the purpose of these events” and “how the life and death of Someone Else (whoever he was) two thousand years ago could help us here and now—except in so far as his example could help us.”

Tolkien explained “that the Christian story was a myth invented by a God who was real, a God whose dying could transform those who believed in him. . . . [Lewis] must appreciate the myth in the same spirit of imaginative understanding that he would bring to, say, a Wagnerian opera.” God must be seen as “the poet who invented [Christianity]” and “the images He used were real men and actual history.”

All his life Lewis had been aware of the “dying god” stories that he encountered in his extensive reading. However, another of his reasons for resisting Christianity was “his inability to find the Gospel story attractive” as he did pagan myths. He asked if this was that same theme all over again. Tolkien enthusiastically assured him it was “except that here is a real Dying God, with a precise location in history and definite historical consequences. The old myth has become a fact. But it still retains the character of a myth.”

22 Carpenter, Inklings, 43.

23 Sayer, Jack, 225.


25 Sayer, Jack, 226.

26 Carpenter, Inklings, 43.

27 Ibid., 47.

28 Ibid., 44.
Tolkien’s response can be further understood from a letter Pearce quotes written to his son:

Of course I do not mean that the Gospels tell what is only a fairy-story; but I do mean very strongly that they do tell a fairy-story: the greatest. Man the story-teller would have to be redeemed in a manner consonant with his nature: by a moving story. But since the author of it is the supreme Artist and the Author of Reality, this one was also made to Be, to be true on the Primary Plane. So that in the Primary Miracle (the Resurrection) and the lesser Christian miracles too though less, you have not only that sudden glimpse of the truth behind the apparent Ananke of our world, but a glimpse that is actually a ray of light through the very chinks of the universe about us.29

At this point a strong wind rushed through the trees lining Addison’s Walk. Lewis felt this to be “a message from the deity.”30 When viewed in light of the conversation that was taking place, one is reminded of another late night conversation described in Scripture. Nicodemus had come to speak with Jesus and when he failed to comprehend the spiritual truths regarding what being born again meant, the Teacher turned to a somewhat mythical illustration: “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the spirit.”31

Lewis found himself struggling to make this all fit within the boundaries of rational argument and logic. It was becoming a matter of belief and he was aware a decision needed to be made. He realized that some sort of “leap of faith” was necessary to get him over the final hurdle. “There must,” he said, “perhaps always be just enough lack of demonstrative certainty to make free choice possible, for what could we do but accept if the faith were like the multiplication table?”32

On October 1, Jack wrote to his long time friend and correspondent Arthur Greeves, “I have just passed on from believing in God to definitely believing in Christ—in Christianity. I will try to explain this an-

29 Pearce, Man and Myth, 107.
30 Sayer, Jack, 225.
31 See John 3:1-21 for Jesus’ meeting with Nicodemus.
32 Carpenter, Inklings, 46.
other time. My long night talk with Dyson and Tolkien had a great deal
to do with it." He later wrote: "[The] story of Christ is simply a true
myth. One must be content to accept it in the same way, remember that
it is God’s myth where the others are men’s myths, i.e., the Pagan sto-
ries are God expressing Himself through the minds of poets, using such
images as He found there."34

Years later Lewis described his conversion:

I know very well when, but hardly how, the final step was taken. I
was driven to Whipsnade [Zoo] one sunny morning. When we set
out I did not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and when
we reached the zoo I did. Yet I had not exactly spent the journey in
thought. Nor in great emotion. . . . It was more like when a man,
after a long sleep, still lying motionless in bed, becomes aware that
he is now awake.35

The gap had finally been bridged. Lewis came to see that “[t]he heart of
Christianity is a myth which is also a fact,” but “[b]ecoming fact it does
not cease to be myth. That is the miracle.”36

With Lewis’ acceptance of Jesus Christ, he chose to become part
of what Tolkien saw as “[t]he ultimate fairy story, or true myth” of
Christ’s incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection.37 Tolkien’s ideas
regarding myth and the gospel are expressed in his classic essay On
Fairy-Stories, which he delivered at the University of St. Andrews in
Scotland as the Andrew Lange Lecture in 1939.

Tolkien described the rather strange yet wonderful realm of Faerie
where myth exerts its most powerful influence:

The land of fairy-story is wide and deep and high, and is filled with
many things: all manner of beasts and birds are found there; shore-

33 Carpenter, Tolkien, 164-165.
34 Birzer, Sanctifying Myth, 26.
35 Lewis, Surprised By Joy, 237.
36 C. S. Lewis, “Myth Became Fact,” God in the Dock: Essays on
Theology and Ethics, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids, MI: William
37 Birzer, Sanctifying Myth, 39.
less seas and stars uncounted; beauty that is an enchantment, and
an ever-present peril; both sorrow and joy as sharp as swords. In
that land a man may (perhaps) count himself fortunate to have
wandered, but its very richness and strangeness make dumb the
traveler who would report it. And while he is there it is dangerous
for him to ask too many questions, lest the gates shut and the keys
be lost. The fairy gold too often turns to withered leaves when it is
brought away.38

Since man is created in the image of God, one of the most effective
means of bringing Him glory is to act as a “sub-creator,” creating “Sec-
ondary World[s] which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is
‘true’: it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it,
while you are, as it were, inside.”39 The end result is a mythical crea-
tion that reflects ultimate truth.

Tolkien believed that the purpose of a fairy story or myth to be
“the joy of the happy ending.” This he called Eucatastrophe, “the good
catastrophe” or “the sudden joyous ‘turn’ (for there is no true end to
any fairy-tale).” This did not mean that fairy stories or myths should be
written with only a “feel good” goal in mind. It was the presence of evil
that revealed the power of eucatastrophe. “It does not deny the exis-
tence of dyscatastrophe, of sorrow and failure: the possibility of these
is necessary to the joy of deliverance; it denies (in the face of much
evidence, if you will) universal final defeat and in so far is evangellum,
giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy, Joy beyond the walls of the world,
poignant as grief.”40

For Tolkien, the use of God given powers to sub-create mythical
tales was not only a calling but crucial to understanding and communi-
cating the Gospel, the greatest eucatastrophe of all. He wrote:

The Birth of Christ is the eucatastrophe of Man’s history. The
Resurrection is the eucatastrophe of the story of the Incarnation.
This story begins and ends in joy. . . . There is no tale ever told that

Charles Williams, ed. C. S. Lewis (Grand Rapids, MI: William B.
39 Ibid., 60.
40 Ibid., 81.
men would rather find was true, and none which so many skeptical men have accepted as true on its own merits.41

Tolkien’s faith and work were inseparable as they were mutually affirming. This conviction helped bring Lewis full circle. The “Joy” he searched for all his life was found through experiencing the Gospel in all its mythical power:

It is not difficult to imagine the peculiar excitement and joy that one would feel, if any specially beautiful fairy-story were found to be ‘primarily’ true, its narrative to be history, without thereby necessarily losing the mythical or allegorical significance that it had possessed. . . . Because this [the Gospel] story is supreme; and it is true. Art has been verified. God is the Lord, of angels, and of men—and of elves. Legend and History have met and fused. . . . The Evangelium has not abrogated legends; it has hallowed them, especially the ‘happy ending’ . 42

Tolkien and Lewis’ friendship spanned almost forty years and helped shape each other’s writings. Christianity was the foundation of their lives and was inherent in all that they wrote after their conversions. Their work continues to influence countless readers, both scholarly and spiritually. To quote Colin Duriez: “As we read Tolkien—and Lewis—we may wish to thank the Author of that providential meeting in the Spring of 1926. The world is immeasurably richer for it.”43

41 Ibid., 83-84.

42 Ibid., 84.

A quick sampling of college and university web sites from the University of Connecticut to California State University, Fresno, reveals that writing is an integral part of most general education programs. Indeed, since most college graduates are likely to “change professions (not just jobs) over three (and some say six) times in [their] career[s],” an education grounded in the “transferable skills” of “thinking and communication” is crucial to later career success (Mannoia 24).

But, you may say, I am not an English teacher: Why should I use writing in my classes? Or, my classes are too large to use writing; I would never finish grading everything. Or, how can I teach writing when I do not even have enough time to cover my course content as it is? In an attempt to answer these and other concerns, I would like to invite you to go with me on an imaginary tour of a college campus to see in action how writing across the curriculum is an integral part of the general education curriculum.

First, we go by a math class and overhear the professor asking students to put into words what they are being asked to do in a problem and then to solve the problem. In so doing, she finds a direct correlation between those who can clearly explain their process and their correct solution to the problem. Seeing us at the door, she comes over and tells us that “no other form of class work or homework gives such powerful feedback as [these] short, written, ungraded assignments in class” (Flesher 45). She can see very clearly what each individual student does not understand.

On the next floor of the Science Building, we pass by a chemistry class in session. Eavesdropping, we hear the professor give the following homework assignment: “Choose one topic we have covered in class that you feel you do not understand. In about 150 words (1 page) try to summarize what it is that you don’t understand” (Cooper n. pag.).

As students prepare to leave class, the professor tells us that his assignment is just the first step of the process; when the students bring in their papers, she will have them exchange with someone else. They will
then have to try to explain the principle that is troubling their neighbor in 100 to 200 words” (Cooper n. pag.).

As the next period begins, we find a biology class in the same building working in groups of four on the topic of stem cell research. Each group must come up with at least one reason to support it or oppose it, but then also counter another group’s reasons in writing. Thus, students are exploring all sides of an issue in order to make an informed, reasoned judgment.

Meanwhile, over in the Fine Arts Building, an art history professor is assigning a research paper calling for students to take a position leading to a thesis, a step beyond a report. Rather than just announcing a due date and number of words and sources needed, the professor asks for a one-page plan of the paper by September 15 giving the proposed topic, questions to be answered, an explanation of the student’s interest in this topic, and a bibliography of available sources on this topic. In addition, the professor requires students to bring in two copies of their rough drafts on September 25. Since the class is large, the professor plans to use peer critiquing out of class for student feedback. He will give students a peer critique form but will first demonstrate its use with a sample paper. This way, students will get feedback from at least two others without bombarding the teacher with drafts to critique.

In another part of the Fine Arts Building, several students who are about to give their senior piano recitals are working on program notes to give information about their composers and selections, while students later that week will be writing critiques of these piano recitals according to a list of criteria their teachers have given them.

As we pass a speech class, we see students using various prewriting techniques, such as brainstorming, mapping, or freewriting, to get ideas for speeches. In groups of four, they will discuss their ideas in order to learn what their audience will want to know, and they then will develop an outline from which they will speak.

As we move along to the social sciences building, we pass by a large sociology class and overhear the professor saying, “For your exit ticket from class today, please use an index card for a microtheme: either write one substantive comment about today’s class, a summary of the main points covered, or a question that you have regarding today’s class. I will review these and begin the next class by responding to them.”

In yet another classroom, we see students grouped in threes reading their drafts to each other. After one student reads, the other two are instructed first to tell something that is interesting from what they have heard, and second, where they are confused or would like more information. The students will then take their drafts and revise them.
Psychology students are being instructed to read an article selected from a psychology journal and make a double-entry notebook. They will draw a line down the center of the paper; on the left side, they will take notes on the reading, recording facts. On the right side, they will put their questions, reactions, and comments about their reading.

It is now lunchtime, so we head for the faculty dining room. Here two faculty members are comparing notes on grading techniques they learned about at the last faculty writing retreat, while another is looking over a writing assignment page for a colleague to see if the purpose for doing it matches course objectives, if the instructions are stated clearly, and if the grading criteria are included.

As a new class period begins, we find ourselves right outside an English classroom, wondering how the professor will deal with the “after-lunch-lethargy” syndrome. He begins class by saying, “Please take some paper and write for five minutes comparing the Greek gods in *The Odyssey* with the God of the Hebrews in Genesis.” Thus, he actively engages the students by having them compare a previous reading assignment with the present one. The professor goes on to say that this writing will be given 1 to 5 points based on the quality of the thinking. Students begin to write quickly.

Our time for touring is growing short, but as we pass a religion class, we overhear something about students writing a spiritual autobiography, a theater professor has students writing a character analysis of the part they are about to play in order to understand that character better, and outside a history class we hear the professor asking students to find current news articles about the Middle Eastern countries they are studying to reflect on in a journal entry.

Although we have not yet visited all the departments on campus, we have seen enough to know that others are also engaged in finding ways to help students learn by using writing in some form. Although these scenarios are hypothetical, most are drawn from actual experiences or articles by faculty in these various disciplines. These efforts are the result of widespread concerns about the writing levels of college students across the nation that began in the 70s. Every scene we have observed has demonstrated some aspect of a multifaceted approach to WAC, but each of these is operating on a common understanding of WAC as expressed by Art Young: “Students use written language to develop and communicate knowledge in every discipline and across disciplines” (3). Susan McLeod has said basically the same thing in her definition of WAC, calling it “a comprehensive program that transforms the curriculum, encouraging writing to learn and learning to write in all disciplines” (4).
Each of these definitions points to a two-pronged emphasis of WAC, both of which are essential to a general education program: writing to learn, and writing to communicate. Writing to learn is called expressive writing: this type of writing is more informal, often ungraded, and is the closest thing we have to “inner speech,” or the thinking process as the writer tries to sort through and make meaning clear for herself or himself (Britton et al., as referenced by Fulwiler, “Argument” 24). Characteristic types of expressive writing are journals, freewrites in answer to prompts at the beginning or ending of class, letters to different audiences, and explanations. This type of writing will engage our students more actively in learning.

Writing to communicate is what we call transactional writing: writing to transact business of some kind that results in more formal products, such as research papers, essays, essay tests, and proposals. The majority of the writing our students have done in the past has consisted of transactional writing (Britton et al., as referenced by Fulwiler, “Argument” 23). And this is an important type of writing because our students need to be able to rise to the demands of communicating clearly with others.

With these definitions in mind, what common denominators undergird writing strategies for the general education curriculum? The activities we saw on our beginning tour are grounded on eight basic principles:

1. **Students learn more when they are engaged with the subject.**

As an old Chinese proverb relates,

I hear—I forget
I see—I remember
I write—I understand (Fulwiler, WAC Retreat, June 1986).

This same principle is demonstrated by a “Learning Pyramid” published by the National Training Lab in Bethel, Maine (Fulwiler WAC Retreat, June 1986). It shows the following average retention rates for different teaching methodologies:

- 5 percent: lecture
- 10 percent: reading
- 20 percent: audiovisual
- 30 percent: demonstration
- 50 percent: discussion group
- 75 percent: practice by doing
• 90 percent: teaching others

Thus, the more students are actively involved in their own learning processes, the more they will understand and retain the subject matter. When students enter a new class with new terminology, their ability to write clearly about the subject is directly proportional to their understanding of the content. That is why scaffolding assignments, so that earlier assignments build the foundation for later ones, is important to allow students time to develop writing competency (Campus Writing Program n. p.)

2. Writing is a unique tool for engaging students in learning.

Janet Emig in an important essay, “Writing as a Mode of Learning,” asserts that “writing represents a unique mode of learning—not merely valuable, not merely special, but unique” (89). She goes on to state that certain contemporary psychologists, such as Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner, have noted that critical thinking skills “seem to develop most fully only with the support system of verbal language—particularly, it seems, of written language” (89). Jerome Bruner has said that we represent and deal with actuality in three ways:

(1) Enactive—we learn “by doing”;  
(2) Iconic—we learn “by depiction in an image”;  
(3) Representational or symbolic—we learn “by restatement in words” (as referenced by Emig 92).

Emig summarizes Bruner’s ideas by stating that “in enactive learning, the hand predominates; in iconic, the eye; and in symbolic, the brain” (92). Thus in writing, which involves the hand, eye, and brain, “all three ways of dealing with actuality are simultaneously, or almost simultaneously deployed” (Emig 92). She concludes that writing, since it involves three ways of knowing that reinforce each other, “marks a uniquely powerful multi-representational mode for learning” (Emig 92).

Several examples from students show how writing has engaged them in thinking deeply about the subject matter. The first example is from a student who is writing a reaction to an in-class prompt in which she was asked to role-play Oedipus in order to understand better his feelings when he learns that he is the man who unknowingly has killed his father, married his mother, and had children by her. The student writes,
I was surprised and somewhat annoyed at the first writing assignment today—I don’t like to play roles and Oedipus’s fate is so horrible—but on reflection that’s what actors do, and I am in a drama class after all. Anyway, it didn’t turn out half bad once the wheels got turning. Oedipus’s pride was brought out much clearer for me than before. [This situation] reminds me how horrified I was when in the movie Chinatown Faye Dunaway is slapped around by Jack Nicholson because he wants to know what this mysterious girl means to Faye D. Finally she says “she’s my sister” and he slaps her again and she says “she’s my daughter” and then she begins crying “she’s my sister and my daughter”—the emotion and then the horrible feeling that washes over you when you thoroughly realize what she’s just said—how much worse for Iocaste to feel that dawning of realization.

This student’s comparison to a contemporary movie at that time shows her engagement: she has identified the horror of Oedipus and Iocaste, his wife, and has shown the universal nature of literature as it probes human feelings.

A freshman in an English composition class said of his journal entries in response to reading assignments, “many times I wrote myself into understanding. There is something about making ideas visible that fosters new ideas, and these eventually build into understanding.” In fact, as Fulwiler relates, Jean Paul Sartre stopped writing when he became blind: he needed to see the visible image of his thoughts in order to develop and revise them (“Argument “22). Dr. Ken Morton corroborates this relationship between thought and writing:

A brain tumor caused my brother, a computer programmer with a master’s degree in physics, to appreciate the link between writing and thinking. Although his mental processes were not affected, the partial paralysis of his hand made it harder for him to put his ideas on paper. It was then that he realized how much he depended on seeing his ideas in order to organize complex information. (Millsaps 114)

3. Not every piece of writing needs to be graded or lead to a final product for learning to occur.

In fact, rather than putting the emphasis on devising “writing” assignments, we need to think in terms of making “thinking” assignments. Informal writing can be described as thinking with a pencil or a computer.
For example, in order to assess reading comprehension, Prof. Carolyn Blevins in the Religion Department at Carson-Newman began an Old Testament survey class by asking students to write informally in response to the question: What do you think about the divided monarchy?

One student’s response demonstrates this principle about writing oneself into understanding. The student wrote: “I’m not quite sure what the divided monarchy is—wait a minute—is this Israel and Judah divided into North and South? Okay. Let’s take it from that view. . . .” The student proceeded to elaborate on this idea, interspersing questions like, “Is this right? Let’s go on” as she continued to get a grip on this topic and discover meaning from her reading and class lectures.

Sometimes the teacher might be the one who learns. Tatyana Flesher, a mathematics professor at Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York, used informal writing to learn why over half of her students missed the test question: “Determine the intervals over which the function is increasing, decreasing, or constant.” She found that those who missed the question were unable to explain clearly in their own words how a function graphically increases or decreases on certain intervals: there was a “direct correspondence between perception of the definition, the ability to explain it, and the capability to solve the problem” (40-42).

Expressive writing can lead to transactional writing or writing to communicate, as the following chart indicates:

**WRITING FOR SELF: EXPRESSIVE WRITING**
(Exploring ideas; Finding a focus)

FIRST DRAFT
(Revising ideas; Clarifying direction)

LATER DRAFT
(Editing sentences; Completing documentation)

**AUDIENCE: TRANSACTIONAL WRITING**
(Focused, Organized, Documented, Corrected)
(Fulwiler Retreat 1987)

Although the writing process may be recursive and not follow this flow chart neatly, it should produce more engagement with the topic, better papers with teacher and peer feedback (avoiding overnighters), and cut down on plagiarism if all drafts and photocopies of articles referenced are required with the final paper.
Teachers of large classes can also use writing to learn (remember that not everything has to be graded) and even a process approach to formal papers without using large chunks of class time. Simply adding due dates for parts of the process and a peer critiquing homework assignment can result in having better final product writing.

**4. Collaborative learning can help students learn from each other.**

If trained properly, students can give each other valuable feedback as peer critiquers without the professor having to see every draft. Students can also teach each other in homework assignments (the greatest strategy for improving retention) as we see in these examples from a chemistry class. Melanie Cooper, a chemistry professor at Clemson, asked her students for homework to summarize in about 150 words what they did not understand about one topic they had covered in class. They were to be specific, not use blanket statements such as “I don’t understand anything,” and not “pose unanswerable problems” (n. pag.). They were to bring two typed copies to class. The next class meeting, she had students exchange this paper with a neighbor, try to explain the topic, and submit it along with the original question at the next class. A second copy of the answer was to be given to the neighbor. A sample of the results of this assignment follows:

Student’s explanation of confusion:

| Limiting reagent problems confuse me. I have trouble distinguishing what the actual limiting reagent is. Is it the one that is entirely used up or the other? The math is not that difficult. My problem comes in the middle of the math after I find the actual moles. Once I finish the mole ratio part I find it hard to decide which is the limiting reagent. |

Another student’s answer:

| The limiting reagent is the chemical that is completely used up. I find that the method which Dr. Cooper uses on the board is too confusing. I find it better to divide the number of moles of each compound by its coefficient. The smallest resulting number is that of the limiting reagent. |

Cooper writes that she now uses this student’s approach because it is less confusing than hers (n. pag.).
5. **WAC can promote learning in many ways, but not every strategy is appropriate or will work for every class.**

The important principle is to use writing in meaningful ways to engage students in learning not only the subject matter of the particular discipline, but also the ways that writing is used in this discipline. In other words and as the above examples illustrate, WAC does not mean having a research paper and/or a journal in every class.

6. **You are the best person to teach students how to use writing in your disciplinary field.**

You do not have to be an English teacher with all of the correct names for grammatical principles to know whether a student’s writing communicates ideas clearly and fulfills disciplinary conventions. As Art Young has pointed out,

> A geology professor in teaching students the knowledge that is geology as well as how to think, communicate, and solve problems like a geologist is initiating students into geology as a discipline and into science as a profession. Sometimes teachers fear that becoming involved in WAC means taking time away from geology—becoming an English teacher for 30 percent of the time—and they are understandably reluctant to do so. WAC says that a geology professor should not attempt to become an English professor at all. Geologists should teach geology, its knowledge and its ways of developing and communicating knowledge, and they should utilize written language as a tool to strengthen this teaching and learning of geology. (37)

The University of Connecticut website seconds this approach in its rationale for using writing in general education classes:

> If our freshmen and sophomores could be given the opportunity to think about writing, to the point where they would come to understand what all good writing has in common, as well as why the writing expectations for a literature course differ from those of a history course, which differ from those of a physics course, which differ from those of a psychology course, we will have taken a big step in the right direction. (Tilton n. pag.)
7. **Students will regard writing as important for all disciplines, and not just English, when they see other professors valuing it as a means for learning and its necessity for job performance.**

WAC is not an underground movement by English faculty to get other faculty to do our jobs for us. Research has shown that a student may make a B in a freshman composition class, but these skills need to be reinforced and expanded to include writing in other classes in order to have a lasting effect. Many times students feel that if a class is not English, then principles of good writing, such as clear organization, development of ideas, and attention to mechanics don’t really matter. It is our job to convince them that good writing does matter, regardless of the discipline (see, for example, the chart on pages 106-107 of *Writing at Carson-Newman College*, 3rd ed.).

8. **Writing can give a general education program coherence as students use writing to make connections among their courses.**

See, for example, the following excerpt from a journal entry for a History of drama class in which we were studying *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams. The student writes,

One very interesting thing about something mentioned in the play really surprised me. On the very day that the play talked about the Napoleonic code, we talked about the Napoleonic code in my Western Civilization class. We had been discussing Napoleon’s reforms and how well his revised French law code worked. It didn’t hit me until then that the characters in *A Streetcar Named Desire* weren’t just making some fictitious remark; a Napoleonic law code really existed, and it was even being used in America many years after it had been developed. It made the history class seem so much more real, and it increased my understanding of the term as it was used in the play. It has helped me link information together rather than keep different areas of study isolated and unrelated to the rest of my education.

Christopher Thaiss, professor at George Mason University, states that “written words are the glue that can hold the fragments [of a general education curriculum] together” (73). Periodically, in an informal class exercise or homework assignment, he asks students to “speculate possible connections between ideas in [his] course and ideas in one or more courses they are taking.” Sometimes, these informal writings can lead to more formal assignments (Thaiss 73).
To answer the questions I began with then, writing is useful for engaging students in learning, regardless of the discipline. Especially in large classes, professors can use writing-to-learn activities with their students to promote learning and to help them achieve coherence among their general education courses. Furthermore, simply adding some due dates for different parts of the writing process and using peer critiquing are possible regardless of class size, steps that often lead to better final drafts.

Some Tips to Help You Get Started

Try adding some writing to learn and/or learning to write assignments to your classes. However, do not try too many things at once. Just pick one course, or perhaps one or two ideas, to use in your classes. Make sure that the writing is designed to help you meet the goals of your course. If you try something and it does not work for you, do not give up but try something else. Keep notes about what works and what does not, which writing prompts are particularly effective, and which assignments produce the best results.

- Save a few good papers from your classes to use as models the next time you teach the class.
- Attend one of our faculty WAC discussion groups or a faculty writing retreat.

If you want to see students more involved in class discussions and more deeply engaged in their own learning, and if you want to equip them to meet disciplinary writing expectations, try using some writing to learn and/or writing to communicate assignments with your classes. If we as faculty show that we value good writing in all courses, we will be giving our students the foundation they will need to be successful communicators whatever their career choices.

Works Cited


The Practice of Baptist Higher Education

Don H. Olive, Sr.

In their affinity with the free-church tradition Baptists have long held that they are different in theory from the churches that claim to possess the true doctrine. Baptists have affirmed the negative way, the *ex via negative*. People live with more tentativeness than the religious view of other traditions allows. Christians are not given some privileged knowledge about reality, simply because they are believers.

This tentative tenor of mind accords with two desirable aspects of the academy. First, *ex via negative* underscores the intellectual necessity of criticism. The academy that loses its ability to be critical of itself and its most assured results has ceased to be the academy. It has ceased being education and has become indoctrination.

Second, *ex via negative* emphasizes the quest model for education. The sculptor seeks after the form within the stone. He is aware that the unhewn stone is not what it will be, but it is filled and waiting to be uncovered. Wisdom is manifested in the action of chipping away at the extraneous, the pretentious, the false. Incapable of the knowledge of divine things, the Baptist academy can nevertheless be the gadfly. After all, for the Baptist academy, the quest for knowledge is more to be desired than the having of knowledge however grandiose.

Thus, the Baptist academy *ex via negative* is loath to speak of abstract knowledge. Much less is it willing to speak of religious, moral, or scientific truth, preferring rather to speak of Jesus of Nazareth, personal truth. His presence, his life, his work, his words—experience of these is affirmed. The Baptist academy finds it fulfillment in education that accords with this experience, all the while pursuing the penultimate truth of the disciplines. All else is “not known, not spoken, not named.”

In this essay attention is focused on how this above described theory manifests itself in practice. The emphasis is upon what being Baptist means for the Baptist academy, lived out in Baptist colleges, universities, and perhaps seminaries. Some of these ideas are commonplace, although, hopefully, not trivial. Nearly all of them fail of expression, as Baptists have uncritically (and unbaptistically) either adopted the models of the academy of other faith traditions within American
culture or, more recently, adopted models derived from the culture of corporate America.

Baptist colleges have too often been regarded as “church-related,” rather than Baptist. Practical issues of faith and learning, thus, are often driven by the concern to maintain church-relatedness in a culture where “college after college has gone its own way.” The discussion arising from this misplaced concern is unfortunate, at best, since it represents a gross misunderstanding of Baptist ecclesiology and the Baptist academy. Since there is no Baptist Church, the discussion of retaining a college to “the Church” is empty and harmful, empty because it is a misstatement of relationship and harmful because it fosters a hierarchical understanding of Baptists and institutions.

The Baptist academy at its best affirms that institutions, including institutions of higher education, are cooperative but independent ventures in specialized areas of Christian ministry. As the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement affirmed, Baptists have traditionally been of three ministries: evangelism and missions, education, and general benevolence (Article XIII). Baptists fail of being Baptist when they have narrowed their vision to evangelism only and regard education as merely a means to “saving” souls.

On the other hand, when general benevolence becomes the single goal of Baptists, education may be treated as only a commodity and students as only customers. Either approach is deficient, for only when proper emphasis is given to all three, and education stands as partner with the other two, can the Baptist vision be lived out in practice.

This division of labor is not merely a separation of interests, but reflects the full commitment of believers. From the point of view of the Baptist academy, education must cease being “handmaiden” and assume a full ministry status in the believer’s life. An educational ministry is required by one’s obedience to the commission of Christ. The Baptist academy remembers that education is not primarily a means to an end, even a worthy one, but actions taken in obedience to Christ’s command.

The Baptist academy is not defined by doctrinal correctness as specified by some governing body, for in historic Baptist life there is no such authority. It is not defined by a formula of piety, for piety is always and ever a private matter, not to be done before others. It is not defined by token required courses in religion or Bible or by mandatory chapel attendance. It is not defined by prescribed rules of conduct that are standard moral fare for the constituency of a college. It is not defined by closely watched boundaries designed to keep the world at arms’ length and students properly cloistered from temptation, twenty miles from the nearest sin, as is claimed to have been announced by a
former Carson-Newman College president. The Baptist academy is instead defined by doing higher education as obedience to Christ to teach believers “all things” commanded.

The free-church, the ideological parent of Baptists, recognizes only Christ’s authority. The free-church understands itself as protester to the incomplete protest of the Protestant reformation. Rejecting heteronomous authority, the left-wing radical reformation vested itself in the principle of autonomy, a self-rule informed by a relationship to Jesus Christ. The earlier Baptist affirmations of absolute religious freedom, the autonomy of the local church, and noncreedal church life flowed out of this central ideal of the autonomy of the faithful, those who constitute the church upon assembly. Adult believers are competent to be directed in life by the faith that is within them.

In practice these theologically flavored ideas produce a uniquely Baptist academy, that is, one in which Baptist educators act as Baptist profess. Such an academy is a complex that can best be viewed in terms of several negations true to the heart of the Baptist spirit. These negations will prove helpful in establishing how Baptist academicians carry out their ministry.

**Not Institutional**

As a reflection of Baptist ecclesiology, the Baptist academy is not an entity held together by a given set of ideas codified in an institution. The academy is a living assembly of gathered learners, a cooperative process, as fluid as the participants in it. Differences in knowledge and experience that distinguish professors from students are not to be ignored. But in light of the Baptist conviction that all things are penultimate and that the future as often disconfirms treasured ideas as it confirms them, no absolute line exists between teachers and the taught. This renunciation of the authority of knowledge in the academy produces several desirable effects.

First, the educational process is practiced upon the basis of the interaction of ideas and not religious dictates, truths once and for all delivered to the saints. Long known as the Socratic method, an authentic confession of ignorance is possible only where truth is understood always to be outstanding. Disciplinary and general truths are not deposita, residing in learned professors, authoritative texts, or sacred canon. Truth always remains before us, tentatively teased out in the dialogue between thinkers. These thinkers are constitutionally aware that no present set of ideas is either complete or destined to be final.

Second, the educational process for the learning assembly not only appreciates diversity, but also demands it as the sine qua non of the
academy. With no preset and privileged categories to defend, Baptist educators embrace diverse ideas. Such an embrace is not the apologetic “all truth is God’s truth,” but rather the robust practice of engaging all ideas, even those of other religions, as genuine possibilities for affirmation. A Baptist academy cannot be without mighty proponents of feminism, evolution, relativity, Marx, secularity, Allah, or any other academically relevant idea. Only in diversity can critical thinking take place.

Third, a learning assembly provides the genuine possibility of producing life-long learners. Only when the authority of the professoriate and academic creedalism is surrendered can learners engage the academic life. Living faithfully in the Baptist academy is to understand life as a pilgrimage toward a future still outstanding, a future that never allows the adoption of the status quo in knowledge and values. Baptist academicians refuse the bishopric, as much as Baptists in general refuse the bishop.

**Not Content**

The Baptist academy is one where the liberal arts are consciously taught and practiced. Even in a time when and place where the word liberal is considered a four-letter word by the arithmetically challenged and the theologically naïve, the Baptist academy braves the winds of ignorance and fashion to continue to affect liberation, as the goal for all members of the academy. The *artes liberalis*, a term first employed by Cicero in the first century before Christ, finds its natural expression in the *liber*, or free person, one who is the proper goal of Christian gospel and the proper end (teleos) of the Baptist academy.

Bumper sticker/bank marquee philosophy is seldom adequate. Recently, however, an attention-catching note asserted: "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance." Discounting the contemporary American propensity to describe everything in terms of cash value, the aphorism makes the significant point that ignorance is not a passive condition, not merely the lack of something. It is a state that robs individuals of potentials and enslaves them to the status quo.

Bound by ignorance, the uneducated find the world limited to a small circle. Many experiences are impossible and opportunities are proscribed. Life is circumscribed by the accidents of time and place, or, worst of all, constrained by bondage to the “present evil age.” The historical correlation of ignorance and sin, as well as education and salvation, is no accident in the theological traditions of the faith.

Alfred North Whitehead, arguably the twentieth century’s greatest metaphysician, noted that it is the ignorance of ignorance that is the real
enemy of education. And it is precisely at this level that the Baptist academy is at its best in seeking the liberation of the human mind. By asking questions of received wisdom, by taking nothing for granted, by challenging common sense, and by prodding assembled learners to think courageously, the academy functions to liberate from the ignorance of ignorance. The Baptist academy is in better position than other academies to do this because of the resources of the Baptist no-saying to received ideas.

Thus, the Baptist academy "bakes no bread." As Aristotle opined about philosophy, it is the most useless of activities, but the "most necessary." It is most necessary, for it and it only can free would-be learners from the authoritative content of moral and religious ideas. The Baptist academy establishes the courageous habit of asking not "What did you learn today?" or "What truth did you add to your arsenal?" but "Did you raise any serious objections?" The Baptist academy at its "liberal" best breaks the bondage of received thought and passive intellect.

A grievous error, at least to the Baptist spirit, is the error that seeks to combine faith and learning by means of doctrinal parameters, parameters within which learners may supposedly move about freely, but never transgress. Like the prisoner who is free to pace his cell, this understanding of academic freedom is rejected by the Baptist academy. No matter how broadly the parameters are cast, no matter how winning the supposed worldview, such imprisonment is rejected, for a liberal arts education cannot brook the dictation of results instead of genuine inquiry.

The claim currently being made that a so-called Christian worldview exemplifies responsibility to "the faith community" is repugnant to the Baptist academy. The liberal arts do not allow the privileging of some set of ideas, particularly religious or creedal ones. Baptists affirm that living faithfully to Christ is the adventure of living toward a future that belongs to Christ and cannot be written in an ossified worldview.

Not Religious

The Baptist academy understands that it is as subversive of religion as it is of authority. Etymologically, religion means "to bind." Rites and rituals, as products of the past, have little to do with living faithfully toward the future. The free-church tradition always seeks ways to live faithfully apart from the inflexible forms of religion. Religion by definition is already adjudged to be inadequate for accommodating the divine surprise. The Baptist academy cannot promote religion in general or engage in the religious enterprise of binding human beings to the causes espoused by religion.
Thus, the Baptist academy has no innate impulse to be religious, indeed, much to the contrary. Its sympathies lie with the free and the secular, that ultimate sectarianism that gladly embraces life free from religion. Neither poverty nor mere philistinism directed early Baptists to the austere and the noncultured. Meeting places were auditoriums, not sanctuaries; services were offered, not worship conducted. The acts of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, as simple remembrances of Jesus, represented faith and were not regarded as symbols, decorations, or icons—all alike thin veils of sacral time and space. This nonreligious, if not antireligious, attitude is inherent in all aspects of Baptist identity, including the Baptist academy.

Living faithfully as an assembly of learners is atmospheric, rather than substantively religious. Living faithfully cannot be expressed in curricula, customs, or prescribed practices. Courses such as Christian Art, Christian Biology, Christian Ethics, or even Christian Religion are a failure to be Baptist. Baptist teachers teach art, biology, mathematics, ethics, or religion within the same parameters of discipline and methodology, as do colleagues in nonBaptist and “secular” schools. Religious customs of public prayer before class or mandatory “worship” in chapel are denials of the freedom given in Christ.

Living faithfully as an assembly of learners is to engage in cooperative, rather than rule directed activity, which is by nature distinctively and quintessentially religious. From God to pope to bishop to priest to people is a hierarchy inherent in the substance of religion. Thus, the religious idea of a pope (chief executive) with a retinue of underlings executing the rules handed down by shadowy legislators (trustees) strikes at the heart of the Baptist academy where learners live faithfully. Administrative creedalism is as repugnant as academic creedalism, and both are foreign to education in the Baptist academy. Some form of secular partnering that is implied by the term cooperation marks the genuinely Baptist.

Last, living faithfully denotes a way of life that manifests freedom from the patterns of a humanity cultured by a religious society, a society that would bind all learners to its own “divinely ordained” definition of the human. The primal act of the Baptist academy is to speak forcefully against all “religious” precepts, for it knows they are conditional. From constitutionally defined concepts of marriage to governmentally determined criteria of wellness, from legislated morality to cultural religious commandments, from presumptive rules that justify preventative war to violent impositions of democracy so-called—to all these religious ideas, the Baptist academy dissents.

Thus, the Baptist academy is composed of learners with dissent built into the fabric of their beings. God’s purpose in this world always
remains outside the grasp of any individual or group. For this reason the Baptist academy understands itself as set apart from the ways and the structures of this world, even the religious ways of other Christians. Since God is continually surprising the world with new things, the Baptist academy.
2004 Founders Day Address

Joe Bill Sloan

We celebrate this day to remind ourselves that many people before us sacrificed and labored diligently to secure in this place a college that is uniquely Christian, a college that provides students a liberal arts education in that unique context.

We are grateful for the sacrifices of those men who returned to the rubble that was Mossy Creek after of the War between the States and the occupation of the campus by Union troops. These men worked to rekindle the dream that began in 1851. We are thankful for those men and women who struggled against the odds of the Great Depression in the 1930s to keep this college financially solvent and available to many students at a fraction of the costs that were really needed to maintain the college.

Even then the college continued its commitment to a growing tradition of academic excellence. Retired faculty and many alumni remember that for several years in the 1940s and 50s, faculty devoted a part of their summer, traveling the Southeast to introduce and recruit students to Carson-Newman, some of whom might not have ever thought it possible to go to college. The past is full of these and many other examples of a determination to make this a uniquely special place for Christian education.

Now, I want to take a few minutes to talk about the present and the, hopefully, future Carson-Newman. I’ve used the word “unique” several times in describing this college. I was tempted to entitle this address: “Carson-Newman College: An Endangered Species?” But, I do not believe that we are in danger of the fate that may affect animals or plants in the wild, which is the usual connotation of the phrase “endangered species.” So, I instead choose the term “unique species” because this place is unique in education circles and has become more so in the group of colleges that profess to be denominationally related Christian colleges.

In the past three decades or so, many church-related, especially Protestant liberal arts colleges have had to make choices about their futures. Some of our peer institutions have moved away from their denominational affiliations. A variety of reasons are given for that choice,
including the sudden windfall of multi million dollar gifts from wealthy benefactors, to the desire of these colleges to remove the restrictions that sometimes are a part of denominational affiliation.

Other peer colleges have chosen to accept the restrictions that have been either placed upon them or embraced by them as their denomination has become more fundamentalist and, thus, resistant to the intellectual inquiry that must be the foundation of any college that is serious about academic excellence.

Carson-Newman has chosen to take neither of these paths. In 1998, the college trustees and administration changed our charter so as to give the college the sole authority to choose its governing board. The effect of this action was to diminish the role of the Tennessee Baptist Convention in the process of choosing the Trustees of the college. In 2000, the college reaffirmed its commitment to remain a Baptist-affiliated institution but still with the ability to control the choice of the governing board. As a part of this redefined role with Tennessee Baptists and all Christians who seek a quality Christian liberal arts experience, the college crafted a mission statement that is permeated with the goals of “faith and learning.” As an aside, I’ve always preferred the reverse order of learning and faith, for learning should revitalize faith and sometimes faith does not precede learning.

I think it was important that we not take the path of our larger and richer peer group and move closer to the secular educational setting, because this nation needs colleges where effective Christian voices promote the kinds of open inquiries and foster vigorous debates about the issues that we face as a society. The success of this nation has always been based on principles of democratic pluralism that must include the secular and the non-secular religious influences of society.

But, is a college that is the captive of an ultra-conservative, fundamentalist denomination capable of fostering such open and free discussion? I would submit such a college cannot, nor does it desire to, do so. Such places believe that they have a monopoly on truth, so they cannot be open to other ideas. That is why it is so critical that Carson-Newman stay on the path taken in 1998 and reaffirmed in 2000.

Students in college religion classes should be challenged and inspired to assess, reassess, and reassess again how they read and understand scripture. They should study a variety of theological perspectives and models and be knowledgeable about other faiths. Otherwise, they are NOT educated.

Students in college science classes should be invigorated by the studies of scientific theories about the tens of thousands of years that have created the earth that we inhabit today. Otherwise, they are NOT educated.
Students in college philosophy, history, and political science classes should acquire the understanding of the differences between loyalties to country and its values, as compared to blind loyalty to government regardless of its policies and actions. Otherwise, they are NOT educated.

And the same principles apply to other academic disciplines—music, psychology, art, medicine, business, literature—for students to have a full education there must be a robust exposure to all competing theories within the discipline. To borrow from John Stuart Mill, education should embrace a “marketplace of ideas.”

In terms of our own personal lives and values, there is nothing wrong with having absolutes about right and wrong/black and white. We need to have a moral compass. But we live in a gray world. It is an increasingly complex world. Critical thinking, openness to new ideas and solutions to problems, and understanding of the ambiguities of life are strengths of character, not character flaws. And mere surface tolerance for others different than we are is not enough; a TRUE (and I use that word with some caution) Christian liberal arts education produces not just a tolerant person but an individual who accepts and embraces diversity and approaches problems with the attitude and skills that are needed to live productively in this complicated day and age.

The uniqueness of Carson-Newman College is that we have re-dedicated this college to provide our students with those life skills. Our uniqueness is in that mission statement: the encouragement of open intellectual inquiry and the development of spiritual maturity. Fulfilling that mission will hopefully always be the mission of the college, for, in the large group of colleges that profess to be church-related, that is truly our uniqueness.
The latter part of the eighteenth-century was a time of excitement and enthusiasm in England. The Monarchy was stable, the economy was booming, a rising middle class was thriving, education was becoming increasingly more available and important to people of all classes, and there was finally a sense of toleration among the myriad of religious groups who were competing for the attention of the English people.

The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K) had been formed in 1698 and by 1741 had established nearly 2000 charity schools (Burton par. 1). Bluestocking feminism was providing an avenue for women to be active in promoting their own intellectual development, as well as in education, religion, and social reform. The Wesleyan Revival movement was rapidly growing and gaining new converts, while the previous generation of religious radicals, the Quakers, along with the Baptists and numerous other separatist groups, had become established and socially acceptable.

The prevailing and most popular theology of the time (regardless of denominational affiliation) was Millenarianism or Millennialism (now called Post-Millennialism by theologians). Created in this atmosphere of religious enthusiasm and societal optimism, Sarah Scott’s Millennium Hall set forth a manifesto for social renewal that offered to initiate the long-awaited millennial reign of Christ.

Scott’s millennial views as set forth in Millennium Hall will not be readily apparent to the contemporary reader for a number of reasons. The foremost barrier to a modern understanding is the contrast between today’s secular society and the religiously oriented society of eighteenth-century England. The differences between the popular theological views of the eighteenth-century and those prevalent in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries provide another serious obstacle.

A careful examination of the millennial theology of the eighteenth-century will demonstrate that Sarah Scott’s Millennium Hall is not only an excellent novel, but is also a powerful appeal for social reform couched in the theological metaphor of its day. It is not, of course,
unique in its serious approach to social issues. As Paula Backscheider so succinctly points out, the novels written by eighteenth-century women writers “tested the theories of clergymen, philosophers, and statesmen through dramatization” (x).

The concept of the Millennium is deeply rooted in Christian and Jewish theology, though the term is never actually used in either the Old or the New Testament of Christian scripture. The term is of Latin origin and is used to refer to the thousand-year reign of Christ mentioned in Revelation 20:4-6. This is the only specific Biblical reference to this reign (Stagg 317), though Christians have historically linked it to other Biblical concepts, such as Isaiah’s “peaceable kingdom” where,

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper’s nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:6-9; cf. Isa. 65:17-25; NIV)

In this and other Old Testament passages, the “Day of the Lord” is described as a time when the entire natural world celebrates the Messianic kingdom. From the beginnings of the Christian church in the first century, until the present day, various forms of millennial theology have been integral to the doctrine of the church.

There are three major millennial views, if references to the “tribulation” are ignored. Premillennialism was the dominant position of Christians in the first through the fifth centuries, and is held by a majority of non-theologically-trained Protestant Christians today. This interpretation asserts that Jesus Christ will return to earth at some unidentified future date and set up a kingdom which he will rule for 1000 years (the Millennium). After this earthly kingdom, there will be a climactic war (Armageddon) in which evil is destroyed, after which God will create a new heaven and a new earth.

Amillennialism is the belief that there will be no literal millennium, but interprets this doctrine allegorically. This interpretation was held by Origen, one of the early Church Fathers, and by Augustine whose influence caused it to become the official doctrinal position of the Roman Catholic Church, beginning with the 5th century (Rist 382).

Postmillennialism is an interpretation that began to be popular in the eighteenth century. It is an optimistic view, based upon a powerful
established church which believes in progress and is Christianizing the world through both evangelistic outreach and societal reform (Colijn 20, 22). Erickson succinctly expresses the Postmillennial interpretation as follows:

The reign of Christ, the locus of which is human hearts, will be complete and universal. The petition, “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,” will be actualized. Peace will prevail and evil will be virtually banished. Then, when the gospel has fully taken effect, Christ will return. (1206)

Postmillennialism was the dominant interpretation in eighteenth-century England, but, due to its intrinsically optimistic worldview, it was gradually displaced by a form of premillennialism called dispensationalism during the conflicts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. John Bright expresses the failure of Postmillennialism in this way:

That misty delusion, of course, no longer exists. The very rooftree of history fell in on it, and it became a casualty. The lesson was spelled out to us that we had both overestimated man and underestimated his predicament. It became clear that man needed some salvation which the amenities of civilization could not give; for although there were placed in his hands all the tools for a new heaven and a new earth, he straightway constructed a new hell. (247)

As noted earlier, most non-theologically-trained Protestant Christians today hold to some form of Premillennial theology, and few have the optimism to hold to a Postmillennial view. Many theologically-trained Protestants have joined with their Catholic brethren in espousing an Amillennial interpretation. Therefore, the contemporary reader who approaches Scott’s Millennium Hall has difficulty recognizing the wealth of millennial symbols and allusions in the novel because they reflect the postmillennial interpretation which has been all but forgotten except among theologians. Scott frames her novel as a letter from an unnamed protagonist to a friend in London. In the first paragraph he selects the name “Millennium Hall” to describe this “amiable family” or “society” that he has encountered as a name that is “the best adapted to the lives of the inhabitants” (53). Scott here is clearly, from the beginning, appealing to the commonly understood millennial theology of her day (Postmillennialism).
As the narrator catches his first glimpse of the countryside surrounding Millennium Hall, he is struck by the almost Edenic beauty of the landscape. He describes the “fragrance wafted from the woodbines,” “the beauty of the grounds,” “the remarkable verdure and neatness of the fields,” “the beauty of the flowers” that are “so artfully planted” and the “mixture of perfumes” that “filled us with reflections on the infinite variety of nature” (56-57). He goes on, noting the beauty and variety of the cattle, the cleanliness, neatness, and “happy amiable innocence” of the young women working in the fields, and the number of healthy and active children (57). Though describing it as a beautiful pastoral scene, a “fairy land” and “enchanted ground” which makes the narrator think of the “Attick School,” Scott again emphasizes the Edenic or millennial connection by restating his decision to call it Millennium Hall, and by his identifying it as “an assured asylum against every evil” (56).

This Edenic pastoral imagery is maintained throughout the early portion of the novel as the narrator describes the flower garden (64), the “very fine wood, which is laid out with so much taste…” (68) and is inhabited by wild animals “who live so unmolested that they seem to have forgot all fear” (69). Lest the reader miss the point and think this is merely a typical pastoral scene, the narrator again makes specific reference to the millennium, stating:

One could scarcely forbear thinking those happy times were come, when “the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lye [sic] down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a young child shall lead them. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.” (69-70)

Having addressed the garden-like setting and its population of small animals, the remainder of this introductory period in the novel is devoted to the greater beasts, and what some in that time would consider as those who are less than human.

The narrator and his companion Lamont are returning from their stroll in the woods when they notice a large fence. Lamont leaps to the conclusion that it is a pen for the ladies’ collection of “beautiful wild beasts” and asserts the joy he finds in such a “triumph of human reason.” Mrs. Mancel disagrees, stating that “when reason appears only in the exertion of cruelty and tyrannical oppression, it is surely not a gift to be boasted of” and that such a creature loses its charm when it is “put out of that station wherein nature, or to speak more properly, the all-wise Creator has placed it” (71).
She then explains that the fence hides an asylum, or refuge, for a group of people who are disabled by birth defects and had been oppressed and enslaved because of their disabilities. The narrator is amazed by the “very extraordinary humanity of the ladies” and by the difference they have made in the lives of the “wretches” under their care (74). The eighteenth-century readers of the novel, who were steeped in the scriptures from their childhood, would have recognized the parallel with Jesus announcement of his coming kingdom when he quotes the prophet Isaiah, saying:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor. (Luke 4:18-19)

Scott shows the natural pretentiousness of humanity, in microcosm, by describing the difficulty of one of the dwarfs in giving up her feelings of superiority because she had been given the gift of a sedan chair. The ladies had eventually, however, by reasoning, persuasion, education, and medical care, brought these poor souls to a condition of happiness, peace and harmony (74).

The narrator concludes this portion of the story with the recognition that these women had managed to seclude themselves from the mainstream of the world and “make as it were a new one for themselves, constituted on such very different principles from that I had hitherto lived in…” (76). This is reminiscent of the “new heaven and new earth” (Rev. 21:1) awaited by believers as the culmination of the millennium.

Sarah Scott has carefully, and brilliantly, structured her novel, progressively moving the protagonist toward a deeper understanding of the program, the philosophy, and the spiritual foundations of the community the narrator calls Millennium Hall. His increasing understanding is augmented—and punctuated—by Mrs. Mancel’s account of the lives of the four women who are the founders and prime movers of this society.

The two common elements in the lives of the women who founded Millennium Hall are education and religion, which were indelibly linked in the eighteenth-century mind. Lady Melvyn instills in her daughter’s (the later Mrs. Morgan’s) mind “the principles of true religion” and “gave her knowledge far superior to her years” (84). Mr. Hintman, Miss Mancel’s guardian, is not “sparing in what concerned her education” though “her greatest improvement was from reading with Miss Melvyn, who instructed her in geography and in such parts of philosophy of which her age was capable; but above all, she was
most attentive to inculcate into her mind the principles of true religion” (91).

Lady Mary Jones, after a frivolous youth under the guidance of Lady Sheerness, comes under the guidance of Lady Brumpton. She spends several years with Lady Brumpton in “a regular and improving course” of reading. After the death of Lady Brumpton, and “touched with the greatness of divine mercy” she meets Mrs. Morgan and Mrs. Mancel at Tunbridge and decides to join them at Millennium Hall. Miss Selvyn is “bred a philosopher from her cradle” and at twelve years old “she excelled all the young ladies of the neighborhood of her own age…” (199). Although her father is a skeptic, he is open-minded and becomes close friends with the local clergyman, “a gentleman of great learning” (201).

Under this influence Mr. Selvyn becomes a believer and “Miss Selvyn was early taught the truths of Christianity, which though the most necessary of all things, was at first the only one neglected” (203). Miss Selvyn is later the wise counselor who advises Lady Mary in the matter of Lord Robert St. George, and after finding – and losing – her real mother (Lady Emilia) accepts Lady Mary’s invitation to visit her and Mrs. Mancel and Mrs. Morgan at Millennium Hall. Thus are the main organizers of the society brought together and after joining together their ideas and fortunes they begin to develop the society now being described as Millennium Hall (194).

Having established the Edenic beauty of Millennium Hall and its environs, and while punctuating the frame story with the individual stories that illustrate the development of the characters of the religious and educated founders of the society, Sarah Scott moves on to develop the philosophical foundation which binds these women together. Surprisingly, from a male standpoint, they are not united by a creed, a constitution, by-laws, or any other formal organizational structure. As educated women, rationally recognizing the common need for social interaction, they have chosen to live together in this society, which they define as “a state of mutual confidence, reciprocal services, and correspondent affections” (111).

When Lamont challenges Mrs. Mancel saying, “You seem Madam . . . to choose to make us all slaves to each other?” she responds by saying, “No, sir, . . . I would only make you friends.” This seemingly casual statement is a powerful appeal to the covenant community which would usher in the millennium. It echoes the words of Jesus in John 14:14-15 where he states “No longer do I call you slaves; for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends…” (NIV). This verse had become the identifying verse behind
the Quaker movement, who are formally known as the Religious Society of Friends.

Although some of their initial zeal had faded with the decline of persecution, this religious body was still very active in the eighteenth-century as advocates for such social reforms as nonviolence, an end to slavery, education for all, equal rights for women, and caring for the needs of the poor. There seems to be little evidence that Sarah Scott was herself a Quaker, but the social reforms that they had been advocating for almost 100 years had begun to permeate society. As Erickson states in discussing the postmillennial view, “The belief in the spread of the kingdom ha[d] taken on a somewhat more secularized form, so that social transformation rather than individualized conversions [was] considered the sign of the kingdom” (1207).

The absence of a contract, creed, or constitution for the society does not imply that there are no rules to govern behavior. These “regulations,” however, amount simply to what might be called “house rules” designed “to preserve an exact equality between them” (116). In summary, they are expected to give everything they have to the society and live in simple peace and equality with one another. All of the needs of the participants will be met by the society, not only the basic food and shelter needs, but also books, musical instruments, and “conveniences for every kind of employment” (116).

Anyone who chooses to leave will have her money returned to her, and the society maintains the right to expel anyone who chooses not to continue living by the rules to which she had assented when becoming a part of the community. There are no meaningless formalities or ceremonies (another similarity to the Quakers) and every member is free to pursue her own interests, inclinations, and employments. Everyone is expected to have some type of activity or employment, whatever their social station, as they believed that “it was the duty of every person to be of service to others” and that “[a]n idle mind, like fallow ground, is the soil for every weed to grow in” (118). It should be noted also that the ladies who were the founders and leaders of the society do not rule by dictate but “by their examples and suggestions” (118).

In this also they seem to have learned a lesson from the Quakers who are governed by a consensus of their members, all of whom are considered equal, and whose meetings are guided by a council of elders without any formal clergy. Millennium Hall could also be thought of as a form of missionary movement as they continue to add new members and new communities to their society. Mrs. Maynard describes such a venture to the narrator, stating, “they determined to hazard another of the same kind, and have just concluded a treaty for a still larger mansion, at about three miles distance, and by the persons now waiting for
it, they have not reason to believe it will be less successful than the other . . .” (121).

In response to the description of their life together, the narrator exclaims, “In what a heaven do you live . . .” (120), again recalling the reader to the millennial theme which involves the creation of a heavenly society on earth of which Christ can then assume the kingship. Having examined the way the millennial society functions as a body, Scott then moves, after another character-developing story about one of the founders, to examine the impact of the society upon their surrounding community.

The Millennium Hall society, unlike many churches past or present, does not exist solely for its own survival. The ladies of the society take positive action to benefit the larger community that surrounds their society. “They instituted schools for the young, and alms-houses for the old,” provided housing and livestock for every young couple who married in their community, and paid for nurses for the sick, as well as food, medicine, and financial reimbursement for lost wages during their illness (159).

They took in orphan girls and raised them as their wards, educating them and preparing them to work as housekeepers or governesses (160). For any of those girls who chose to marry (and also for those in the surrounding parish if they were of good character) they provided a dowry, stocked their dairies, and furnished them with poultry (163). They also established “in the parish a manufacture of carpets and ruggs [sic], which succeeded so well, as to enrich all the country round about” (243).

Though this may seem to the modern reader to be somewhat reminiscent of the activities of the reformed Jean Valjean in Victor Hugo’s monumental classic Les Miserables, it should be noted that Hugo’s epic was not written until around the 1860’s, almost 100 years later. Both novels, however, are rooted in the same ideals of simplicity, compassion for the needy, and Christian charity.

When the narrator learns of all that the ladies of Millennium Hall do in support of their newly-married wards, he expresses some surprise, given that none of them were married. Mrs. Melvyn’s reply is that they “consider matrimony as absolutely necessary to the good of society” and “a general duty,” but that too often “the case is pretty equal as to both sexes, each can destroy the other’s peace” (163-64). Therefore, they do what they can to encourage a positive experience in marital relations among those in their community.

Scott makes it clear that Millennium Hall is not an attempt to suggest a blueprint for an institutionalized social reform movement. Though some of these ideas were put into practice by Sarah Scott her-
self with Lady Barbara Montagu, and other bluestocking feminists of the eighteenth-century tried similar measures (Kelly 40-41), the fictitious community in the novel is clearly not intended to be a model to be institutionalized. Scott is demonstrating that true change is relational, not institutional. Millennium Hall is a challenge to all Christians to live out their faith by finding creative ways to help the people around them. Scott makes this point when she has Lamont praise the Millennium Hall society, stating, “If any people have a right to turn reformers, you ladies are best qualified, since you begin by reforming yourselves; you practice more than you preach, and therefore must always be listened to with attention.”

To this praise Mrs. Mancel, one of the founding members of the community replies, “We do not set up for reformers...we have sufficient employment in improving ourselves; to mend the world requires much abler hands” (166). She explains further that the source of what they are trying to accomplish is rooted in the Bible, and that they have no intent to judge anyone else. “I am required to answer only for myself...” she states. “Humility forbids me to censure others, and prudence obliges me to avoid copying them’ (167).

The novel concludes with the narrator entering Lamont’s room to find him reading the Bible. When he expresses surprise, Lamont responds in a manner that seems meant to challenge the external religiosity of many so-called Christians. The narrator states that Lamont was:

...convinced by the conduct of the ladies of this house, that their religion must be the true one. When he had before considered the lives of Christians, their doctrine seemed to have so little influence on their actions, that he imagined there was no sufficient effect produced by Christianity, to warrant a belief...but he now saw what religion in reality was, and by its precepts, was convinced its original must be divine (248).

The narrator, however, is affected differently. He states, in the concluding words of the novel, “For my part, my thoughts are all engaged in a scheme to imitate them on a smaller scale” (249).

These two seemingly disparate responses to the Millennium Hall community are actually two sides of the same coin. The reader is again brought face-to-face with the optimistic view of postmillennial Christianity as noted earlier. The key, Scott seems to be saying, is a powerful established church which believes in progress and in Christianizing the world through both evangelistic outreach and societal reform (Colijn 20, 22). Lamont clearly represents the successful results of a lifestyle approach to evangelistic outreach, while the narrator is the one who is
moved to begin works for social reform in emulation of his mentors at Millennium Hall.

Both types of efforts are essential if the church is going to complete its mission and usher-in the millennial kingdom of Christ. *Millennium Hall* is therefore not a program to be followed, but an optimistic Postmillennial manifesto, calling upon Christians to do their duty and bring to fruition a new world order that is founded on peace, justice, and charity and is worthy of the coming of the Christ.

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Liberal Arts Education:
Strong Minds, Strong Hearts

[Liberal Arts Week Address, Feb. 15, 2005]

Robin Bryson Thomerson ('83)

It is my distinct pleasure to be here with you this morning. The privilege of visiting with you in this forum is an honor beyond my capabilities of expression. While my family provided the cornerstone for my faith, values and priorities, it was Carson-Newman that helped me to establish the foundation for my future.

“Truth, Beauty and Goodness” is not just a motto; it is a living, breathing tradition that is grounded in liberal arts and faith. For those currently immersed in this culture, that phrase may seem abstract, or even hollow. But those of us who are products of this tradition can look back and say that indeed, Carson-Newman produces strong minds and strong hearts.

Now, if you and I were speaking one-on-one, and if you were honest, as a student you might say: “In the REAL world who is going to care about a strong mind and a strong heart?” Even while sitting in this chapel, you may not even be thinking about this topic at all—you may be thinking of your next class, your next test or, more likely, your next date. You may even be wondering why you have to come to chapel at all, what purpose it serves and how in this world will it help you in your future.

Speaking of the future, what impact can Western Civilization possibly have on the future of a business major anyway? Who cares about that? For that matter, why do you have to take all those Gen Ed and elective classes? I know you ask those questions because I’ve sat in those pews, I’ve thought the same thoughts and asked the same questions.

I know you ask those questions, because I’ve sat with some of you in Stokely and you’ve asked me those questions. Today, with twenty years of post-graduate life experiences behind me, I can tell you that the strong mind and strong heart you are developing here will be one of the foremost assets of your life. The greatest skills you are learning here are the abilities to listen, read, think, reason, and discern in an independent and critical manner.
You should not expect to agree with everything you hear or read in this place. You should expect to be challenged in your own beliefs, for that challenge will teach you to critically evaluate what you believe today, ascertain for yourself that you hold the belief to be true and equip you with the skills to defend and champion that belief.

You will know how to think for yourself—to determine from your own strength of mind and heart what is true and what is false. You will not be enslaved by what others tell you is the truth.

Rest assured that when you leave this unique and special place, you will be prepared in all ways to live and fully experience the promise of Isaiah 40:31 that “those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

The study of liberal arts has a long and rich tradition that dates to the time of the ancient Greeks--Socrates, Plato and Aristotle who asked such questions as: “What is good and evil?” and, “How do we learn to do what is good and avoid what is evil?”

From these academic discussions, there developed a tradition of study called “liberal arts” which translated from the ancient Greek means literally “arts of freedom.” To the Greeks, liberal arts represented the ability to attain knowledge as a free person, one who could choose a course of action, as opposed to the obligations of a slave who was subject to the will of a master. The purpose of the studies focused on that part of our humanity that is truly free, the mind and soul. The intent was not so much to teach a skill upon which to make a living but rather to teach skills upon which the student could build a good life. To that end, the ancients developed seven areas of study designed to impart wisdom and knowledge:

- Logic
- Grammar
- Rhetoric
- Mathematics
- Geometry
- Music
- Astronomy

Believe it or not, the questions of “why” all these subjects must be studied have been asked for centuries. A scholar of the 12th century, known as Hugo of St. Victor, answered the questions that we’ve all asked when he wrote:

But, you will say, I find in histories much useless and forbidden matter; why should I busy myself therewith? Very true, there are in the Scriptures many things which, considered in themselves, are apparently not worth acquiring, but which, if you compare them
with others connected with them, and if you weigh them, bearing in mind this connection, will prove to be necessary and useful. Some things are worth knowing on their own account; but others, although apparently offering no return for our trouble, should not be neglected, because without them the former cannot be thoroughly mastered. Learn everything; you will afterwards discover that nothing is superfluous; limited knowledge affords no enjoyment.

When I left Carson-Newman, I had a Bachelor of Arts degree, a major in Political Science, a dream, an acceptance letter to the University of Tennessee College of Law, and a fist-full of student loan applications. When I left UT, I had my education, my dream, and I had picked up a husband, the “book-learnin'” necessary to practice law and TWO fists full of student loan repayment notices. I went forward to practice in the highly technical and regulated area of environmental law—surface coal mining, hazardous waste and superfund law. I suddenly found myself on another planet, working with aliens called engineers, biologists, and geologists. Later, I moved from environmental law to the highly technical and regulated field of higher education funding, administering student loans, grants and scholarships. I suddenly found myself on another planet working with aliens called bankers, systems technologists and operations experts.

I had no training or prior experience in either environmental law or higher education funding. I read material that looked like ancient Greek, and in the beginning I did not even know what questions to ask my experts. Nonetheless, I was able to connect with those experts, listen to them and learn from them because Carson-Newman had taught me to go beyond my comfort zone, to approach new concepts without fear and to be open to new and divergent opportunities.

Though I was working in an area that had no relation to my major course of study in college, the skills I learned here made it possible for me to be competent and confident in my new world. I was able to realize my dreams by connecting my new world with my love of government and my utmost respect for the law. I was blessed to be part of a team of lawyers who worked legislative sessions. After the politicians, lobbyists and legislators had negotiated, we sat down with their directions and blank pieces of paper to write laws that would protect the environment. I was blessed to be involved on a state and national level in efforts to make it possible for students to pay for college. Those blessings were born in these halls and classrooms, where I was taught to embrace what was not naturally a part of me.
By its very nature, the study of liberal arts is inclusive of varying ideas, opinions and beliefs. At the very heart of the tradition is the ability to engage in open intellectual inquiry and serious, thoughtful discourse as students learn to reason, to question and to think on a level that is not shackled by emotion or indoctrination. It is through this process that students are taught to carefully consider other cultures, ideas and beliefs to gain an understanding that leads to compassion, tolerance and the ability to act in an effective and decisive manner.

While a liberal arts training is rich in tradition and nobility of purpose, how does it translate in today’s society? College News reports that a 1998 study found that alumni of liberal arts colleges accounted for about only three percent of all American college graduates; however, those alumni represent:

- 8% of the nation’s wealthiest CEOs listed by Forbes magazine in 1998
- 8% of former Peace Corps volunteers
- 19% of United States Presidents
- 23% of Pulitzer Prize winners in drama
- 19% of Pulitzer Prize winners in history
- 18% of Pulitzer Prize winners in poetry
- 8% of Pulitzer Prize winners in biography
- 6% of Pulitzer Prize winners in fiction

(All numbers from 1960-1998)

In a two-year period, 20% of all scientists elected to the National Academy of Sciences received their undergraduate education from liberal arts colleges.

These are impressive statistics, but what value does the art of thinking freely hold for the typical graduate of today? In an article for the Association of American Colleges and Universities, Dr. William J. Cronon of the University of Wisconsin, identified ten qualities of a liberally educated person:

1. They know how to listen and to hear. They pay attention. They listen to not only what is said but track logical reasoning, detect illogic, hear the emotions that lie behind both the logic and the illogic, and ultimately empathize with the person who is feeling those emotions.

In this fast paced world where competition and the bottom line are paramount, this is a rare and valued quality that enables one to break down barriers and effectively communicate. When working with individuals who had fallen on hard times and who had failed to repay their
student loans, I often heard “you are the first person who has really listened to me. I know I can work this out, I just need someone to listen.” As Dr. Cronon states, it’s not just the ability to listen to the words but to hear the message that lies behind the words and to connect that to the needs and demands of the current circumstance.

As we tell our children, if you just show up and listen, you’ll be ahead of 90% of your peers. The same is true for you. If you take advantage of what is being taught here, you’ll learn the valuable art of listening to really hear, you’ll be able to connect what you hear with what is needed and you will find yourself marketable just because you showed up and listened.

2. **They read and they understand.** They can look beyond words and appreciate the context of the human condition that resulted in the material being read. They can comprehend and value different genres and styles and encounter “the world as a fascinating and extraordinarily intricate set of texts waiting to be read and understood.”

I believe this is what Hugo meant when he said “limited knowledge affords no enjoyment.” To anticipate that life is an ever-expanding opportunity to learn of something new refreshes and sustains a joy that brings a rich and full life. You have the opportunity here to enjoy the rap, country or hip-hop music you listen to in your car as well as to learn about and appreciate beautiful classical pieces performed by the music department. You can enjoy a detective novel as well as the classic literature of Dickens and Hawthorne. Expanding your world and connecting to other worlds brings satisfaction and joy.

3. **They can talk with anyone.** They have broad exposures. Their ability to listen and connect different ideas and concepts allow them to converse with anyone because of an educated and learned interest in what others have to offer.

Because a liberal arts environment encourages open inquiry and thoughtful discourse, you are learning that everyone has something to offer and that you can learn from anyone. You will find yourself wanting to know what someone thinks and a true interest in what they have to say will drive your ability to use conversation to learn. This quality is closely connected with the ability to listen and hear and is equally valuable. The ability to talk to anyone will open doors for you not only in the business world but also in your personal and social relationships. Again, listening to hear, reading to understand and talking to learn connect to provide you with a good, rich and full life.
4. *They can write clearly and persuasively and movingly.* The art of written expression is ingrained in the liberal arts experience. It generates the ability to utilize words that teach, persuade and touch the recipient.

I cannot stress enough the importance of this attribute. At every opportunity you should engage in written communication. I know from personal experience that our faculty will give you many opportunities—take advantage of those opportunities to become the very best writer that you can be! A little more than one year ago, I attended hearings sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education to take testimony from the public regarding reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. The Department invited students, parents, educators and employers to give testimony. Without fail, each employer present complained of the inability of current graduates to communicate effectively in written form. I constantly review the written product of young technical professionals and am concerned with their lack of ability to write. I urge you to embrace your opportunities to write while you are here. Make the most of your experience here and learn the art of the written word and the use of vocabulary to persuade, inspire and touch your audience.

5. *They can solve a wide variety of puzzles and problems.* They have “the ability to look at a complicated reality, break it into pieces, figure out how it works, with the end result of being able to do practical things in the real world.”

Life is really all about puzzles. Personal relationships, business relationships, social interactions are, in their simplest form, splendid, intricate puzzles that can be connected to cast a most glorious picture. Whether it be your home, your church, or your business, the challenge is to analyze each personality around you, figure out where you can fit in and how each personality trait can be combined to reach ultimate success and harmony within the group. You may not realize it, but you are learning how to do that right now—you may be involved in student government, a service organization, an athletic team or simply living in a dorm with other students. In any of these, you are learning to interrelate and work toward a common goal.

6. *Educated people respect rigor, not so much for its own sake, but as a way of seeking truth.* “Truly educated people love learning, but they love wisdom more. . . . They understand that knowledge serves values and they strive to put these two, knowledge and values, into constant dialogue with each other.” They endeavor to utilize the truth they
have discerned for a larger, beneficial purpose that will uplift and leave their world a bit better.

In practicing law for almost nineteen years, I have learned that knowledge without wisdom and discernment is ineffective. You can know your case from A to Z, but if you don’t utilize wisdom and discernment in the presentation of your knowledge you won’t persuade, you won’t inspire and you won’t effectuate change. A distinctive aspect of liberal arts is that it reaches beneath superficial facts being studied and requires the student to connect those facts to the world around them. This breeds a wisdom which evolves into somewhat of an innate ability to evaluate situations that at first blush appear to be complicated and to discern solutions that may not be easy but will be accepted and acted on. I call it the ability to give bad news, have the recipient accept the news and then work with you to make the situation better than it was before.

7. They practice respect and humility, tolerance, and self-criticism. “They have the intellectual range and the emotional generosity to step outside their own experiences and prejudices to recognize the parochialism of their own viewpoints, thereby opening themselves to perspectives very different from their own. This quality of intellectual openness and tolerance is among the most important values we associate with liberal education.”

This quality I hold very dear for it is the essence of what we learn here. We learn that regardless of how passionate we are in our own beliefs and values, the person on the opposite side of the room or the opposite side of the globe is just as passionate in his or her own beliefs and values. In that way we are more alike than different. In that way, God smiles upon us both and our tolerance and generosity blooms from His love.

8. They understand how to get things done in this world. In their effort to leave the world a better place, they learn to adapt and to make things happen. If we are to leave the world a better place, action is absolutely necessary and we cannot abdicate our responsibility to right a wrong, to do good and avoid doing harm. We must not abuse what power we have and we must use our abilities and accomplishments in a positive manner.

To take action to do good, avoid doing harm, to make the world a better place without abusing power—does that mean that we must be
great? Must we run for president or win a Nobel Prize? I sincerely doubt that on the day Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on an Alabama bus, she thought that she would become an icon of the civil rights movement. The small things we do on a daily basis are what matter.

I don’t have to be powerful to abuse my power. All I have to do is demean my neighbor, co-worker or child and I have abused the power that I have with that person. I have also harmed my ability to be effective with that person. Carson-Newman has a heritage of being an uplifting place. That quality is what drew me here. On my first campus visit, I saw the joy in the faces of the students; they were friendly and welcoming to me as a stranger. I knew I wanted to be part of this. If you continue to internalize this quality you will draw people to you and thus enable yourself to get things done in a way that uplifts and does not abuse power.

9. They nurture and empower the people around them. “One of the most important things that tempers the exercise of power and shapes right action is surely the recognition that no one ever acts alone. A liberally educated person understands that they belong to a community whose prosperity and well being are crucial to their own and they help that community flourish by giving of themselves to make the success of others possible.

At Carson-Newman, we learn the value of community. We know it is impossible to be effective or to accomplish our goals alone. We learn that the success of the group equates to the success of the individual. The commitment of this faculty and this community to the individual success of each student, to YOUR success, is what makes Carson-Newman College special. I urge all of us to recognize this fact and to commit ourselves to giving back in like measure. This environment, our community, breeds the willingness and generosity to share success.

10. They connect. “More than anything else, being an educated person means being able to see connections so as to be able to make sense of the world and act within it in creative ways. All of the other qualities that I’ve just described-listening, reading, writing, talking, puzzle-solving, seeing the world through others’ eyes, empowering others, leading—every last one of these things is finally about connecting.”

You will recall that I have used the term “connect” throughout this talk. At Carson-Newman we learn to connect math with music, history with economics, and religion with science. It breeds tolerance to learn
that evolution is science and creationism is religion but that the two can co-exist with academic integrity and Christian values. The natural debate that arises from these two disciplines should find a scholarly home in liberal arts. Likewise, the debate regarding inerrancy of the scriptures should find a scholarly home in Christian liberal arts.

Like liberal arts itself, these debates should be thoughtful, well reasoned and unfettered by emotion or indoctrination. Like the qualities of a liberally educated person, the debates should be respectful, humble and tolerant, aiming to empower and uplift to gain wisdom and understanding. These debates should not involve personal agendas and should never be used to assail the institution or assault individual faculty. I stand before you as a liberally educated individual who cannot fail to act when a wrong has been done. I stand before you to publicly say that to take a scholarly debate and make it a personal attack against individuals or an institution is just wrong.

This is my faculty, just as they are yours. They are the same today as they were when they taught me. I can and will attest to their devotion to Christ, their commitment to Christian education and their fidelity to academic integrity. I assure you that in teaching students to think, they are making them strong in faith and that when the rigors of this world become the reality of their lives, they will remain strong. They will not be faint of heart.

These debates have a place here within Christian liberal arts. It is my belief that they should be treated with the utmost care and respect. I urge everyone involved, whether they be trustees, administration, faculty, staff, alumni, students or other concerned individuals to defer to the process that is liberal arts. Allow the liberal arts tradition to use these debates in a scholarly way that teaches, encourages and understands not only knowledge but also wisdom. If we guard the integrity of the tradition and allow it to handle these debates in the manner employed for thousands of years, it will do so in a style that breeds the respect, humility and tolerance that come from learning to passionately disagree but to respect one another and to value our diversity.

As a Christian liberal arts institution, Carson-Newman has distinguished itself in both the secular and religious educational community by combining academic and scientific integrity with adherence to Christian principles. For more than 150 years, it has taught students, it has taught us, to think independently, to believe deeply, to give enthusiastically and to serve humbly.

The tradition of learning that lives and breathes in the walls of this institution embodies the very best of what constitutes a liberal arts education. In this environment, strong minds and strong hearts are being developed. The liberal arts education gained here gives the foundation
to touch our world and leave it a bit better. It provides the skills, not just to make a living, but, more importantly, to live a good life.

The faith learned here gives a glorious hope in the Lord for all of us to continually renew our strength, to soar on wings like eagles; to run and not grow weary, to walk and not be faint. I leave you with a definition of success penned by Ralph Waldo Emerson that exemplifies all that we learn in Christian liberal arts:

What is success?
To laugh often and much;
To win the respect of intelligent people
and the affection of children;
To earn the appreciation of honest critics
and endure the betrayal of false friends;
To appreciate beauty;
To find the best in others;
To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch
or a redeemed social condition;
To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived;
This is to have succeeded.

I admonish you to take the skills you learn here, go forth and succeed. I thank you for your kind attention and I keep you always in my heart and in my prayers.
I am endeavoring to articulate what I believe about science and scripture and how, together, they impact our lives. This is not based on extensive reading of literature, but on a lifetime of influence by Christian family, friends and churches, on regular personal Bible study, on trying to follow the Lordship of Christ, and on training in physics and a career of research and teaching of physics, astronomy, computer science and mathematics. This essay is not intended to persuade anyone to believe as I do, but it is offered in the hope that this discourse will help others to formulate and articulate their own practice of both reason and faith.

For the purpose of this treatise, the word “science” is intended to comprise all systematic studies, including the natural sciences, social studies, studies of human behavior, and systematic theology. Although my experience is primarily in physics, I believe similar principles apply to many areas of study. “Scripture” is intended to include the canonized Bible, as commonly recognized by most biblical scholars, using any translation that is deemed to be reasonably faithful to the earliest available texts.

From my perspective, scientific study is often misinterpreted or misrepresented as a search for absolute truth, resulting in irrefutable conclusions. I believe most reputable scientists view their work as an on-going endeavor to find and refine useful theories by which to describe and utilize the world around us. Any conclusion drawn from their work is never absolutely proven to be correct, but is always subject to being disproved or shown to be inadequate for some purposes.

We have fallen into the misleading habit of referring to some theories as “laws.” However, many famous “laws” of physics have been shown to be incorrect, for example, Newton’s laws of motion. While these laws are adequate for describing the motion of billiard balls, rocket ships, and satellites, we now know that calculations based on them are not precise. When speeds approach the speed of light or when objects are as small as atoms or as massive as stars, the observed behavior of these objects does not adhere to Newton’s laws! New con-
cepts of relativity and quantum theory are required to accurately predict their behavior.

Such discrepancies do not obviate the value of a theory, however. For most directly observed motions Newton’s laws yield results that agree with observations so closely that the discrepancies cannot be measured. Thus, Newton’s laws are still used, as a practical convenience. The more complex theories are not needed, to obtain useful results. By extension, we should suppose that even the revered theories of relativity and quantum mechanics will one day be shown insufficiently accurate for some purposes. Even now, string theory seems to be gaining credibility for cosmological calculations; and some evidence may be exposing inadequacies of the former theories.

Therefore, the value of a scientific theory does not depend so much on whether it is right or wrong, but on whether it is useful. If useful applications may be drawn from a theory, then it is of value to the scientific community and to humanity at large. If we are aware of the limitations of a theory, then we are appropriately equipped to make proper use of it. Otherwise, inappropriate application of a theory may become a stumbling block to progress.

A most daunting task of science is to unravel the overall structure of the entire universe and to understand the processes by which the universe has come into being and has developed into its present form. We may wonder if creatures can really fathom the processes of creation and describe the plan of the Creator. Nevertheless, I consider the remarkable mental capacity of mankind, to contemplate his own existence and to question his own place in the universe as a divinely endowed challenge to explore the structure of the universe and seek to discover its origin. This is a part of God’s directive to “fill the earth and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28). God made the universe with great wisdom and intricately intelligent design. He has also endowed man with the capacity to discover principles of His creative design. If we are to be good stewards of His universe and of the capacities He has given us, we must diligently study this world and apply our minds to understanding it. We should be good stewards of His designs (see Isaiah 6:9-13).

Astronomers and cosmologists have responded to that challenge by studying the structure of stars, galaxies, and clusters of galaxies. As farther reaches of space are explored, there appears to be an ever-increasing order of emptiness in our universe. There is more distance between neighboring stars than most of us can imagine. Yet, on a cosmic scale, our solar system is in a relatively crowded part of our Milky Way galaxy, beyond which there is even more empty space between galaxies. Galaxies, in turn, are gathered in clusters of galaxies, which are separated by emptiness that is an order of magnitude larger than
clusters themselves. Beyond that, super-clusters of clusters are spreading out even further into space. In principle, we could imagine that the order of clustering continues ad infinitum and thus avoid the perplexing quandary of explaining what exists beyond the observable universe. Most cosmologists, however, find it more useful to assume that the universe is finite in both extent and in age.

Theories have been developed which help us understand the functioning of stars and other astronomical phenomena with remarkable success. This, in spite of our inability to travel much beyond our own planet, see beneath the surface of the sun, or detect any detailed features of any star other than the sun. Only by thorough analysis of tiny specks of light and painstaking application of principles of physics have we illuminated some of the mysteries of the heavens. Not all phenomena are explained to everyone’s satisfaction, however; and there are still competing theories, which remain to be adjudged as to which is most consistent with observations.

One theory that has gained credibility with many scientists is the “Big Bang” theory, which posits that the origin of the universe occurred at an instant when all the matter-energy of the universe was released in a tremendous explosion at a tiny point. That theory is consistent with observations that galaxies are receding from each other at a great rate, as though driven by a large explosion. Background radiation from empty space and other acutely measured phenomena also seem to support the notion of such an explosive beginning of the universe. By careful measurement of current conditions in the universe, physicists have been able to deduce conditions that would have existed an infinitesimal moment after the beginning of time. There are always discrepancies and dissenting views, but the “Big Bang” notion has produced some interesting and useful conclusions. Since scientists cannot conduct experiments regarding the creation of the universe, nor can they observe more than one example of the process, any degree of success in this field is rather remarkable.

At the other extreme end of the scale, physicists have probed the inner workings of matter. The term “atom” derives from a Greek word implying the smallest indivisible particle of matter. Although the modern concept of the atom includes clearly separable components, the term applies to a very useful concept of physics and chemistry. The atom is much too small to be observed with visible light, being a thousand times smaller than the wavelengths of light by which we see. The tiny world of the atom does not conform to the principles of motion that we readily observe around us. The position and momentum of electrons and other sub-microscopic entities appear to be governed by mathematical equations of probability, rather than by Newton’s pre-
dictable equations of motion. Yet, evidence is quite convincing that quantum theories regarding the structure of atoms provide accurate results regarding chemical reactions, bonding of atoms into molecular structures, the emission and absorption of light, and other phenomena.

As we delve into the interior structure of the atom, we find another rather startling degree of emptiness. The nucleus of the atom, which comprises over 99.9% of its mass, resides amidst a swarming cloud of electrons at a tiny point of space one hundred thousand times smaller in diameter than the minuscule atom itself. Our most useful theories of this tiny nucleus indicate that its major constituents are protons, neutrons, and a number of medium-sized mesons, which serve to bind these parts into the unbelievably small volume of the nucleus. So, the “indivisible” atom appears to be incredibly divisible!

As nuclear physicists were just becoming comfortable and familiar with these constituents and were attempting to unravel their mysteries, evidence began to mount that nuclear particles are themselves composed of an entirely new class of particles called “quarks.” Theories regarding the behavior of all these basic particles of matter stretch one’s mind beyond what seems intuitively plausible and well beyond the mathematical skills of most of us. One may now begin to ask, “What are quarks made of?”

If I may stray a bit from the field of physics, I would like to comment on evolutionary theory. Evolution has been hotly debated and often misunderstood and misinterpreted, in my view. From what I have learned from biologists, I believe that principles of evolution have been demonstrated as useful tools for classifying various life forms and for explaining their existence and survival through the ages. These principles seem to be well supported by substantial evidence, gathered and interpreted by a large number of reputable biologists. Many of these biologists are also devout believers in God and in His divine creation and sustenance of life.

Some people view evolution as a theory that attributes the development of life forms to mere chance, devoid of any divine origin. I rather believe that evolution is a very plausible description of a divinely ordained process by which life came into being and flourished on earth. While some isolated observations may appear to be inconsistent with evolutionary principles, the preponderance of evidence seems to support the occurrence of evolutionary processes. The concept of evolution of life does not obviate my faith in God, but reinforces my conviction that God creates and sustains life in a marvelously patient process, with an orderly plan that stretches our imagination. I can certainly perceive God working in my life and in various living beings around me through
natural, gradual processes of change. Our notions of evolution might be inaccurate, but they are nevertheless useful and even inspiring.

Theories of the sciences have achieved moderate success in describing observations ranging from the very smallest nuclear particle to the most far-reaching galactic structures of the cosmos, from the inanimate to the living, from the individual cell to society at large. Theories in many fields of natural science have reached such a complexity and level of sophistication that only experts trained in that narrow field can fully comprehend their ramifications. I doubt that any one person or even a collective team of physicists could claim a thorough understanding of the whole of physics. Consistency of theory with observation is not perfect and understanding of phenomena is not complete, however. Similar statements may be made regarding all areas of science. It is my conviction that our quest for understanding the natural world will never be completely satisfactory. Theories will continue to be disproved or found lacking. There will always be questions about what lies beyond or beneath our current understanding. As long as a child can ask “why?” or “what is this made of?” there will be a need for scientific inquiry.

Having discoursed beyond what I fully comprehend of scientific studies, I would like to discuss what I believe about scripture. I believe the Bible is a uniquely inspired book containing a divinely ordained message from God. The Bible is inspired by God in its origin, in its preservation and canonization, in its translation and dissemination, and in its illumination and interpretation for our lives.

I believe the content of the Bible was produced by genuine people of faith, as they experienced divine revelation from God. I am not comfortable, however, with the term “inerrant” in connection with the biblical text. Some claim that the original words were inerrant, but that is not a practical conclusion, since no such original record of words exists and some parts of the Bible most likely came from multiple oral traditions with no singular origin. God surely communicates His message with perfection, but the human aspect of the biblical record renders it less than perfect. As soon as man contemplates God’s message, I believe it becomes less than perfectly understood. When he communicates it to others, it is corrupted by man’s limitations. I think if we ignore the human background of scripture, we are in danger of misunderstanding its message; and we may be guilty of an idolatrous attitude toward the book. If our God could be adequately described in a book, then we have made Him too small. If all that God requires of our relationship with Him could be prescribed in words, then there would be no need for faith.
Beyond the difficulty of recording a divine message for human understanding, there is the problem of transmitting that message through ages of changing languages, cultures, and literary styles. We must rely on trained biblical scholars to help us understand what the text said and what it meant in the day it was recorded. The process of translating words and meaning into our language always involves interpretation by the translators, which affects the meaning we derive from scripture. It also appears that much of the Bible is written in figurative terms, which, when taken literally, may convey a very different meaning from what was originally intended. Our own interpretation of the words of the Bible becomes an important key to the meaning we find in the message.

Words of the Bible have certainly been used in ways that seem contrary to God’s intentions. In the Garden of Eden, Satan turned God’s command into a question, “Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (Genesis 3:1 KJV). When tempting Jesus, Satan used scripture to cast doubt on God’s providence (Matthew 4:6). Some have used scripture to justify war, racial prejudice, and gender discrimination. Others, by insisting that their own interpretation of scripture is the only way to believe the Bible, have driven wedges between peoples of faith. Such divisive use of scripture may well do more to impede the cause of Christ than anything the devil could imagine! In these instances, I would not call those passages the word of God. Like any other powerful words, passages of scripture can be used for ungodly purposes. The Bible is the word of God only when His message is used for His purposes.

The phrase, word of the Lord, in scripture often refers to the expression of all that God is: His power in creation, His character of righteousness, His standards for living in holy communion with Him, and His awesome command for reverence. Whenever and however His Word is expressed, we must pay careful attention and ascribe highest priority to the divine communication. We must thank the Lord for His holy, powerful, and commanding Word and pay reverent attention to every expression of His Word (see Jeremiah 1).

The word of the Lord comes to His spokespersons with overwhelming force, so that in spite of reluctance or misgivings, he is able to bring words of warning and encouragement, of prophecy and judgment, of grace and peace. Even in the face of opposition and disaster, God is always about fulfilling His word through the events of history. Faithful spokespersons have bravely proclaimed God’s message in difficult circumstances. We must speak boldly the message He has for our generation (Ezekiel 13:1-16).
It is an awesome responsibility to declare the word of the Lord. Those who do so must be sure that God has really spoken to them and that they are not declaring false hopes from their own imagination. The false hopes for a false peace, which they have built up, will be destroyed in a mighty crash by God’s wrath. We must discern between our own false hopes and the true word of God that comes from God. We must only hear and declare what is truly God’s word (see Acts 13:40-52).

Given the seemingly impossible prospect of recording, transmitting, and understanding a message from God, the Bible appears to me as a divinely ordained miracle. That miracle includes the recording, preservation, canonization, translation, reading, and understanding of the divine message. Therefore, we should approach our reading of the Bible with the same awe with which we would view a raising of the dead, the birth of a child, or the redemption of a sinner. Unless we are reading and understanding scripture with divine guidance, we may be assimilating a message derived from our own inclination, from someone else’s determination, or from satanic urge, rather than from God.

One part of the Bible that is particularly hard to interpret is the account of creation found in Genesis. A literal analysis of the text implies that creation of the universe took place in six days, about six thousand years ago. That appears to be in distinct contradiction with considerable physical evidence that the universe is ten to fifteen billion years old, that many transformations occurred over billions of years, and that life has developed for many millions of years.

There are several ways to try to resolve these apparent discrepancies. Some deny the validity of the Bible and accept only what can be “scientifically proven.” Some relegate validity of the Bible only to “spiritual” matters and leave science to the scientists. Some deny all of science and accept only what is written in the Bible (as they literally interpret it). There are various shades of resolution in between these extremes.

In trying to bring harmony between the biblical account of creation and physical evidence, we may examine the literal meaning of the words in Genesis 1. The word “day” may not mean a twenty-four hour period, as we experience a day. After all, the sun is not mentioned until the fourth day. One rather useful sense of the word “day” refers to an undetermined period of time is as, for example, “in Abraham’s day.” Certainly, God’s day could be eons in length! In jest, here is an amusing calculation that illustrates how God’s day differs from ours. In 2 Peter 3:8, we read “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (KJV).” So one day is like 365,000 days and each of those days is like 1000 years (since the factor is mentioned
twice), making one day like 365 million years. The six days of God’s creative activity could thus literally be claimed to have lasted nearly two billion years, which is remarkably similar to what physical evidence seems to indicate.

Rather than focus on literal meaning of words, I believe we should examine the significance of the message of scripture. To me, the important message of Genesis 1-2 is that God created the entire universe by His own power, according to His divine plan and in an orderly fashion. I don’t think the six days were intended to be taken literally, but they speak to the orderliness of the process. We must bear in mind that ancient man had no means of comprehending billions of years, so six days of creation provided a symbolic picture of God’s creative process, which spoke adequately to him of God’s method. Now that we are able to express numbers in the billions, we can begin to comprehend the great patience with which God created the universe.

The order of the stages of creation presented in Genesis 1 is not the same as the order that seems to be apparent from physical evidence or logical reasoning. For example, it seems a bit strange that plants should be created before the sun, moon, and stars. This apparent contradiction does not hinder my belief in the message of Genesis, however. God, in His divine time frame, is not limited to a one-dimensional aspect of time, which marches only forward. We may think of God as having many different dimensions of time.

From His perspective, He can cause an event before or even after it happens. His order of events is not bound by our one-dimensional time frame! More significantly, I believe the message of the order of events presented in Genesis 1 is found in the two series of three progressions, from non-living to living: light, sky, plants, and then lights, creatures of sea and air, creatures of land. God is the source of light and life, both literally and figuratively. When we impose our modern, western standards of technical accuracy on the ancient, eastern style of writing, we may miss the message of the Bible.

God communicates to us through messengers, through His word and by His Holy Spirit influencing our hearts. But we can never fully comprehend His identity or invoke His name in a way that fully honors Him. We honor Him by obedient faith in God, whom we can never fully know in our mortal state (see Judges 13:15-21). Knowing, understanding, and observing God’s word is tantamount to successful living. By following God’s directions, the Israelites were able to conquer far more powerful peoples and occupy their land. Only by keeping God’s laws would they be able to remain fruitful in the land. Other peoples, who did not understand God’s laws, were not as blessed. Neither were they chosen as His people.
True wisdom and understanding do not come from human efforts alone. They do not reside in nature or the principles of the universe. They cannot be purchased, inherited, or gained by humankind’s efforts. True wisdom and understanding come only by the grace of God, as He allows us to gain insight through scripture, revelation from God’s Holy Spirit, instruction from godly teachers, and study on our part. All study is vain unless we depend on God (see Psalms 119:97-104).

Since Jesus also felt obliged to study God’s law and inquire into its meaning, we must be diligent to study, understand and obey God’s word in the scriptures (see Luke 2:41-52). Study of the scripture does not necessarily lead us to its real message, however. The Jewish scholars had thoroughly studied the scriptures, yet missed its message about Christ. Only if we study God’s word with our hearts open to its message and to the guidance of the Holy Spirit will we find the gospel message of salvation through faith in Jesus (see John 5:36-47).

I am certain that my interpretations of Genesis and many parts of the Bible will be disputed by others who have studied the Bible. There are sure to be elements of my theology that are wrong. In fact, I believe every interpretation of the Bible by man has flaws. If we could somehow distill every thought that anyone has had about God that is true and in keeping with God’s divine nature and formulate those thoughts into a coherent discourse on God, that discourse would fall far short of God’s glory. By nature, we all interpret the Bible and contemplate the nature of God according to our own limitations and biases. Since none of us has a perfect perception of God, we must not look down on anyone’s ideas about God or interpretation of the Bible. The good news of the gospel is that God loves us in spite of all our misinformed notions about Himself. The demand of the gospel is that we love each other in spite of all our mistakes and differences.

Therefore, I try not to inflict my own way of understanding the Bible on other people with undue force. I am eager to share my views in hope of inspiring others. I also try to appreciate the divine inspiration that comes through another person’s differing interpretation of scripture. One may find inspiration in accepting that there were six literal days of creation. God could certainly have created a 15 billion year-old universe in six days. I find greater personal inspiration in the thought that God exercised unimaginable patience by ordaining those six days to unfold for billions of years.

Some scientists try to circumvent the notion of a creator by proposing a theory in which the universe has no beginning point at all. That does not bother my faith, for God is old enough to have created a universe of infinite age! “From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:2, KJV). If we are to maintain effective fellowship with
other Christians and if we are to relate in a redemptive fashion with those outside the Christian faith, we must be accepting and understanding of a wide range of interpretations of scripture and world events.

Lest we fall into the trap of relativism in our faith, we need some standard by which to form an opinion regarding interpretation of scripture. I take the view that an interpretation of scripture is most nearly valid if it is consistent with the overall message of the Bible and if it inspires me in a divine manner. What may be inspiring to one person or age may not be so to another. God’s revelation is not static, nor carved in an idol of stone.

We must allow God’s dynamic message of scripture to speak differently to different people in different circumstances. Each of us has the responsibility and the privilege of experiencing God’s biblical message in ways that are tailored to meet our particular needs. That responsibility requires diligent study of the entire Bible and faith in the Holy Spirit to guide our understanding of its message. Living out the message of the Bible requires that we practice creative accommodation in the context of Christian fellowship.

If we ask for wisdom from God, He will grant the sort of wisdom that guards us against all kinds of enemies, both spiritual and physical. God’s wisdom keeps us from temptations of all kinds and helps us to discern the best path to take and the most just of relationships among our fellow human beings. God’s wisdom can even confound Satan and all those who oppose the cause of Christ. Sharing instruction from God’s wisdom will build a community of good will and peace. Therefore, we must seek God’s wisdom above all other reason. We should rely on His wisdom rather than our own or anyone else’s (see Proverbs 3:13-20).

It is my firm conviction that scientific study and biblical faith are intended to be employed together in our lives without contradiction. There is no area of legitimate study that will contradict faith, when pursued with integrity. While faith is not derived from scientific study or logical reasoning, many conclusions of science can serve to under-gird and reinforce our faith.

The heavens declare the glory of God; 
the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 
Psalms 19:1 NIV

A scientific explanation of creation reinforces my belief in an intelligent creator. The biologists’ description of the evolution of life deepens my reverence for the source and sustainer of life. Conversely, my faith in an omniscient creator motivates me to endeavor to explain
mysteries of matter and the universe. Someone has said, “Science with-
out faith is blind. Faith without science is lame” (a paraphrase of a
quote attributed to Albert Einstein). By relying both on faith that is
based on God’s biblical message and on scientific discoveries derived
from careful observation and skilled reasoning, we can live a life
blessed with both spiritual sight and intellectual vigor.
The Origins of Fundamentalism

I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to you all for being here, and especially to the department of religion for inviting me to give lectures named for the great Baptist ethicist, T. B. Maston. I feel honored to be here.

My subject is, as you see, Fundamentalism, and I want to begin with its origins. Fundamentalism began in America in the nineteenth century. Then, as now, the dominant religion in America was Christianity. The dominant expression of Christianity was Protestantism. And the dominant type of Protestantism was evangelicalism. Evangelical Protestants believe that it is necessary for every person to undergo a conversion in order to be a Christian, even those who are born into evangelical homes and grow up in evangelical churches. And evangelical Protestants believe that the principal component in the mission God has given to the church is missions and evangelism, including the evangelism of their own children.

So evangelical Protestants exercised a kind of dominance, a cultural hegemony, in America in the nineteenth century. But evangelical Protestants were far from a uniform or even a united group. In fact, throughout the nineteenth century they expended an enormous amount of time and energy on denominational polemics, arguing that ours is the true church and yours isn’t, and so on.

In the course of the nineteenth century four new clusters of ideas came on the scene that changed the nature of the evangelical hegemony. They were the Enlightenment, biblical criticism, biological evolution, and liberal theology.

The Enlightenment was a prominent stream of thought in Europe and the American colonies that began in the eighteenth century. Four characteristic ideas of the Enlightenment were individualism, reason, freedom, and progress. Enlightenment thinkers tended to have confidence that the principal human problems could be resolved if individu-
als would set aside their superstitions and think rationally about their world, and they tended also to think that progress was in fact being made toward a better world. They believed that continued progress was dependent in large measure on individuals being freed from all authorities to think and act for themselves; in practice this meant freedom from the authority of the state and the authority of the church. The drive for freedom from the authority of the state—which meant the divine right of kings to rule—gave us the American Revolution and the American experiment in participatory government. The drive for freedom from the authority of the church gave us the increasing skepticism that we associate with modernity.

Christians had always studied the Bible carefully, but it was not until the modern era that they began to do what is now called historical-critical study. This study is historical because it insists on trying to understand the meaning of biblical passages by asking what they would have meant in the historical context in which they were written. It is critical, not in the sense that it is necessarily negative, but in the sense that scholars do not merely learn what the Bible says but rather devise their own questions to put to the Bible and then ransack the Bible for answers to their questions.

Biological evolution is the teaching that life on planet Earth began a very long time ago, that the earliest forms of life were very simple, and that the forms of life became more and more complex across the ages.

Liberal theology took many forms, but all of them had in common that their authors intended to affirm the truths of the Christian religion in ways that would continue to be understandable and credible to people who had accepted the Enlightenment, the historical-critical study of the Bible, and biological evolution. In short, liberal theology was Christian theology accommodated to some of the principal ideas of modernity.

The arrival of these ideas in America was slow and piecemeal, but by the end of the 19th century large numbers of church members had come to feel that these new ideas constituted a serious threat to the church. They referred to these ideas as modernism or liberalism. They understood liberalism to be the thin edge of the wedge of secularism, unbelief.

I want to take a moment to point out a profound and sad irony here. Liberal theologians had accommodated Christian theology to modernity for the express purpose of helping modern people retain their Christian faith. Nevertheless, many Christians came to think that liberal theology had the opposite effect and was itself a grave threat to their Christian faith.
And they were determined to resist this threat. But how? One possibility was to work intellectually against the troubling ideas of modernity. The German Albert Schweitzer did this in his famous book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. He showed that the many biographies of Jesus written by liberals in the nineteenth century were in fact historical distortions, projections of the values of the writers onto the revered form of Jesus. The Swiss theologian Karl Barth resisted modernity in this way also. In his books he undermined liberal theologies by displaying the adequacy of the biblical message for the modern world.

There was another way to resist the threat of liberalism, and that was to get organized. This happened in America. Large numbers of Protestants deliberately set aside their denominational differences in order to form a united front against their common enemy, liberalism. That united front became known as the Fundamentalist movement.

The name is interesting. A series of twelve pamphlets, containing 90 articles, was published between 1910-1915 with the title *The Fundamentals*. Two California businessmen, Lyman and Milton Steward, arranged for three million copies of *The Fundamentals* to be distributed free to Christians leaders in America and abroad. Some of the articles were by classical Christian scholars such as James Orr and B. B. Warfield. Others were by traditionalists in various churches, including Southern Baptists such as E. Y. Mullins. Others were by persons associated with the new Bible institutes such as the Moody Bible Institute and the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (Biola). In an introduction to a facsimile edition of *The Fundamentals*, historian George Marsden has written that “*The Fundamentals* may have been quite literally the first shot in the fundamentalist controversies.”

The word *Fundamentalists* was coined five years later. On July 1, 1920, a Northern Baptist newspaper editor named Curtis Lee Laws coined the word *fundamentalists* to refer to himself and his friends who were ready, as he wrote, “to do battle royal for the Fundamentals.”

The words *Fundamentalism* and *Fundamentalist* became standard designations for the movement and its members. Initially they were not regarded as pejorative words; many people happily thought of themselves as Fundamentalists, as Laws had done.

In summary, the original Fundamentalism was a movement of traditional Protestants in the United States who set aside their denomina-

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tional differences in order to form a united front against a common enemy, liberalism, which they understood to be the thin edge of the wedge of secularism and therefore a serious threat to the Christian church. Fundamentalism began as a religious impulse. The impulse generated a movement. And the movement created a network of institutions that embodied the impulse.

**Developments in Fundamentalism**

Now I want to make four comments about the complex history of Fundamentalism. The first concerns its center of gravity. The conventional wisdom is that the original movement was southern, rural, and anti-intellectual, but that is wrong. In fact, the original movement was stronger in the north than in the south. It was stronger in urban than in rural areas. And its original leaders included towering intellectuals such as J. Gresham Machen. The two groups most affected by Fundamentalism were the Northern Baptists and the Northern Presbyterians. Fundamentalists attempted to make their views prevail in these denominations, but they failed. When that happened, many of them withdrew completely from the denominations and began to preach that the denominations were apostate; separation from liberalism then became a normal practice for many Fundamentalists.

My second comment is that the Fundamentalist coalition was so loose that no person or group in it had the authority to draw up a definitive list of the fundamentals they were all trying to defend. In fact, there were some major theological differences among Fundamentalists, and they were not just denominational differences. For example, many Fundamentalists believed in the inerrancy of the original manuscripts of the Bible; this appeal to the original manuscripts had been worked out by theologians at Princeton, but it was not a part of the heritage of the Bible institutes, and it was rejected by the author of the first article in *The Fundamentals*, James Orr.

Another major emphasis of many Fundamentalists was dispensational premillennialism; historian Ernest Sandeen has argued that this view of the end of the world, known today to millions of people through the *Left Behind* books, was definitive of the movement. But the Princeton theologians who worked out the theology of the original manuscripts of the Bible were not premillennialists.

Another emphasis in early Fundamentalism was a form of Christian living known as the deeper life and associated with the Keswick Movement in England. The Princeton theologians were opposed to the deeper life theology.
In summary, Fundamentalism was a loose coalition of persons with a variety of theologies and with no single person or group to provide a definitive account of the fundamentals.

My third comment concerns the conventional understanding of Fundamentalism as having five points. The complicated story of the five points has been told in the books by Ernest Sandeen and George Marsden. The bottom line is that in 1910 the General Assembly of the Northern Presbyterian Church endorsed five points of doctrine. They were:

- The inerrancy of the original manuscripts of the Bible
- The virgin birth of Christ
- The substitutionary atonement of Christ
- The bodily resurrection of Christ
- And the authenticity of the miracles recorded in the Bible.

During the 1920s the phrase *five fundamentals* was used sometimes to refer to these five doctrines, sometimes to refer to a slightly altered version that included the deity of Christ, and sometimes to refer to yet another version in which the premillennial return of Christ was substituted for the authenticity of the miracles.

It is important, in interpreting Fundamentalism, to recognize that it was a religious movement. It was a reaction to modernity, but its origins were religious; it was a religious reaction to modernity. As a religious movement, it included substantive theological beliefs. Fundamentalists are right to insist that those who study the movement pay attention to the theology. On the other hand, it also is important to recognize that Fundamentalism did not have a single, universally-accepted statement of the fundamentals.

My fourth comment concerns the course of Fundamentalism’s development. Fundamentalism began with a sense of entitlement to exercise hegemony in American life. Then, beginning in the 1920s, it suffered a series of major defeats. It failed to take control of any denomination. It was humiliated by the public’s response to its concerns about evolution as those were expressed at the Scopes trial in Dayton, Tennessee, in 1925. It was crushed by the repeal early in Franklin Roosevelt’s administration of the amendment to the Constitution prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages.

In the 1930s the character of Fundamentalism’s leadership began to change, passing from scholars such as J. Gresham Machen to Bible teachers and evangelists such as Bob Jones and John R. Rice. During that decade the movement effectively disappeared from public view, and many Americans assumed that, except for a few isolated pockets, it
had disappeared for good. In fact, it had not died away, but rather it was flourishing and creating a network and a subculture of its own.

In 1940s it gave birth to a gentler, more open movement which today is known simply as evangelicalism and is best represented by Billy Graham. Then, in 1979, Fundamentalism re-merged as a political power in American life with Jerry Falwell’s formation of the Moral Majority.

It is likely that Fundamentalism will continue to play an important role in American life, but it is very unlikely that it will dominate American life. In saying this, I am disagreeing with those who think that Fundamentalism is going to disappear, and also with those who think that Fundamentalism is going to take control of our country. I think that America is likely to remain religiously pluralistic, with Fundamentalism as one religious group among many, and with no one group exercising very much hegemony. We are all minorities now.

**Generic Fundamentalism**

Now I want to talk about fundamentalism in a more generic sense. For at least a quarter of a century it has been the practice of many commentators on religion to use the word *fundamentalists* to refer to certain persons not just in Christianity but also in Judaism, Hinduism, Confucianism, and other religions. For example, a number of news reporters described the terrorists who attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, as *Islamic fundamentalists*.

This usage is almost always negative, but it is so widespread that many people hearing the word *fundamentalists* assume that one is talking about terrorist extremists committed to using violence to achieve their ends. As a result of this connotation, Bob Jones III, the president of Bob Jones University, has announced that he will no longer refer to himself and his colleagues as *Fundamentalists*, even though he and his father and his grandfather and their colleagues had proudly called themselves by that name throughout most of the twentieth century.

Scholars have a different problem with the generic use of *fundamentalism*, namely, its vagueness. In the largest study of the subject we have, the five-volume set published as *The Fundamentalism Project*, editors Martin Marty and Scott Appleby discussed this matter carefully.³ In the end they decided to continue to use the word *fundamental-

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because some word is needed, because this word is already widely used, and because nothing else seemed better.

They said that some word is needed because there is a family resemblance between the movements found in the various religions, and because understanding the family resemblance is an important step in understanding the movements. The family resemblance includes several family traits which Marty and Appleby described, and I am going to draw on now on their description.

The first family trait of fundamentalism is that it is a religious impulse driving a religious movement. Fundamentalism cannot be understood in non-religious terms alone.

A second family trait is that fundamentalism is a reaction against the modern world. The reaction to modernity is essential to the character of fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is a kind of traditionalism, but it is not the only kind. Long before the modern world came into existence there were traditionalists in the various religions, but fundamentalism did not exist then because the modern world had not yet emerged. Today there are in the various religions forms of traditionalism that are not fundamentalist, because they maintain their traditions with little or no effort to oppose modernity.

Moreover, fundamentalists do not reject everything about the modern world. They are selective about what they reject and what they accept. For example, some Islamic fundamentalists use a modern technology, the Internet, to communicate their opposition to a modern idea, that women should participate in public life as fully as men do.

A third family trait is that fundamentalists react to modernity by fighting against it. There are, of course, other ways for traditionalists to respond to modernity. For example, they can withdraw from modern society, as the Amish do. Or they can ignore modernity, as some Catholics do; Malcolm Muggeridge once commented that it was a matter of complete indifference to him whether the Earth went around the sun or the sun around the Earth.

Fundamentalists neither withdraw from nor ignore modernity; they fight it. They are co-belligerents whose common enemy is the modern world. And they fight it for this reason, that they perceive the modern world as a threat to their corporate and personal identity. Fundamentalists believe that their faith and their community could be destroyed by what Walter Lippmann called “the acids of modernity.”

Fundamentalists characteristically speak of their fight against modernity in dramatic terms. They embrace a natural inclination we all feel to assume that, when we have explained our views clearly, those who still do not agree with us either did not understand us or else are
just being stubborn. In other words, if you do not agree with me, you are either stupid or evil.

Many of us in the modern world have come to believe that this is a mistake and that it is a sign of maturity to recognize that sometimes very intelligent, very decent people sincerely disagree with our deeply held views. Fundamentalists tend not to see it this way. They characteristically assume that their enemies’ unbelief is a moral betrayal. This is an assumption that can lead to anger towards the enemies.

A fourth family trait is that fundamentalists are selective about the aspects of their tradition which they retain. They don’t retain everything. For example, the Hebrew Scriptures describe a world in which patriarchy, polygamy, and slavery were all widely practiced. Jewish fundamentalists today retain patriarchy but not polygamy or slavery.

A fifth family trait is that “in the process of interpreting the tradition, evaluating modernity, and selectively retrieving salient elements of both, charismatic and authoritarian male leaders play a central role.”

A sixth family trait is that fundamentalism includes a vision of history. Fundamentalists remember the past as better than the present. They see the present as a time of crisis. They see the future as a time when their religion will be victorious. They usually reject concepts such as progress which are important in modern histories.

A seventh family trait of fundamentalism is that fundamentalists set unequivocal boundaries between true believers and outsiders. It is not unusual for fundamentalists to take extreme steps that effectively separate believers from unbelievers; we all remember the events of 9/11. To outsiders these extreme steps make no sense, but from the point of view of fundamentalists they make perfect sense: the religious community sees itself as fighting for its life against modernity, and the only way to survive is to keep the insiders inside and the outsiders outside. They see it as risky even to associate with outsiders for fear of contamination.

Finally, fundamentalists have as their goal replacing the offensive elements in modernity with their own religious faith. They are not working toward a peaceful co-existence with liberalism, but toward exercising hegemony. Marty and Appleby call this the totalitarian impulse in fundamentalism.

These are eight of the family traits shared by fundamentalist movements in the various religions. Taken together, they constitute what Max Weber called an ideal type. Even when some fundamental-

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Marty and Appleby, I: 826.
ists lack one or another of these traits, a family resemblance may be apparent.

The Theology of the Original Fundamentalists

Now I want to return to the original Protestant Fundamentalists in America and to talk about their theology. Theology is a subject that is dear to the hearts of Fundamentalists, and it is dear to me also. As the name suggests, Fundamentalists made efforts to identify the fundamentals of the Christian faith. In my judgment, their efforts were not very successful; the fundamentals of the Christian faith were not presented in a balanced way in Fundamentalism.

The origin of the imbalance is the Fundamentalists’ battle against liberalism. Fundamentalism bore within itself not only the Christian tradition but also the marks of its war against liberalism, and that war distorted the Fundamentalist presentation of the Christian faith.

Often what Fundamentalists assert as fundamentals are, in fact, not fundamentals at all, but rather strategic outposts which Fundamentalists had set up to aid them in their battle against liberals. Here are some examples. Fundamentalists affirmed the inerrancy of the original manuscripts of the Bible, but surely the fundamental thing is not the nonexistent original manuscripts but rather the Bible as we now have it in modern translations—this Bible is the Word of God to the church today. Fundamentalists affirmed the virgin birth of Christ, but surely the fundamental thing is that Jesus of Nazareth was the Incarnation of the Son of God. Fundamentalists affirmed the substitutionary understanding of Jesus’ death, but surely the fundamental thing is that Jesus died and rose again to save the world, however one may understand that. Fundamentalists affirmed a detailed scenario for events at the end of the world, dispensational premillennialism, but surely the fundamental thing is that the future of the world is in God’s hands and God will bring the world to its appropriate end in God’s own time and way.

Sometimes the imbalance in Fundamentalist theology is extreme. For example, the original 90 pamphlets called The Fundamentals included articles defending the idea that the book of Isaiah was written by just one man; some historical-critical scholars thought they could identify more than one author of that great book. On the other hand, The Fundamentals did not contain any articles elaborating the Christian belief that the one true God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In my judgment, it doesn’t matter very much how many men wrote Isaiah; I consider it part of God’s Word, whether there were one or two or three authors. But it matters very much that in some wonderful and mysterious way, the one true God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
In other words, as strange as it may sound, Fundamentalism was not fundamental enough. We need a better guide to the fundamentals of the Christian faith than we get from Fundamentalism. Just as war is too important to be left to the generals, so the fundamentals of our faith are too important to be left to Fundamentalists.

**Attitudes Associated with Fundamentalism**

Fundamentalism is characterized not only by its theology and its conflict with liberalism, but also by its attitudes. It was the attitudes which led to the reformation of Fundamentalism now known as evangelicalism. In the 1940s Fundamentalist leaders such as the evangelist Charles Fuller, the Congregationalist pastor Harold John Ockenga, the journalist Carl F. H. Henry, and the philosopher and theologian E. J. Carnell came to feel that Fundamentalism needed to be reformed. These men and others like them accepted all of the theology of Fundamentalism, and they also agreed with Fundamentalism’s fight against liberalism. But they also felt that the movement itself had developed problems which needed to be corrected.

For example, E. J. Carnell said that across the years Fundamentalism had become anti-intellectual, divisive, mean-spirited, and socially irresponsible.\(^5\) Carnell called on his fellow Christians to avoid these attitudes.

He said that Christians should commit themselves to serious intellectual work; when he became president of Fuller Theological Seminary, he said that it was his hope to build a “Harvard of the west.” He recognized, of course, that intellectual work sometimes misleads Christians, but he pointed out that ignorance does, too. The ideal, he thought, was to be both a faithful and a thoughtful Christian.

The divisiveness of Fundamentalism is more complicated. The Christian church was divided long before the arrival of Fundamentalism. The church split in the eleventh century and then splintered in the sixteenth century and afterwards. We Protestants think that the church is better off because of the Reformation, despite the divisions it caused, which means that we think that divisions are sometimes justified.

On the other hand, Christians believe in the unity of the church, too. The prayer of Jesus in John 17 speaks deeply to us all. So, the questions to be asked about Fundamentalism are these: Does it tend to

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be more divisive than other expressions of Christian faith? And are the divisions sponsored by Fundamentalism necessary and constructive, or unnecessary and therefore destructive?

Concerning the first question, the divisions made by Fundamentalist are principled; that is, they are the result of the conviction of Fundamentalists that God calls the covenant people to come out from denominations that tolerate theological and moral errors. In Fundamentalism this is called separationism, and it is discussed with great care. For example, many Fundamentalists practice not only primary separation—cutting ties with liberals—but also secondary separation—cutting ties both with liberals and with any Fundamentalists who have failed to cut their ties with liberals. It was Billy Graham’s failure to practice separation that led Fundamentalists to criticize Graham so harshly. They knew that he shared their theology, but he invited liberals and Catholics and others to sponsor his evangelistic campaigns and to sit on the platform with him, and that was unacceptable to conscientious Fundamentalists.

It seems to me fair to say that, in view of this belief in secondary separation, which many Fundamentalists hold to be biblical, Fundamentalism is more divisive than many other expressions of Christian faith.

As for the second question, whether the divisions of Fundamentalism are necessary and constructive or unnecessary and destructive, the answer differs depending on whether one is or is not affiliated with Fundamentalism. From a Fundamentalist’s point of view, their separation is necessary because it is biblical, and so it is constructive; from a non-Fundamentalist’s point of view, their separation is not required by the Bible and so is unnecessary and destructive.

Carnell’s third criticism was that Fundamentalism had become mean-spirited. As we have seen, a defining characteristic of Fundamentalism is its opposition to liberalism, and within Fundamentalism that opposition came to be understood as a militant one. For example, one of the great historians of Fundamentalism, George W. Dollar, himself a devout Fundamentalism, has proposed this definition:

*Historic Fundamentalism is the literal exposition of all of the affirmations and attitudes of the Bible and the militant exposure of all non-Biblical affirmations and attitudes.*

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The commitment to militancy can lead, of course, to mean-spiritedness. In fact, the call for militancy provides a justification for mean-spiritedness. What happened is that, in many though not all Fundamentalist circles, mean-spiritedness came to be a positive sign that one is truly a believer and truly an opponent of the enemies of the Christian faith. Mean-spiritedness has been a problem for Fundamentalists.

On the other hand, mean-spiritedness is distributed across the theological spectrum, and many Fundamentalists have been treated meanly, so no one’s hands are entirely clean here. Even E. J. Carnell, in criticizing Fundamentalists for being mean-spirited, wrote things such as “Fundamentalism is orthodoxy gone cultic.” One of the problems we all face as we attempt to write about things of which we disapprove is that we may ourselves begin to incorporate those things into our writing.

Carnell’s fourth criticism of Fundamentalism was that it evaded its social responsibilities. In fact, some Fundamentalists had engaged social issues. For example, in 1925 Fundamentalists opposed the teaching of evolution in public schools in Dayton. In 1928 they opposed the candidacy of Roman Catholic Al Smith for the presidency. Throughout the 1920s they supported the enforcement of the prohibition amendment.

What, then, can Carnell have meant by saying that Fundamentalism was socially irresponsible? Apparently he meant that there were important social issues which Fundamentalists were not addressing, and about this he was correct. The obvious example is racial segregation; the impulse to eliminate segregation did not come from Fundamentalists, and some Fundamentalists, most famously, Bob Jones University, supported racial segregation as a matter of principle.

There is therefore some truth in Carnell’s claims that Fundamentalism had been anti-intellectual, divisive, mean-spirited, and socially irresponsible, so it is not surprising that many people today use the word fundamentalism not to refer to a particular group but to refer to anyone who has any of these attitudes. One even hears occasionally a reference to a fundamentalist liberal, by which is meant a person whose theology is liberal but who shares attitudes such as mean-spiritedness or divisiveness which have come to be associated with Fundamentalism.

**Conclusion**

Across almost two millennia the Christian faith has been expressed in a variety of forms. One of these is Fundamentalism. People whose Christian faith takes other forms often refuse to acknowledge that Fun-
damentalists are Christians at all, and Fundamentalists naturally return the compliment. In my judgment, this is a mistake on both their parts. I believe that it is important for those of us who are not Fundamentalists to be respectful of Fundamentalists. Christians should never be contemptuous of those with whom they disagree. It is regrettable that many people in America today feel contempt for Fundamentalism.

Of course, many people have been hurt by Fundamentalism and have become embittered by their experiences. Sadly, some of them have even lost their Christian faith. I want to mention two people who were hurt by Fundamentalists but who retained their faith and who have written helpfully about their experience. One is Philip Yancy, whose book is entitled *Soul Survivor*. The other is Randall Balmer, whose book is entitled *Growing Pains: Learning to Love My Father’s Faith*.

Many people are frightened by Fundamentalism. You can see this in a novel by Margaret Atwood entitled *The Handmaid’s Tale*. Many Christians, who themselves have not been hurt by Fundamentalism and who are not frightened by it, are nevertheless made uneasy by it. They recognize the sincerity of the faith of Fundamentalists, and this makes them wonder if they themselves are really good Christians. They say, “I’m trusting in the Lord and I’m trying to follow Jesus, but my faith is not as intense as the faith of Fundamentalists. Could it be that I’m not a real Christian?”

It is very important for these people to know that Fundamentalism is not the only expression of genuine Christian faith. You can express genuine faith in the Lord by living a life of humility, kindness, gentleness, patience, and compassion; you don’t have to conduct a militant campaign against those with whom you disagree in order to be a faithful Christian.

One of the great challenges facing the church today is finding ways for Fundamentalists and non-Fundamentalists to coexist without constant and destructive conflict that undermines the credibility of the gospel. Having a better understanding of each other is a first step. Learning to respect each other is a second. Somebody needs to do it. Why not us? Why not now?
Good morning! I am Jae-Shik Shin, from Korea, and I am very happy to have a chance to talk about my school and to encourage you to study abroad.

First, I would like to introduce you briefly to my school. My school, Honam Theological University and Seminary, is a Presbyterian institution. It is one of Carson-Newman’s sister schools, established by Presbyterian missionaries to educate local church leaders. Most of them came from South Carolina and North Carolina.

My university consists of three parts, undergraduate, a graduate school, and seminary. The seminary is our major program, which has about five hundred seminarians. The undergraduate program has three majors—theology, music, and social welfare. If you are interested in visiting Korea, or spending a semester, or a year in my school, please contact the Center for Global Education. You will have a wonderful experience in Korea.

Now I want to talk about some advantages of studying abroad, based on my personal experience. After I became a full time faculty member, I encouraged my students to study abroad. My experience of studying in the United States had been very special for me. There are many advantages of studying in a foreign country.

Let me tell you about studying abroad. I think that to study abroad is to be a person in the frontier. When you are studying abroad, you are on the margin between your home country and your visiting country. However, to become a marginal person is not such a happy experience.

You have a feeling of alienation and separation. When nobody talks to you, you may say, “I want to go home.” Of course, you may feel that way, but only a few times. What we should remember is that the feeling of separation is not limited to exchange students. You may have a feeling of separation in this wonderful community, even at Carson-Newman!

In spite of some difficulties, as a teacher and ordained pastor, I found many more advantages of studying abroad. I think that studying abroad gives you a chance to find out who you are. You can find your
true identity. What am I talking about? You may say with confidence, “Dr. Shin, I know who I am.” Yes! Everyone believes that he or she knows himself or herself well, but that belief may not be true.

I found my identity after I came to this country. I was on the line between Korea and the United States. I found myself on the margin where two cultures encounter each other. The western culture was in front of me, and Korean culture behind me. Only after meeting with the western culture did I find what being a Korean is. I found the uniqueness of being a Korean. I found the differences between a Korean heritage and that of America. I could understand both Korean tradition and American tradition. I could distinguish American culture from Korean culture. I could compare “a Korean way” and “an American way.” I recognized my true identity during my studying abroad. Now, more than before, I know who I am.

As I found my identity, my viewpoint was getting wider and wider. My perspective is beyond that of Korea and also beyond that of America. When I talked about this, my mentor called it a “trans-pacific perspective.” It bridges my perspective of East and West. In a sense, it is a kind of global vision. This encounter of different cultures produces a creative result. When you digest two cultures, you can produce your own creative ideas. When you study in a foreign country, you have more possibility to be a creative person.

During your studying abroad, you will find who you are, you will have a global vision, and you will be a creative person. For these reasons, as a professor, I sincerely encourage you to consider studying abroad.

As an ordained pastor, I would like to explain another advantage, which is more meaningful for me. During my study as a foreign student, I found one of the essential teachings of Gospel, which I did not fully recognize in Korea. I always had belonged to the majority in Korea. However, when I came to this country, I found myself a minority, a marginal person, and an outsider. This experience made me reconsider who Jesus Christ is, and what Jesus did.

Jesus became a humble human being. He did not come to us as a King in Jerusalem. Rather he willingly stayed with marginal people, sinners, and outsiders. Jesus himself was a marginal person. Jesus tried to connect and reconcile us with God on the margin. That is the way that Jesus chose.

As a Christian, we always want to be like Jesus and follow him. When I was on the margin, I could understand more clearly who Jesus was, and what he did. It was an unexpected gift, which I had during my study abroad. I believe that where Jesus stayed is an authentic location of Christianity.
Do you want to find your true identity? Do you want to have a global vision? Do you want to be a more creative person? Do you want to experience the caring of God? Do you want to be an authentic Christian? Then, consider studying abroad, experiencing other cultures, and meeting different people, seriously. Thank you very much!
Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients

Charles W. Camp (C-N ’60)

2004-05 Distinguished Alumnus

Introduction

Uniquely embodying the Christian principles fostered by Carson-Newman College, Charles W. Camp is named 2004-05 Distinguished Alumnus for his acclaimed ministry and for his abiding loyalty to his alma mater.

Because of early difficult circumstances, Mr. Camp raised in two children’s homes. Rather than allowing these experiences negatively to direct his life, he used them to grow into the deeply compassionate person he is and into one who would ultimately spend a lifetime in service to children in the name of Jesus Christ.

A graduate of Chattanooga’s Tyner High School, Mr. Camp entered Carson-Newman in 1953, completing his studies in psychology and sociology in 1960, after an interruption by a stint in the United States Army (1955-57). At Carson-Newman, he was active in Columbian Literary Society and esteemed for his enthusiasm, humor, integrity and honor. Lacking funds to pay his graduation fees, he left without his diploma. Thirty-five years later, as a gift from his wife, the fees were paid; and he walked across the stage to receive his diploma with a host of his college contemporaries present. Postgraduate studies have included management courses and a master’s degree in counseling and psychology.

As a United States Army soldier, he and a friend launched a project to assist 200 orphans fathered by American soldiers, raising $4,000 worth of food, clothing and toys. Mr. Camp was recognized in the Stars and Stripes, various U. S. and German publications, and chronicled in a movie featured on CBS-TV. He was aptly called “man with the golden heart.”

This “man with a golden heart” has devoted his life to the mission of Boys Club of America. Founding director of the Morristown, Tennessee, and Dothan, Alabama, clubs, Mr. Camp served as executive
director in Nashville, regional administrator in Atlanta and Washington, D.C., and again as executive director in Dothan. He was named “Young Man of the Year” by the Morristown Jaycees and “Outstanding Field Services Staff Member; was instrumental in breaking racial barriers within Boys Clubs; functioned as the national organization’s liaison with the United States Congress and the White House; and served on the regional board with former President Richard Nixon. The testimonies and productive lives of his Boys Club “sons,” however, will be his eternal tributes.

Dedicated deacon, Sunday School teacher, Baptist Young Men’s leader in First Baptist Church, he is also active in Rotary, United Way, and a courageous advocate for integrity in city government—in short, he is a stalwart force for good in Dothan.

He and wife, Marie, have two children, three grandchildren, and numerous “children” who have come under their wings through Boys Clubs and international exchange experiences. Member of Carson-Newman’s Steeple Society, his devotion is best expressed in his own words: “I am what I am, because Carson-Newman College made the difference in my life.” For his Christian witness, the difference he has made in the lives of so many, and the honor he brings to his alma mater, Mr. Camp is Distinguished Alumnus.

Response

Frank Davis from Memphis, Tennessee, finished here in 1954. He and other Camp Ocoee cabin counselors before him introduced me to Carson-Newman College. This happened while I lived at The Bonny Oaks School in Chattanooga, Tennessee. At ten, eleven, twelve, and thirteen years old, I was among a group of “underprivileged” boys invited each year to this YMCA facility in Benton, Tennessee.

While I cannot affirm with absolute certainty how or when it happened, I do know at some point during my undergraduate experience here, I came to the realization that we who profess Christ as Savior must commit to doing what we can, when we can, where we can, and for whomever we can.

During recent weeks, there has been ample opportunity for me to think about the Carson-Newman motto. What I have concluded is part is this: TRUTH, GOODNESS, BEAUTY—it is the essence of all that counts for eternity.

Eighteen years old; minus the typical home/family tie; fun-loving; a bit devilish; agreeable with peers; angry and in denial; longing for validation; afraid of proving myself unworthy; and eager for redemp-
ition—this was I, as I presented to Carson-Newman College unannounced in the Fall of 1953.

Few will remember that I came to Jefferson City, from Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. At Duke, I had just been elected President of the freshman class. Though restless and somewhat naïve, I believed Carson-Newman was exactly RIGHT for me. This special place afforded students a quality Christian liberal arts education at a reasonable price. The students, faculty, and administration of Carson-Newman (with an enrollment then of 700 plus) graciously received me. On this campus, I was equal to all other students. I felt secure. I was at peace. For the first time since finishing High School in May, I was content. No, I was supremely HAPPY!

To me it did not matter that I was among the recognized elite at Duke. Being a BMOC (Big Man on Campus) was not my destiny. Deep within an empty soul, there was a profound yearning for me to be at Carson-Newman College—a place I had dreamed about as a youngster at Camp Ocoee. Frank Davis may well have been the persuasive Student Representative who taught me these words from a favorite old hymn, “How Firm a Foundation:”

Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;
I’ll strengthen and help thee, and cause thee to stand
Upheld by MY righteous, omnipotent hand.

Sometimes when life has been unbalanced and my spirit broken or near broken, I have been restored by these inspired and comforting words.

Dr. Fite was President when I walked these hallowed grounds. He was special—special to me and special to other less-privileged students. His devotion to family, faculty, staff, and students was spontaneous and sincere; his Christian role modeling was natural; his kind and gentle demeanor was real; his quiet presence was nurturing and reassuring; and Baptists near and far acknowledged his allegiance to institutional integrity.

Called on this very campus for a “Home Missions” ministry and fortified with a “firm foundation”, I remain indebted to a Faculty and Staff Members who prepared me for a forty years career with America’s economically deprived children/youth. They are: Dr. Bass, Dr. Chapman, Dr. Miles, Dr. Harris, Dr. Cook, Dr. Turner, Dr. Brasher, Miss Huggins, Mr. Sloan, Coach “Frosty” Holt, Mrs. Ruben, John Billington, Kathleen Manley, and Pearl McHan. All of these gifted and giving saints were Carson-Newman CLASSICS!
My four and five years old dormitory charges at the Atlanta Childs’ Home in Atlanta, GA when I was but six years old; younger boys and girls who shared the Bonny Oaks experience with me in the 40s and 50s; the 210 orphan babies in Karlsruhe, Germany, fathered by American soldiers and birthed by German mothers; the 300 or so boys from Morristown’s poverty-pocket in 1958; and the 25,000 other “Little Ones” I have been privileged to provide for through Boys and Girls Clubs. To the best of my ability at the time, I received each of these as a gift, and I affirmed each one as created in God’s very own image.

To be sure, their individual need and their potential for success helped sustain me through some stressful times. Fortunately, there were many more joyful times. This evening I want to reinforce a statement I have made numerous times the past 52 years: “No doubt about it, there was divine purpose in my being so warmly received into the Carson-Newman family. I am what I am because Carson-Newman College made the difference in my life.”

In the mid-50s, I lived here with some of you. Together we were encouraged to grow in Christian principles; prepare for service to others; and to incorporate learning as a life-long endeavor. When asked to summarize my work and witness through Boys and Girls Clubs, I usually respond with heartfelt praise for Carson-Newman. I readily acknowledge Carson-Newman’s influence and teachings; and then I will share three declarations of faith as follows:

1st There is a haunting restlessness among God’s children for daily fellowship with the Savior.
2nd Within the Gospels, there is an undeniable inclusiveness that accentuates the Brotherhood of all humankind.
3rd One’s redemptive process is best witnessed at Calvary.

TRUTH—GOODNESS—BEAUTY: Yes, these are truly beautiful words! They are, however, more than words for those of us who love this magnificent Baptist institution. The TRUTH of his birth, death and resurrection calls each of us to repentance. The GOODNESS of his own, leads the least, the last, and the lost to fullness of life. The BEAUTY of believers who depart this holy place serves unreservedly for the betterment of people in all corners of the globe.

This has been oh so special for Marie and me—a mountain top experience for sure! Thank you sincerely for every kind word spoken and every kindness extended. This setting and all of you remain in my heart and mind forever

TO GOD BE THE GLORY!
Charles W. Gibbs, (C-N ’91)

2004-05 Outstanding Young Alumnus

Introduction

Recognized for the stewardship of his God-given gifts, his early professional achievements and Christian acts of service, as well as the contributions he will yet make to society, Charles W. Gibbs is honored as 2004-05 Outstanding Young Alumnus.

Born in Mobile, Alabama, he grew up in Birmingham, Middle and East Tennessee. Enrolling in Carson-Newman in 1987, Charles graduated magna cum laude in 1991, with the Bachelor of Music in Music Education. As an undergraduate, he was a Presidential Scholar, recipient of the Theodore Presser Scholarship, named Outstanding Graduate in Music, president of Phi Mu Alpha, member of Phi Kappa Lambda and Mortar Board, the Carson-Newman band and A Cappella Choir. Though accepted for graduate studies in music at Northwestern University, he followed his desire to prepare for Christian ministry and instead attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Talented in music, desirous to serve in Christian ministry, yet feeling a call to medicine, he, in time, determined to pursue his dream of a career in medicine. After completing required foundational undergraduate studies for medical school and achieving high marks in the preparation, he enrolled in the University of Tennessee College of Medicine, earning the Doctor of Medicine in 1998. As a medical student, Dr. Gibbs remained active in Christian music ministry and volunteer service to charitable organizations, including the American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

While completing his internship and residency in obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Missouri/Truman Medical Center/St. Luke’s Hospital, Dr. Gibbs held leadership roles in the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG); was instrumental in forming task forces to investigate and improve the medical delivery systems to under-served, at-risk women in urban areas; received the ACOG District VII Outstanding Research Award and the James Thorp Award for Research Excellence. Dr. Gibbs’ medical career experience includes service on the faculty of the University of Missouri (Kansas City), private practice in which he mostly attended high-risk indigent
obstetrical patients, and medical director for the Kansas City Women’s Clinic.

Charles W. Gibbs, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., currently is a Maternal-Fetal Medicine Fellow at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis; continues to practice Christian ministry through care for at-risk pregnancies in an indigent patient population; and nurtures and uses his musical talents and training through service to others and for personal renewal. He and his wife Katherine N. Florendo, M.D., and their two young daughters are happily back in Tennessee. They are members of First Baptist, Memphis, and also involved in Church of the Holy Communion Episcopal, where their elder daughter attends school. As one who is a responsible steward of his talents and understands the healing power in both the arts and sciences, Charles W. Gibbs, Outstanding Young Alumnus, stands among the elite of young Carson-Newman alumni.

Response

I am honored to be nominated and selected as an Outstanding Young Alumnus. I have always been proud to have Carson-Newman as my Alma Mater; it is humbling and gratifying to know that my Alma Mater is apparently proud of me as well.

When I graduated from Carson-Newman College in 1991, I was certain that I would finish Seminary with my Doctorate in Vocal Pedagogy and teach voice or chorus in the college setting. Sure enough, thirteen years later, I am an obstetrician and still in training. Truly, as the old Jewish saying goes, “Man plans and God laughs.”

I do not want to take up time explaining the meandering path that led from Seminary student to High-Risk Obstetrics Fellow. Instead, I would like to relate why I would not change anything about my undergraduate or graduate experience, even if I could.

When I was visiting colleges as a high-school senior, Carson-Newman fulfilled all my requirements as a prospective student and music major. It was a small school with beautiful facilities, a strong music department with well-known professors and a marching band, a championship football program, and freshman could have cars on campus. Because of the size of the school and my major, I was able to experience all the “musts” of the Carson-Newman experience: English with Dr. Turner, Conducting with Dr. Ball, Lyric Theatre, “mini-term, and other enriching aspects of this close-knit community.

What I remember most about Carson-Newman, though, are the friends I made here. My college roommate is still a good friend, and other than my wife, still the person I consider my best friend. We were
both music majors and spent time in class, in concert, and in student
教学 together. I still correspond with several members of Seed
Company from those years, and those trips, concerts and experiences I
will never forget. Several of my professors have contacted me via email
and letters over the years.

Although my career and goals have changed since graduation, my
studies at Carson-Newman remain valuable and relevant to my work
today. As a Music Education major, emphasis was directed not only to
performance, but also to education. Many of the required classes ex-
posed me to the theories and fundamentals of learning. As an academic
physician, my primary responsibility is teaching. I am charged with
educating patients, medical students, residents, and other practicing
physicians in the ever-changing world of medicine. Skills I developed
in teaching 5th graders to hold and play a trumpet correctly still come
into play as I attempt to instill not only knowledge, but also the enthusi-
asim for learning in young physicians.

Music continues to enrich my life. As a father, I understand the
importance of a broad, balanced education for my children, and the
benefits of early involvement in the arts. Both my children have been
exposed to music from an early age. I understand that having music in
their lives will not only make them happier, but also will broaden their
minds and make them more open to new challenges and learning ex-
periences. As a professional in a field where excitement and joy can
sometimes be mixed with sadness and heartbreak, I find that no art re-
vives, rejuvenates and inspires like music. I firmly believe that what is
now my avocation makes my vocation not only possible, but also much
more enjoyable.

As public education becomes more and more secular, and as God
is forced inexorably from public life, it is increasingly vital that Faith-
based higher learning be preserved. My scientific education in medi-
cine has not been hindered or challenged (as some would have us be-
lieve is inevitable) by my belief in God. On the contrary, the power and
majesty of creation is revealed to me every day as I learn about the path
from conception to birth and the marvelous process that God set in mo-
tion. Each time a baby is born, he or she is a living testimony that we
are indeed “fearfully and wonderfully made.”

My daughter attends a Christian school, and her younger sister will
as well. As my wife, who attended the same school can attest, their
academic expectations will be the highest imaginable, and yet they will
also learn about a Power greater than themselves and a Love that is
never ending. It is essential, then, that Christian education and faith-
based centers of higher learning continue to flourish here in America;
children and young adults must be reminded of the source of all knowl-
edge and wisdom as they seek to obtain it and apply it in their personal and professional lives. I hope that my children and the children of this community will continue to be served by this great college, and that it will continue to stand for academic excellence in a Christian environment in the years to come.

Once again, it is an honor to receive this award. I will continue to strive to be worthy of it. Thank you.
Since ancient times, humans have been fascinated with the possibility of invisibility. As the scientist, Griffin, proclaims in H. G. Wells’ *The Invisible Man*, “An invisible man is a man of power” (42). Seen by no one and with small chance of being caught, the invisible man may do as he pleases, whether good or evil. This paper will examine the concept of invisibility in literature and explore its effect on morality and the human condition. The literary works used in this study will be the fable of Gyges, Plato’s *Republic*, *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien, and *The Invisible Man* by H. G. Wells.

Glaucon, the teller of the Gyges fable in the *Republic*, recounts the story to argue that immorality is by nature stronger than morality. Anyone, given the opportunity, will enjoy the fruits of immorality. If just persons receive Gyges’ ring, a ring of invisibility, Glaucon asks, what will possibly keep them just? Such persons could “go about among men with the powers of a god” (Plato 45). Glaucon wants to explore the nature of immorality, when all possible punitive consequences for immorality are removed (Davis par. 27).

The tale of Gyges, a fable in which the unseen and therefore unjust man is the hero, is something of a rags-to-riches story—albeit the riches are ill gotten. According to the *Republic*, Gyges is a shepherd working for the king when a sudden earthquake opens a chasm near his flock. Curious, Gyges explores the chasm and finds, among other strange sights, a naked corpse wearing a golden ring. Gyges takes the ring and leaves (44).

Later, at a meeting of the king’s shepherds, Gyges fidgets with the ring and eventually turns its bezel toward himself. He finds that his fellow shepherds have begun to speak as if he were no longer sitting with them; the ring makes him invisible. When he turns the bezel outwards again, he becomes visible. Using his newfound ability, he eventually seduces the queen, kills the king, and usurps the kingdom (45). His invisibility allows him to use underhanded techniques to become
more than he had ever expected—and with no apparent ill conse-
quences.

According to the Republic’s Gyges fable, morality has no appeal
 without the human desire to avoid punishment. Morality as repre-
sented in the fable exists only as a myth—humans will do wrong if
given the chance, i.e., without the likelihood of suffering punishment
upon being caught in their wrongs. The moral only sacrifice their im-
moral desires in order to gain the security that a system of morality
offers (44). Though they praise the contrived system of security, all
face the temptation to grant their own wishes through easier, unjust
means (Davis par. 2). Most people are simply too weak or too fearful
of being punished to actualize their inner desires for immorality

Gyges, freed by his invisibility from the serious results of igno-
rng the common system of morality, allows his appetites for power
and wealth to rule his actions. His actions show that even an ordinarily
just man will become immoral once he has the power to evade the
normal consequences of immoral actions—in Gyges’ case, the power
of invisibility (Plato 44). Unjust actions and blatant immorality, cou-
pled with the ability to avoid unwanted consequences, procure Gyges
all that he wants much more effectively than working as a common,
rule-abiding shepherd ever could (45). The practice of immorality
comes to him naturally once he finds an escape from the fetters of
society’s moral code.

A key theme of the fable is the empowerment that Gyges’ immor-
alty brings. The ring of invisibility lifts Gyges beyond the standards
of acceptable behavior embraced by his society. Invisibility allows
weak adherers to law to have sudden power, and thus “the fulfillment
of no desire denied them” (Davis par. 27). Gyges’ positions at the be-

ingin and end of his story serve as a physical example of the shift of
power given by invisibility: a lowly shepherd ends his journey as king,
and a law-abiding citizen finds himself above the law (par. 25). He has
the queen, the throne, and the power to procure more of the same in
his hands—or literally, on his finger.

Gyges’ newfound supremacy not only expresses the power of
immorality, but also shows man’s natural proclivity toward immorality
when given the opportunity to do so. The story’s main aim is to give
an example of how strong immorality is within every human while
arguing that morality is only a convention that makes its adherers
weak (par. 4).

An indication of every man’s natural inclination toward immoral-
ity is the manner in which the ring grants invisibility: Gyges turns the
bezel of the ring toward himself so that the ring’s front is facing Gy-
ges’ inner being (par. 26). When he commits crimes as an invisible
man, as the ring is facing his soul, Gyges indicates that he is by nature immoral; he simply never had the capacity to act according to his true nature before invisibility provided the opportunity for unrestrained crime.

In his fable exploring immorality, Glaucon ends with Gyges as a wealthy, and presumably happy, king; however, he does not explore the implications of Gyges’ actions. One main argument against the power of immorality is that human beings with consciences would become unhappy disobeying their inner compulsions to adhere to a moral code (Nielsen 484). Modern interpreter Kai Nielsen makes the case that Gyges would need a “moral tranquilizer” to deaden his nagging conscience, if he truly wished to enjoy his power (485). The conscience, Nielsen asserts, will not allow an invisible, immoral man to live at peace with himself.

Glaucon actually introduces another potential problem for Gyges through a detail in the story. Gyges finds the ring on a corpse. The last owner of the ring died alone with the ring; it was not handed down to another owner, despite its great power. The death of its bearer shows that the ring “leaves the greatest human problem unsolved” (Davis par. 25). Invisibility may give the feeling of invincibility, but an invisible man is still subject to loneliness and death.

Other questions arise when critically examining the fortunate ending of Gyges’ fable. In his essay, “Why Should I Be Moral?” Kai Nielsen reasons that unrestrained selfishness has intrinsic consequences, such as the difficulty in finding true friendship, appreciation, sincere recognition for success, or a sense of general well-being (487). As long as he is invisible, Gyges must live without such pleasures. Journalist Michael Davis observes that a man must be visible to enjoy what he has obtained. Gyges may gain as much power or wealth as he pleases, but in reality he receives no satisfaction. He is denied recognition, and mere wealth is cold comfort (par. 28). Glaucon has a lack of foresight not to think of this quandary in his telling of the fable. Nielsen reasons:

If I am thoroughly and consistently selfish and get caught, people will treat me badly. I will be an outcast, I will be unloved, all hands will be on guard against me. I may even be retaliated against or punished as an “irredeemable moral beast.” All of this will obviously make me suffer. Thus, I better not take up such a selfish policy, or I will surely be unhappy (484).

Glaucon fails to include the possibilities of dissatisfaction in Gyges’ story, assuming that the power of invisibility will protect him
from such drawbacks. A later author, J. R. R. Tolkien, takes a similar concept—the ring of invisibility—but has a different outlook on its effect on the wearer’s quality of life.

In his novel *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien shifts the focus from Gyges’ material rewards to the more spiritual implications of invisibility. Although his work contains many wars, Tolkien sees moral victory as more important than physical victory in battle (Dickerson 95). His treatment of the invisibility ring, therefore, focuses more on the inner being of the person rather than on what the invisible man can gain. He uses Gollum, a character at once both hateful and pitiable, as a case study.

Gollum begins life as Sméagol, a peaceful, hobbit-like individual living in a community located in a pleasant, grassy area near a river. The name Sméagol means “burrowing” in Old English, and Sméagol is true to his name. He loves looking for secrets and origins (Noel 63). His family has plenty of money, so among his humble folk, he lacks in nothing (Tolkien 51). He lives normally, in a rural setting, much the same as Gyges’ first dwelling.

Once the Ring of Power that grants invisibility enters Sméagol’s life, however, he immediately begins a moral downward spiral. In *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien describes how Sméagol begins a transformation into Gollum. His friend Déagol finds the Ring; and, as soon as Sméagol sees it, he lusts after it. His corruption begins when he strangles his comrade for possession of the Ring. After the newly made murderer discovers the Ring’s power, he immediately puts it to ill use, discovering secrets and using those secrets against the people from whom he hears them.

Thus, his once-innocent love of secrets is corrupted into malicious eavesdropping. He becomes “sharp-eyed and keen-eared for all . . . hurtful;” and he begins to steal, talk to himself, and make strange swallowing sounds in his throat—which leads to his derogatory nickname, Gollum. While he is invisible, he does as he pleases with no thought of the consequences, but eventually he must become visible again. His fellow townspeople begin to deride him out of spite for his nastiness and eventually banish him from their village (52). Gollum has the same power and opportunities as Gyges and uses these for similar selfish purposes, but Tolkien’s narrative more realistically incorporates the negative reactions of others to the misuse of the power.

Gollum’s troubles do not end with banishment from his home. Tolkien uses Gollum to explore fascination with and effects of evil in the soul, for Gollum gives himself completely over to his darker tendencies brought on by the Ring’s power (Helms par. 9). Gollum is not as fortunate as Gyges, who receives nothing but rewards for his im-
morality. Through Gollum, Tolkien shows that immorality, even if unseen by others, brings unwelcome consequences to the person who does the wrong.

The medium of fantasy writing allows Tolkien to take the corruption of Gollum to extremes. Gollum may do all the harm to others that he pleases, but the harm to his person is equal, if not greater. He becomes a miserable wretch, controlled by his own evil. He begins to change physically, his form becoming more animal than human. He displays such feral qualities as luminescent eyes and the ability to track his prey by following scent trails (Tolkien 598). He eats his food raw, catching and killing any victims he can find with invisible hands (11). Among other animal comparisons, he is likened to an insect, a whining dog, and a frog (598, 604, 670). This outward change reflects his inner corruption: the unabated selfishness that the power of invisibility allows has made him little more than an animal, concerned with only his own survival.

Once separated from society both by his superhuman ability and by his vice, Gollum decays further. He becomes paranoid, hating the sun and moon because he feels they always watch him; he, therefore, prefers darkness and makes his abode deep within the caves under the Misty Mountains (Noel 64). Although invisible, his inner guilt has obviously convinced him that even the heavenly bodies accuse him of his crimes. In his dark home, Gollum is alone for years while still yearning for companionship.

Although evil, he retains traces of his humanity; and his mind still holds hints of pleasant memories—now tainted by bitterness, of course. Gollum’s riddle game with unwilling visitor Bilbo Baggins, reminiscent of his happier days before the Ring, reveals the still-present longing for what he sacrificed to own the Ring (Tolkien 53). He cannot kill the desire for camaraderie, the society he forfeited long ago. He has confined himself in a prison of loneliness with the uninhibited selfishness allowed by invisibility.

Immorality without external punishment also takes its toll on Gollum’s mental health. In his self-constructed state of constant solitude, Gollum can only talk to himself. He begins to make excuses to himself so that in his mind, at least, he exonerates himself from Déagol’s murder and the claiming of the Ring (55). The need to make excuses reveals how much his conscience plagues him.

At the same time, he believes his fate unfair, and he wants revenge for himself (55-56). He has convinced himself that his fate is not his fault and that others have forced it on him, when he has actually forced himself into his position. This state of mind shows the
depths to which his selfishness has poisoned his thinking—he even blames his guilty conscience on others.

The lack of the benefits of society and the soul-corroding power of the Ring divide Gollum’s personality into two parts: the vicious, selfish side that lusts after the Ring’s power, and the more Sméagol-like side that still wishes for normalcy and friendship with the hobbits he meets (Noel 64). Gollum’s schizophrenia, a condition so intense that he actually has arguments with himself, makes him unpredictable and dangerous once he loses the source of his power, the Ring (Tolkien 618f). In a world set against him, the invisibility granted by the Ring can be his one comfort; it can hide him from those he hates.

The Ring and its power are crucial in Gollum’s struggle against the world and against himself. Tolkien writes that Gollum in fact hates the Ring, the object he calls his “precious,” more than anything else in his hate-filled world. Nevertheless, he cannot stop wanting it. The insatiable desire for an object that brings him such misfortune causes Gollum understandable frustration with himself, increasing his own self-hatred and adding to his problems with schizophrenia. In fact, no one who bears the Ring can stop wanting its power, even when fully aware of its evil nature (54). If this is true for the corpse in the Gyges fable, it explains why the ring in that story is not passed down to another bearer.

Why is the Ring so difficult to repudiate when it brings so much evil into the lives of its bearers? In his book Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings, Matthew Dickerson suggests three possible sources for the Ring’s corruptive power. The Ring, made by Sauron, is an extension of its maker evil, consciously corrupts its victims; the Ring brings about internal corruption through the character’s own weakness and propensity to sin; and the Ring corrupts through the character becoming addicted to its power (101).

The very desirability of the power the Ring offers is able to enslave susceptible minds (Noel 161). Invisibility incessantly tempts the owner to commit immoral acts he probably never thinks of doing otherwise; so, the Ring can never be used for good (159). Randel Helms in his article “Tolkien’s World” remarks that “even the desire to use it will inevitably corrupt the soul” (par. 20). The surrender to the constant temptation to gain advantage over others through invisibility is enough to damage any goodness in the soul.

Gollum does not share Gyges’ supposedly happy ending. After spending the entire novel chasing after the Ring, Gollum’s precious possession leads to his end. His lust for the Ring and its power betrays him in the end, because even as he celebrates the recapture of his
prize, his exultant dance carries him into the lava of Mount Doom as he cries out to his "Precious" (Tolkien 925). Like the corpse on which Gyges found his ring, the power of invisibility and unseen immorality cannot help Gollum escape death. His hunger for power betrays him to a fiery end.

H. G. Wells’ *The Invisible Man*, a science-fiction story entirely devoted to the doings and mental workings of one who has achieved invisibility, mirrors Tolkien’s thoughts on the corruptive power’s effects. Wells’ invisible man, an ambitious scientist named Griffin, does not use a ring as the other two characters do; he instead manipulates physics so that light neither reflects nor refracts off his body (Wells, *Invisible* 80ff). Although the method of invisibility is scientific rather than mythical and permanent rather than removable, Wells comes to many of the same conclusions as Tolkien and the critics of Gyges’ fable about the effects of invisibility on a human being.

Griffin is at first ecstatic at his success in gaining invisibility, something he has worked long to achieve. He explains, “I beheld, unclouded by doubt, a magnificent vision of all that invisibility might mean to man,—the mystery, the power, the freedom. Drawbacks I saw none” (82). As soon as he succeeds, the desire to cause mischief to others—to startle pedestrians in the city and commit other comparatively harmless pranks—takes hold of him (93). Later, with prolonged use of the invisibility, both the advantages and the relative harmlessness of Griffin’s actions become corrupt. After all, an invisible man does as he pleases—steals easily, spies, escapes from the police with no problems (59).

As soon as Griffin attains invisibility, he wants to use his power for mischief, not the good of others; and this quickly develops into crimes that are more serious. This trait he shares with both Gyges and Gollum. Gyges begins by only being amused with his fellow shepherds’ confusion and later exploits his power for more egregious uses; Gollum replaces his eavesdropping to find out secrets with trickery and murder.

Griffin soon finds, however, that invisibility is not always the advantage he once thought it to be. Griffin takes whatever he wants without retribution, but as the critics of Gyges pronounced, he cannot enjoy his new possessions without becoming visible again (Davis par. 28). Wells writes that to regain visibility, Griffin must wrap himself with as many clothes as possible. He contemptuously describes himself as taking semblance of humanity only when “wrapped like a mummy” (*Invisible* 110). To be invisible, then, Griffin must be naked and, in a way, more vulnerable to harm than before he became invisible (Bergonzi 120). Griffin begins to realize what detriment invisibil-
ity can be to his humanity. He is absurdly different from everyone
else, more vulnerable to injuries and severe weather in his nakedness,
and unable to enjoy his newfound power.

Already separated from the rest of society by his power, Griffin
isolates himself more throughout the plot with increasingly evil ac-
tions. His evil begins as Gollum’s does—with the lust for power. Grif-
fin steals the money he needs to conduct invisibility research from his
father, who subsequently shoots himself because the money is not his.
Griffin relays this information with cold apathy (Wells, *Invisible*
83). Through the course of the novel, Griffin alienates himself both from
his fellow humans and from the reader of his story as he moves from
mere pranks to merciless murder (Bergonzi 118). The reader begins as
sympathetic to the misfortune and absurdity of Griffin’s situation, but
his violence estranges him from the reader, who can no longer tolerate
his actions (Hammond 90).

By the end of the novel, the alienation has driven Griffin to insan-
ity, as isolation does with Gollum. He thinks only of his self-
 preservation, and he thinks to achieve that goal through a “reign of
terror” (Wells, *Invisible* 116). Days of frustration and alienation lead
him to believe that his only way to relate to society is through declar-
ing war on other humans.

In his insanity, Griffin concludes that homicide is the only activity
for which invisibility is useful. He reasons that stealing and spying are
difficult even with invisibility because he still makes noise. He muses
that invisibility only really helps when approaching quietly or escaping;
thus, it is best for killing (113). Even this proves worthless, though,
for after he brutally murders an elderly man named Mr. Wick-
steed, a bodiless voice is heard in the area, “wailing and laughing,
sobbing and groaning” (121).

Griffin still has a conscience, a quality he shares with the rest of
the human race; he has no “moral tranquilizer” to allow him to commit
murder without guilt (Nielsen 485). As critics of the Gyges fable pre-
dicted, a human being with a conscience cannot commit such evil acts
as murder without some form of punishment, even if that punishment
is his own maddening guilt.

Griffin’s ultimate fate is similar to Gollum’s: striving after power
through invisibility is his downfall. The alienation, discomfort, frustra-
tion, and mental torment that the power brings culminate in the death
of the invisible man. The story of the invisible man becomes the story
of pride in power leading to unavoidable death (Bergonzi 120). After
townspeople bludgeon Griffin to death to protect a man he is ruth-
lessly hunting, the dead man that slowly appears before them is little
more than a pathetic, hungry corpse, still with an expression of anger
on his face. Even in death he receives disgust rather than pity (Wells, *Invisible* 136). He dies as a predator and an outcast, rejected by a society that will not accept his power or his behavior.

H. G. Wells explores similar themes in a short story called “The Country of the Blind.” Instead of an invisible man, the main character Nunez is a seeing man in a valley inhabited entirely by blind people. Like Griffin, he expects countless advantages, always repeating to himself, “In the Country of the Blind the One-Eyed Man is King” (Wells, “Country” 545). His dreams of ruling, however, soon become resignation, as he realizes that the blind do not deem sight useful. They have lived without sight for generations and feel no need for it (559, 549). Sight proves more of a disadvantage than the advantage he once thought it to be, and he experiences the same disillusionment that Griffin faces.

Also, like Griffin, Nunez realizes that his only benefit as a seeing man is in battle with the blind. Nunez, however, cannot break past his morality and bring himself to injure one of them (555). Griffin, on the other hand, murders a man and suffers mental torment as a result. In both “The Country of the Blind” and *The Invisible Man*, the “departure from the accepted norms of behaviour” leads to problems. Thus, a seeing man in a blind culture is as unacceptable to himself and society as is an invisible man in a seeing culture (Hammond 90).

The Gyges fable in Plato’s *Republic*, J. R. R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Invisible Man* by H. G. Wells make plain that an invisible man is a powerful man indeed. He is free from the common laws of society; he fears no punishment for his misdeeds. Unfortunately, stripped of the façade that works for a good impression upon their fellow men, the invisible man knows no limits to his seemingly unavoidable immorality. In all three works the invisible man stoops to levels undreamed of before he attains invisibility.

A thorough examination of these literary works makes evident two major aspects of invisibility: that it is an addictive power and that it inevitably corrupts its users’ ability to relate positively to other people. First, Gyges, Gollum, and Griffin all experience the exhilaration of supernatural power that elevates them above their fellows. Invisibility allows them to think only of themselves, and they are therefore inclined neither to renounce their power nor repent for the crimes committed while invisible. The power becomes an addiction, necessary to the characters either because they need the ability to escape punishment or because they simply enjoy the power over others.

Second, elevation above the law to which other people are bound leads Gyges, Gollum, and Griffin to desire domination over others, and invisibility allows them to obtain this level of power. However,
the will and the power to dominate separate them from the people dominated. This alienation from other humans drives Gollum and Griffin to insanity and eventually to their own deaths. The power that allows them to rise above their fellowman is what brings them to a level lower than that of anyone who simply follows the social institution of morality. Society acts as a civilizing force, and those who purposefully depart from that force find themselves reduced to monsters. Although people naturally strive after power over others, this power unlimited becomes their own destruction.

Human nature, then, is in its most basic state self-seeking: while visible, a man will follow the moral code of his culture, seeking his happiness by avoiding punishment and reaping rewards. With the ability to become invisible, however, human nature expresses itself most clearly in misdeeds and subsequent alienation from all others. In the cases of Gollum and Griffin, the lack of companionship brings wretchedness and insanity. The literature of invisibility clearly reveals that “without social morality men are less than human” (Hammond 90). Once freed from his society’s common system of morality, the invisible man only brings misfortune upon others, and in doing so he destroys himself. He is a tragic and truth-revealing figure, exposing aspects of human nature that simultaneously appall and fascinate the imagination.

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