Institute for Christian Teaching
Education Department of Seventh-day Adventists

PERCEPTION, PROCESS, PRODUCT:

Integrating Faith and Learning

for a

Christlike Character

by

Hedley J. Eager

Dean, School of Graduate Studies
Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies
Lalaan I, Silang, Cavite 4118, Philippines

PERCEPTION, PROCESS, PRODUCT: Integrating Faith and Learning for a Christlike Character

God was Creator of all that is true, noble, and beautiful. He shared with Adam and Eve His expectations for them. But as time went by, they responded to the expectations of Satan in place of those of God. Their responses led to eternal consequences for their choices.

By experiencing the reality of these choices, Adam and Eve were in a position to be more perceptive of the long-term reality when choices were to be made. Moral choices and value-related choices are the building blocks for character development.

As parents, teachers, ministers or Christian leaders, we must be perceptive to both the ideal, the "what ought to be," and reality, "what is." Jesus shared a challenging goal with us. This goal focuses on "what ought to be." "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt 5:48). Is this expectation beyond reality?

We make so many mistakes. We see others do the same. And we ask—"How can we ever be perfect?" One thing is certain. As mortal human beings we are limited when we depend on our own will power. Like Adam and Eve, we fail. Like the young man who came to Jesus asking what he needed to do to be saved, and who went away sorrowful, our perception is somewhat blurred. It is only with God's help that we can be perfect.

Mortal will-power is only as strong as mortality itself. There is nothing supernatural about it. But each of us is in daily conflict with supernatural powers of evil, powers that we cannot see, powers that we cannot even begin to equal in artistry, skill, and baffling mind control.

Powers that are real. Silent. Attractive. Convincing. Powers that divert the mind's focus. Powers that suggest what to think and do, without referring to reason and integrity. To be ready to meet these powers with a mature Christian preparation our students need the stimulating interaction of an environment where faith and learning are effectively integrated.

Integrating faith and learning requires perception. Perception to know what to integrate and how to integrate faith with learning. The "how" requires knowledge and skill in the integrating process. At the very beginning of the process, we must have our objectives clear. We need to know the outcome or product that we are aiming to produce. This paper, will address these three aspects of the integration of faith and learning. The application of the paper has particular relevance to secondary education, but the principles have a more universal application.

I. PERCEPTION

To be perceptive for integrating faith and learning for character development, we need to understand God's basic theoretical structure for living. "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart...soul...mind, and...strength. And...Love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12:30-31). Since our God is a God of love, His theoretical structure for developing people is contained within His concept of love, His law, which is an expression of His character.

The assumption is that if God's law is an expression of His character, and we accept that His law is a law of love, then the concepts that this law encompasses will clarify the components of the theoretical structure for developing a Christlike character.

De Jong stated: "The moral virtues provide the framework for a person's life and the ambience for the intellectual virtues" (1990, p. 91). To be perceptive of this we will identify the concepts that contribute to a clearer perception of this structure. These concepts formulate the building blocks of character development.

Concepts forming the Components of God's Theoretical Structure for developing a Christlike Character.

For one's character to pattern after God's, or Christ's, then we must be perceptive about the concepts that make up the qualities of a Christlike character. I find these qualities or concepts within the basic code for living, the decalogue.

Commandment 1

Thou shalt have no other gods before me (Ex 20:3).

The first phrase with impact is Thou shalt have. If you have something you consider it to be yours. There is some pride of ownership, of belonging. You *identify* yourself with what you have. Each of us has a family name. Our parents gave it to us. It establishes our *identity*.

"God has given each of us an identity of our own, which cannot be merged in that of another. Our very bodies are not our own....Our lives and all our faculties belong to Him. He is caring for us every moment....We are absolutely dependent upon God.

"A great lesson is learned when we understand our relation to God and His relation to us. The words, 'Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price,' should be hung in memory's hall that we may ever recognize God's right to our talents, our property, our influence, our individual selves" (White 1962).

Identity is important. Each person has his own identity as a gift from God and created in His own image. God also bought us with his own life, and therefore He is our Savior and Redeemer.

No other emphasizes the finality of keeping to ONE god, the ONLY God. No other reinforces the uniqueness of the identity relationship. He is the only God. Through this we establish our true *identity*, and we do it in a *unity relationship*, in *oneness* with God. These unique qualities of character God wants to see in His children who are to be perfect as He is perfect (Matt 5:48).

> Concepts for a clearer perception--Identity; unity of relationship; and oneness with God.

Commandment 2

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any

thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments" (Ex 20:4-6).

In this second commandment God introduces first, the idea of making graven images; second, bowing in worship; third, that the Lord God is a jealous God; fourth, the Lord God is One who shows mercy; and fifth, He recognizes those who love Him and keep His commandments.

God appreciates *singleness of worship* which includes an inner decision of *commitment*. He honors *singleness of loyalty*. He "refuses to share His glory with idols....He declines the worship and service of a divided heart" (SDA Bible Commentary, Vol 1, 1953, p. 602). God guards jealously with whom, or with what He shares His glory.

He rewards *love* and *obedience* with *mercy*, His example to us. This concept of mercy includes *benevolence, compassion, forbearance, forgiveness, kindness*, and *sympathy*. Such qualities are a product of *love* and are a strong link in the theoretical structure for building a Christlike character.

When Jesus practiced the love of His Father, He obeyed the will of His Father. This was *cooperation* of the highest order. Within this second commandment God expects us to cooperate with Him as we keep His commandments.

Concepts for a clearer perception--Singleness of worship; commitment; singleness of loyalty; mercy; benevolence; compassion; forbearance; forgiveness; kindness; sympathy; love; and cooperation.

Commandment 3

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Ex 20:7).

"Those who are brought into covenant relation with God are pledged to speak of Him in the most respectful, reverential manner...." (White 1952). The qualities of *respect* and *reverence* can not develop overnight. Respecting and showing reverence to God includes having a high regard for not only the name of God, but also any person or thing that represents the handiwork of God.

God's deep love for man implies that He also *trusts* in us. He shows a *trust* that elicits respect and reverence on our part. When we honor that trust by showing respect and reverence, we grow to trust both God and each other.

Concepts for a clearer perception--Respect; reverence; and trust.

Commandment 4

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is

within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex 20:8-11).

When we remember something that was a sharing of happiness and joy, it thrills, it inspires the inner heart. To remember to keep the sabbath day holy, is to remember a happy shared experience with our God, and in this we can share His holiness, "each one giving for the love and joy of being together" (Londis 1978, p. 54). Experiencing and enjoying *inspiration* through worship is a part of the Christian's character. Moreover, worshiping every sabbath expects being *consistent* in this worship.

As we follow the command to keep the sabbath holy, God has clearly described His own *example* of how He kept the sabbath--He rested, blessed, and hallowed it, or made it holy. God's own *modelling* emphasized the importance He held for the sabbath.

This fourth commandment "is the only commandment in the whole decalogue telling who God is" (White 1955). It helps us *identify* with Him better, and enables us to understand why *loyalty* and *allegiance* to Him are important. It also helps us to develop greater *respect* for Him and the day He set as holy.

Within this fourth commandment God also gave the directive that we are to *work* six days each week, and not work on the seventh day. And so *reverence* and *respect* for the Sabbath as a holy day is also a part of *worship*. Then during the other six days, work calls for *industry* and *diligence*.

> Concepts for a clearer perception--Inspiration; consistency; modelling example; identity; allegiance; respect; work; reverence; worship; industry; and diligence.

Commandment 5

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Ex 20:12).

People are important. Every person who is born has a father and a mother. To *honor* them is to be highly respectful to them. Having regard for the *personage*, the importance of the person, because of who they are, reinforces the concept of *respect*.

Honor and *respect* are direct attributes of God's character. God gives us a reason to honor and respect our parents by linking them with the conditional promise for long life. James Londis (1978) adds that this commandment emphasizes thoughtfulness of *responsibility*, and *security* for the elderly.

"Children as they grow in years are to appreciate the care that their parents have given them. They are to find their greatest pleasure in helping father and mother" (White 1954). Therefore, recognizing each person's individual *self-worth*, and one's inherent responsibility to give *honor* and *respect* where it is due, having regard for the *personage* of an individual, and one's own *identity* in relationships, these will all contribute to the growth of spiritual and personal relationships with God and with each other.

Concepts for a clearer perception--Honor; personage; respect; self-worth, identity, responsibility, and security.

Commandment 6

Thou shalt not kill (Ex 20:13).

Killing is a destructive action. It happens suddenly or slowly. It can be an act of violence or result from the expression of attitudes. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15).

To be perceptive for the hidden treasures in this command, let us focus on the opposite of killing. Destruction is negative, the positive is to build.

What is the positive approach to people that has the effect of building attitudes and relationships? What positive action towards people does the building?

I suggest we begin with *caring service*? People who give caring service to others are living out the principle of the second great commandment of Jesus, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt 22:39).

Caring service will build both spiritual and personal relationships and not break or destroy them. *Personage*, the importance of people, is kept in perspective. "All were created in His [Christ's] image, and even the most degraded are to be treated with respect and tenderness" (White 1958). James Londis (1978) suggests that *love* removes the reason for killing. *Caring service* with *respect* for the individual, and showing *tenderness* in dealing with people, will contribute positively to character growth.

Concepts for a clearer perception--Caring service; personage; respect; and tenderness, love.

Commandment 7

Thou shalt not commit adultery (Ex 20:14).

Faith and *trust* in each other complement *love* for each other in the marriage relationship. As qualities they have deep personal and spiritual meaning. Furthermore, they are in the process of development long before marriage.

Love, faith, and *trust* provide the motivation and the power for decision making to keep *purity* in focus and uplift the image of God in us. This commandment encompasses the concept that within the boundaries of relationships that God has ordained, we are free to love and be loved (Londis 1978). Ellen White writes, "Our sisters should encourage true *meekness*....They should...be...*modest* and *unassuming, slow to speak*. They may cherish *courteousness*. To be *kind, tender, pitiful, forgiving,* and *humble* would be becoming and well pleasing to God....All will feel that there is a sacred circle of purity around these God-fearing women which shields them from any unwarranted liberties....

"To married men I am instructed to say, It is to your wives, the mothers of your children, that your *respect* and *affection* are due. Your attentions

are to be given to them, and your thoughts are to dwell upon plans *for their happiness*"(italics added) (White 1952a).

The concepts within the seventh commandment help us make further positive decisions toward a Christlike character. The integration of faith and learning within Christian education helps individuals continue their understanding and application of these concepts in decisions that show that the image of God is growing within them.

> <u>Concepts for a clearer perception</u>--Faith; trust; love; purity; meekness; modesty; courtesy; kindness; tenderness; humility; respect; affection; being unassuming and slow to speak; being able to show pity; and being forgiving.

Commandment 8

Thou shalt not steal (Ex 20:15).

To have regard for another's property, time, reputation, name, or anything else, is a noble quality. This quality calls forth the deepest *respect* and upholds the universal principle of *honesty*. With *honesty* as the universal principle, then *truth* is the absolute about which *honesty* revolves. "A man may not have a pleasant exterior, he may be deficient in many respects, but if he has a reputation for straightforward honesty, he will be respected....A man who steadfastly adheres to truth will win the confidence of all" (White 1952b).

Where no stealing occurs, a community respects the property of others. This contributes to a sense of *security*.

<u>Concepts for a clearer perception</u>--respect; honesty; truth; and security.

Commandment 9

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor (Ex 20:16).

There is a saying that *truth* will always come out in the end. *Truth* is the answer to falsehood and lies. When someone tells a lie, then repents and owns up to the *truth*, there is an expectation that *repentance* will be accepted and *forgiveness* granted. But bearing false witness is more than telling lies or untruths. It can include flippant speech, expressions of envy, evil thinking (<u>SDA Bible Commentary</u>, Vol I, 1953), a wrong example in health practice (White 1951), or any behavior that deceives or gives a misguided impression.

"Everything that Christians do should be as transparent as the sunlight. Truth is of God; deception, in every one of its myriad forms, is of Satan.... We can not speak the truth unless our minds are continually guided by Him who is truth" (White 1955).

> <u>Concepts for a clearer perception</u>--Truth; repentance; and forgiveness.

Commandment 10

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy

neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's (Ex 20:17).

The comprehensiveness expressed in this command calls for *integrity*. The personal application calls for *selfless commitment*. Each quality helps the other to grow in effectiveness within a person's character. Refraining from indulging in any desire for something that belongs to another (White 1913) is part of a conscious decision to *honor* God. Such a decision recognizes a freedom to share, and a freedom from being driven or controlled by things, by materialism (Londis 1978).

Concepts for a clearer perception--Integrity; selfless commitment; honor; freedom to share; and freedom from materialism.

In summary, the theoretical structure for developing a Christlike character is clearly found within the decalogue. Identifying the concepts that help clarify this theoretical structure have provided many of the focal points that instructors can use for integrating faith and learning within Christian education. The following table is a summary of the concepts derived from the above simple analysis of each of the ten commandments.

Table: CONCEPTUAL COMPONENTS WITHIN THE THEORETICAL STRUCTURE OF GOD'S LAW FOR BUILDING A CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER

Key: * = conceptual components of the first four commandments
      + = conceptual components of the fifth to tenth commandments.
      [Note that there is integration of the conceptual components identified between the first four and last six commandments.]

+ Affection	* Mercy
* Allegiance	* Modelling Example
* Benevolence	+ Modesty
+ Caring Service	* Oneness
* Commitment	++ Personage
* Compassion	+ Purity
* Consistency	+ Repentance
* Cooperation	**++++ Respect
+ Courtesy	+ Responsibility
* Diligence	** Reverence
+ Faith	++ Security
* Forbearance	+ Selfless Commitment
*++ Forgiveness	+ Self-worth
+ Freedom to share	+ Showing pity
+ Freedom from materialism	* Singleness of loyalty
+ Honesty	* Singleness of worship
++ Honor	+ Slow to speak
+ Humility	* Sympathy
**+ Identity	++ Tenderness
* Inspiration	*+ Trust
* Industry	++ Truth
+ Integrity	+ Unassuming
*+ Kindness	* Unity
*++ Love	* Work
+ Meekness	* Worship

This set of concepts is by no means an exhaustive one. But it does provide a basic guide to the kinds of qualities that will characterize the person who benefits from the integrating of faith and learning throughout their developing years. Since the ultimate goal of Christian education is a Christlike character, a restoring of God's image in the person, these are the qualities that lead to such a development. How do we ensure that young people are provided with the best opportunity to grow to Christlike maturity? In the following we will consider the components that contribute to a successful process or procedure for integrating faith and learning in the institution and the daily experience of the students.

II. PROCESS

Integrating faith and learning in education is providing a holistically oriented environment for Christian thinking and living. This environment will lead young people through experiences and challenges so that the character of each will grow to become like Christ's. God is love, and every concept within God's universal theoretical structure of love for God and love for man adds clarity to our perception of the goal of the Christlike character. Integrating faith and learning is integrating the very character of God into the life of every individual through the media of life's daily experiences.

As De Jong emphasized, "Students must not simply be offered faith and learning in separate and unrelated packages, so to speak, but students should observe how faith gives direction and meaning to learning and see how learning enriches faith" (1990, p. 133).

Arthur De Jong further addressed the responsibility of process. In his discussion he placed greater emphasis on the people interacting, than on the medium they use at the time of interaction.

"The issue is not whether there is such a thing as Christian mathematics or chemistry, but whether all faculty members--whatever their academic discipline--use and offer all of themselves as they work to enrich and enlarge their students" (p.135).

Thus the process of integration is dependent upon people, people who interact and who give of themselves. De Jong continued by stating: "The integration of faith and learning takes place in the classroom some of the time and outside the classroom some of the time. It takes place as people interact with people, when students listen to lectures and observe faculty members function in their profession, when students argue with faculty members, and when they are counseled by faculty members" (Ibid).

Therefore the interaction of the instructor with the students during say a mathematics period may include personal faith sharing, or it may include spiritual understanding that stems from the subject matter of the academic class.
Arthur Holmes (1987) added a broader concept to the thinking process. He stated, "Integration is ultimately concerned to see things whole from a Christian perspective, to penetrate thought with that perspective, to think Christianly."

For a person to become Christlike will include to think like Christ and act like Christ. In doing this the image of God will be in the process of being restored within that person's life.

Teachers, parents, ministers, and youth leaders are involved in training children and youth and therefore are involved in the process of integrating faith and learning in the lives of those with whom they interact. How effectively they do this will influence the product of their efforts.

In this section I will focus first on the arena of spiritual and philosophical conflict for integrating faith and learning. Second, on objectives; third on planning; fourth on processing strategies for integrating faith and learning; and fifth, on some classroom examples for stimulating students to think Christianly, or spiritually.

Arena of Spiritual Conflict

Adventist teachers accept that there is a real warfare between God and the spirits of evil. Paul's statement of the reality of this conflict in Eph 6:12, supports this belief. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Every Christian, young or old, is in the arena of this conflict. But Ellen White points to a source of help. "The Christian life is a warfare.... In this conflict of righteousness against unrighteousness we can be successful only by divine aid" (White 1930).

Therefore to meet the conflict the Christian must have access to divine aid. Our understanding of the kinds of aid available and how to use them is important to meet the problem. Here are five of the basic resources.

1. Each individual has a mind given by God. This mind has almost unlimited power to interact ideas from previous learning, to assess, weigh the evidence and consequences of choices, and to make decisions. This gift of the ability to think critically and creatively is a powerful resource for success in the conflict against evil.

2. What we put into the mind--ideas, beliefs, principles, and values--will be a store of knowledge that we can use for effective decision-making (Rom 12:1-2).

3. The Holy Spirit is an all-knowing, all-powerful, ever-present teacher and guide. "The Holy Ghost...shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance" (John 14:26). "Lo, I am with you alway" (Matt 28:20).

4. The Scriptures. God's instruction to us through the writings of Ellen White. The writings of other Christian authors (2 Tim 3:14-17).

5. Parents, ministers, teachers, other Christian leaders, and friends who hold to the same beliefs and principles (Luke 6:40).

Young people have a positive potential for success when the available resources are utilized. But are they being used effectively? Are teachers, parents, and others helping students learn how to make the best use of the resources available?

To integrate faith and learning we must not only identify ways of putting these resources to the best use as educators, but we must develop skills within our students so that they can integrate their faith with their learning, and make the result productive in their spiritual growth.

Objectives

Ellen White emphasized: "The great aim of the teacher should be the perfecting of Christian character in himself and in his students" (White 1913). The Christian's character is the final product. How to develop this character to become Christlike, is the broad practical goal of the Christian teacher.

The total school program of the majority of Adventist schools includes the various academic classes in each discipline, the planned daily and weekly spiritual activities, special programs such as the Week of Prayer, Health Week, Temperance programs and other spiritually related activities. There are the spiritual outreach programs both on and off campus. Social and physical activities, including musical, cultural, and sporting programs are also integrated within the total program of the school.

This breadth of program variety provides considerable opportunity to integrate faith and learning into the total program of the school. Integration is more than providing spiritual programs, weekly chapels, and Bible classes. By integrating faith and learning into the total program, each student's spiritual growth will receive constant daily support.

Objectives are important. They are effective when they are realistic and have observable outcomes. When we state our objectives, first, students and faculty know the direction that learning is to occur. Second, they can prepare their thinking to move in the desired direction. Third, they can assess their effectiveness in attaining the objectives. And fourth, they will be developing a habit of thinking and planning that is comprehensive and directional.

To keep the objectives in spiritual perspective, they should comply with the directives of scripture. De Jong (1990, p. 93) beautifully summarized this concept: "Point...students not toward self-fulfillment, as our culture desires, but rather toward living their lives to the glory of God through discipleship."

Planning

At the planning stage faculty can brainstorm to itemize possible creative ideas to be included in the different aspects of overall planning and the detailed follow-up planning. Next they can formulate objectives for each program and activity planned. These objectives will then provide the guide for all later planning, implementing, and evaluating techniques and procedures.

Objectives focussing on spiritual growth and spiritual support of students must be included in every course outline and action plan throughout the school's operation. Whole person development is important for total quality improvement and a balanced holistic development for each student.

"Treat students as whole persons whose spirits need growth as much as their intellects" (De Jong 1990, p. 109).

For total quality improvement, the school board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students must include faith objectives at both macro and micro levels of planning. The macro levels will include the major levels of planning at administration level. Here faith concepts will be included in long-term planning, overall program planning, campus master plan and facility planning, budget planning, and personnel related planning. The micro level planning will include committee action planning, course objectives and lesson plans, student activity planning, and even student project or group class activity planning within an one class or subject area.

Processing Strategies for Integrating Faith and Learning

When we think of identifying and processing strategies for integrating faith and learning, some have a difficult time recognizing what to do. To begin with, I would like to share with you the top ten strategies that a number of effective private secondary schools identified as most important for being effective in achieving their purpose (Eager 1987). And for many of them, integrating their faith throughout their program was a part of their purpose.

1. Show you care about students as people
2. Match your program with your purpose or mission
3. Address needs of the whole person
4. Take a personal caring interest in each student
5. Provide a quality program for student benefit
6. Make your program one of which students will be proud
7. Develop student abilities to their highest potential
8. Take time to listen
9. Set a positive example
10. Believe that your organization is effective.

If we want to integrate faith and learning in Christian education, then these strategies applied to integration of faith with the learning experiences we offer will provide a substantiated guideline for success. The purpose is to develop a Christlike character in each student.

1. Show you care about students as people: Research in one exemplary Christian school demonstrated that student decisions for respectful Christian behavior were based more on faculty example and their personal caring interest than on the regularly considered factors of teaching of values and Christian principles in Bible class and Chapel programs (Ibid).

2. Match your program with your purpose or mission: If your program for integrating faith and learning throughout your school or school system is a key part of your total program, then every aspect of your integrating must be carefully planned to support the fulfillment of the school's mission. If the purpose of the integration of faith and learning is to develop a Christlike character in the students, then every aspect of the program must contribute to this purpose.

3. Address needs of the whole person: The major focus in this

strategy is to address student needs in the integrating of faith process. It is possible for faculty to address what they consider should be student needs. If they overlook the real needs of students, it is very possible that students will not be ready to receive the benefit of the integrating focus.

4. Take a personal caring interest in each student: One exemplary school demonstrated a constant flow of communication between individuals and between administration, faculty, and students that maintained a conscious interest in people as individuals at all levels of interaction (Ibid). Because character development is a personal matter, personal interest in individuals regarding the spiritual meaning and application to life of faith integration will contribute positively to character development.

5. Provide a quality program for student benefit: If we are going to integrate faith and learning in an effective manner, our Christian principles demand a quality academic program, a quality spiritual program, a quality physical program, and a quality social program. These do not have to function in isolation or as compartmentalized entities (Holmes 1987). Rather they too need to be integrated in their emphases and in how they meet the needs of the students.

6. Make your program one of which students will be proud: We have already noted that identity is important as a conceptual component within the theoretical structure of God's law of love. For people to want to identify with it, we must present a total program that is thoroughly planned to meet student needs (Ibid), that upholds the expectations of the board, administration, faculty, parents, and community, and is effective in carrying through their program so that students want to be a part of it. In being a willing part of the total program, they also contribute to the fulfillment of the school's mission, and their own character development.

7. Develop student abilities to their highest potential: This is more easily said than done. Many schools recognize in practice that other priorities supersede this strategy (Ibid). It seems to be an area that needs considerable planning, and will be a challenge to the faculty who are focussing on integrating faith and learning for student growth. Because schools do not find it easy to develop potential does not mean it is any the less important. Rather, we can accept it as a greater challenge, and for the developing of faith through learning, it most certainly is a worthwhile challenge.

8. Take time to listen: This very practical strategy indicates that there is need for two-way interaction, and that the environment and personnel must be non-threatening. Students need to have someone who will listen to their concerns, their misunderstandings, their emotional, spiritual, and other personal needs (Ibid). In the integration of faith and learning at the personal level, to listen is a very important strategy, we only need to read the account of Nicodemus and Jesus to recognize the importance of being approachable and being ready to listen (John 3).

9. Set a positive example: Example is a powerful tool. Students read our lives more perceptively than we care to think. In the lives of faculty our students see faith in action. If we live what we believe, they recognize it as genuine. If what we teach and what we live do not match, any suggestion of integrating faith with learning will cancel out.

    Some aspects of integrating faith with learning through example include sharing a meaningful spiritual life, genuine participation in religious and spiritual activities, being professional in our academic field, expecting high standards and practicing high standards. Other aspects include living what we believe, and demonstrating Christlike behavior in all interpersonnel interactions with other faculty and with students, including giving emotional support and the resolving of conflict situations (Eager 1987).

10. Believe that your organization is effective: If you have done your planning carefully, you know that your program is an excellent one. Believe in it and communicate your belief. Demonstrate it as you live this belief every day (Ibid). The integration of faith and learning that is planned well and permeates all aspects of your school program is going to be effective. Look for the evidences that are sure to show up and recognize them. Tell each other about what is happening. It will reinforce success.

Some Classroom Examples for Stimulating Students to Think Christianly, or Spiritually

The integration of faith and learning includes the challenge to help students broaden thinking to go beyond the boundaries of their discipline. They need to be able to recognize how other disciplines relate to the one they are studying. Because working with the Spirit of God to restore in them the image of God is a major thrust for the Christian teacher, helping students recognize spiritual linkages and spiritual meaning in different aspects of their disciplines helps them grow in their ability to think Christianly or to think spiritually.

The following are four examples of how some teachers view the possibility of integrating spiritual meaning and faith relationships within their class lessons (Eager 1993).

1. The first example provides an opportunity to enter into discussion with the class linking the theme of nature within the novel to appreciation of God as Creator. Selective questioning would be important to the success of this example.

    Subject/Lesson description--Literature--The Old Man and the Sea--Hemingway.

    Level--Secondary classes.

    Focus of lesson--The relationship of the old man to the sea showed his intimate knowledge of both places and sea creatures which he respected.

<u>Knowledge, discussion, skill</u>--Students discover from reading the novel details related to the degree of the old man's intimate knowledge and his relationship to that knowledge.

<u>Spiritual parallel or link</u>--Students are challenged to study nature through a recognition of its beauty and order, to appreciate God as the Creator and Sustainer as well as His knowledge of us as creatures in His grand design.

2. The second example offers opportunity to interest the students through creativity and observation. There is opportunity to encourage the students to reinforce their concept of God's power and knowledge when observing the endless ranges of patterns in mathematics.

    <u>Subject/Lesson description</u>--Mathematics.

    <u>Level</u>--Upper elementary and secondary classes.

    <u>Focus of lesson</u>--Math pattern.

    <u>Knowledge, discussion, skill</u>--Developmental process.

    <u>Spiritual parallel/link</u>--Beauty of pattern in math shows how complex but interrelated and endless are God's principles and concepts. None contradict. All build up and support each other.

3. This third example provides direct intellectual challenge through discussion of opposites--power and weakness, right and wrong, good and evil, people identifying with wickedness, and people identifying with right doing, God in control or man in control.

    <u>Subject/Lesson description</u>--History.

    <u>Level</u>--Secondary classes.

    <u>Focus of lesson</u>--Conditions under the rule of Hitler.

    <u>Knowledge, discussion, skill</u>--Discussion of why God allows the existence of someone like Hitler.

    <u>Spiritual parallel/link</u>--Study of the Bible and potential implications if God removes His control.

4. This lesson stimulates written skills. But the application of writing from "various points of view" is a preparation for developing attitudes of tolerance and understanding in the spiritual application of witnessing.

    <u>Subject/Lesson description</u>--English--Writing.

    <u>Level</u>--Secondary classes.

    <u>Focus of lesson</u>--Writing about an incident from "various points of view."

Knowledge, discussion, skill--Each person experiences things differently and interprets what happens based on their own background.

Spiritual parallel/link--Every person is unique and has had unique experiences in life and so what happens will affect each person differently. We need to keep this in mind when witnessing to them. We need to be conscious of individual needs and how to best help them and lead them to Christ.

The potential of interrelating lesson topics with spiritual meaning and personal application is endless. The process calls for stimulating the positive thinking of the students. Faculty do not have to provide all the parallels and links. It is much more effective when the students do the thinking and sharing of their ideas. Let them discuss the relevance of each other's suggestions to practical life. With the teacher's encouragement, much insightful thinking and growth can occur.

The teacher who is continually on the lookout for opportunities of sharing spiritual insights at the appropriate time and in a natural manner, will develop a skill in integrating faith and learning in the classroom context. Their insightful stimulation will spark the minds of the students to begin perceiving their own spiritual insights.

If at any time a teacher recognizes that the attempt to integrate the faith aspect of the lesson received negative impact, it is time to assess the reason for the feedback. The process was either a poor attempt at getting the key idea stimulated, or the students were not ready for what was presented, or the concept was too difficult, uninteresting, nonchallenging, or it may have been introduced in a way that provoked cynicism or sarcasm on the part of the students.

When negative feedback occurs, move slowly at introducing spiritual meaning and Biblical parallels. Emphasizing values are easier than drawing spiritual lessons that may apply to personal spiritual growth in faith relationship with Christ.

It is very important to make spiritual reference or introduce a religious parallel into a class lesson in a very unobtrusive and natural manner. Most often it will be on an incidental basis.

Discussion may come out of the incident and lead into opportunity for further spiritual understanding. But these moments will be perceived by the alert instructor, and students assessed for readiness. Also the teacher will quickly make a mental note whether to pursue the opportunity individually after class, or right then, or at a later more appropriate time for the benefit of the group as a whole.

In conclusion I would note that perception does not stop when the planning and implementing stages begin. Perception continues throughout the process stage. And processing strategies for faith integration although difficult for many teachers at first, if continued with a variety of approaches, will make teaching both more rewarding to the teacher, and potentially developing for each student. Utilizing the effectiveness strategies in ensuring a strong integration of faith and learning program will bring a carefully planned structure to your procedures to ensure maximum success.

III. PRODUCT

One of the major goals of integrating faith and learning is to develop a habit of spiritual thinking within the student. Each person is daily having to make value decisions between the beautiful things of life that build both personal and spiritual relationships and ultimately a Christlike character, and the less important things of life, or worse, the distractors from spiritual growth that will turn the person away from Christ and eternity.

Not everything has to have a spiritual lesson every moment of the day. Integration of faith and learning does not expect the student to be obsessed with Biblical or spiritual parallels in everything. Integration of faith and learning is wanting to help young people to be alert with "spiritual vigilance" which Ellen White describes as "the price of safety" (SDA Bible Commentary, Vol 6, 1957).

School programs provide faculty, staff, and student leaders, opportunities of helping young people develop the habit of spiritual thinking and awareness. The opportunities are both informal, in or out of class, as well as formal opportunities in planned spiritual programs.

Building a Christlike character happens slowly. No one ever takes a crash course in this and succeeds. Students are in the age of establishing their own youthful identity as they release themselves from parental dependency. They are establishing peer relationships, and toward the end of the teenage years, relationships of intimacy (Smart & Smart 1972).

While they are doing all of this, there is a tendency to identify the church and church personnel as authority figures. Youth are endeavoring to be released from authority figures and gain some independence. And yet for the Christian young person to grow in faith we must teach dependence on Christ.

Integrating faith and learning aims also to help the teenage student to recognize that his or her faith, with the help of the Holy Spirit's power and guidance, will put perspective into attaining their independence, and in making right decisions for career choices, and for intimacy relationships.

Integration of faith and learning has a major role in developing the young person as a whole person. The teacher's example of daily living as a person, as a child of God, and as a professional provides a living model for students to follow (Luke 6:40).

As the students see faith being integrated in the teacher's personal life they will recognize that a happy, secure person can live in today's stress-filled world. And they can see this as they watch you share yourself with student's and faculty--showing you care, taking time to listen, and to pray with each other and with students.

As students see you in your example of spiritual participation and just being there when students need the moment of spiritual and personal encouragement, these student can see that your spiritual life is meaningful to you. It gives them faith. The integrating of faith in their personal spiritual life takes on a more mature outlook. They grow because they see spiritual living in your life is meaningful to you, and it is not a sham, or something to be done because it is expected.

Students are on the receiving end of your life as a professional. When they see your professional life is in order, is in control, that you are knowledgeable in your field, that your expectations of them as students are challenging yet attainable, that you are fair in your assessments, when they see that you keep your word and live by your professional expectations of them, they respect you. They want to be like you. They feel secure in your presence. They are glad to be your student.

CONCLUSION

Perception, within the macro spectrum of integrating faith and learning at the secondary level, includes seeing the end product, the goal in the lives of the students, right from the beginning. Perception includes identifying God's theoretical framework for building character. It includes identifying the positive moral concepts that provide the components of God's theoretical structure for character development. Perception includes identifying the objectives that will help fulfill the long-term goal of a Christlike character in a person who has grown to be able to make secure and mature decisions based on the spiritual dimensions of his or her Christian development. It includes, recognizing possible strategies for building character--the whole person-- through many opportunities of interaction, individually as well as in group settings. Perception includes being able to have the insight during the process stage of knowing when students are ready to share spiritual insights of their own. When they are ready to do this they are maturing in their growth in faith and learning.

Process, is understanding the macro picture of teacher and student as the focal point of the Christian warfare, and acting on this understanding to integrate faith and learning for helping to restore the image of God in the lives of the students. In the instructional process, both teachers and students are supported by Christ, the angels and the Holy Spirit, while at the same time being buffeted at every opportunity by the devil and his cohorts. Process includes identifying the spiritual integration objectives for programs, activities, courses, and lesson plans. It includes the selection and implementation of particular strategies for integrating faith and learning at both the macro and micro levels of operation. It includes assessing the responses of students and making sure that each opportunity of integration is progressive toward reaching the ultimate goal. Process includes adjusting and changing strategies when feedback indicates this is needed; and it includes living the example of faith in action within an integrated, secure Christian life of personal relationships, personal religion, and professionalism.

Product is recognizing the end goal of integrating faith and learning for each student. Product keeps the end goal in view while working daily in interaction with each student. This interaction will help him or her integrate faith in a realistic and mature way. Thus the product in the student's life will help him or her to develop a Christlike character and a dependent relationship on Christ that is both personal, and spiritually meaningful as he or she prepares for a career, and life's intimate choices and responsibilities. Product is realizing growth in each student that is toward Christian spiritual maturity alongside of social, physical, and intellectual maturity--whole person development. Finally the product is a person who can make decisions with Christian maturity and integrity because he or she has learned to integrate faith and learning in the everyday experiences of life.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

De Jong, Arthur. (1990). Reclaiming a mission. Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Eager, Hedley J. (1987). Identification of key strategies for school effectiveness and how they are implemented, as perceived by administrators and teachers in selected exemplary private secondary schools. Doctoral dissertation. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University.

Eager, Hedley J. (1993). Faith and learning in classroom teaching. Unpublished research manuscript. Silang, Cavite, Philippines: Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies.

Eager, Hedley J. (1992). Building the right character: Integrating faith and learning for whole person development (Draft Copy). Silang, Cavite, Philippines: Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies.

Gaebelein, Frank E. (1968). The pattern of God's truth. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books.

Holmes, Arthur F. (1987). The idea of a Christian college (rev ed). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Londis, James J. (1978). God's finger wrote freedom. Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

Seventh-day Adventist bible commentary, Vol. 1, (1953). Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, pp. 602, 1106.

Seventh-day Adventist bible commentary, Vol. 6. (1957). Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, p 1094.

Seventh-day Adventists. South Pacific Division. Department of Education. S.D.A. secondary curriculum series. Silver Spring, MD: Institute for Christian Teaching, 1990.

Smart, Mollie S. and Smart, Russell C. (1972). Children: Development and relationships, 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan, p. 651.

White, Ellen. (1913). Counsels to teachers, parents, and students. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, p. 68.

White, Ellen. (1913). Patriarchs and prophets. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, p. 309.

White, Ellen (1930). Messages to young people. Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, p. 55.

White, Ellen. (1951). Counsels on health. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, pp. 155-156.

White, Ellen. (1952a). Adventist home. Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, pp.334-337.

White, Ellen. (1952b). <u>My life today</u>. Washington DC: Review and Herald, p. 282, 330.

White, Ellen. (1954). <u>Child guidance</u>. Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing, p. 121.

White, Ellen. (1955). <u>Sons and daughters of God</u>. Washington, DC: Review and Herald, p. 59, 64.

White, Ellen. (1958). <u>Love unlimited</u>. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, p. 57.

White, Ellen, (1962). <u>Testimonies to ministers & gospel workers</u>, Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, p, 423.