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**TOWARD A CHRIST-CENTERED VIEW OF SCHOLARSHIP
IN POST-MODERN ACADEMIA**

by
Candice C. Haas Hollingsead, PhD
Andrews University
United States of America

**613-06 Institute for Christian Teaching
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Silver Spring, MD 20904 USA**

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Introduction

“The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise seek it out” (Proverbs 18:15). What is the responsibility of a Christ-centered scholar in seeking and disseminating knowledge in the Post-modern world? This paper is grounded upon the following three premises:

- (1) Christ is the source of all wisdom and knowledge, Paul writes to the Laodicea’s, “that they may have the full riches of complete understanding . . . know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:2,3);
- (2) Christ desires to give us knowledge, writing about Daniel and his four friends, “To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning” (Daniel 1:17), and
- (3) Christ desires that we share our knowledge that He gives to us with others, Jeremiah speaking to Israel regarding what the Lord has said to him, “I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding” (Jeremiah 3:15).

The question of scholarship will be answered by a review of perspectives with a discussion on Post-modernism. This is followed by a description of the Christian Role in three areas of responsibility, teaching, service and scholarship, as defined by Boyer (1990), along with the importance of faith integration. Misalignment of perspectives will be presented in terms of socio-historical reality disconnect and Christian culture disconnect. A rationale for a philosophy of scholarship, supported by Scripture narratives, will be shared along with a model of the Christian Scholar’s role. This includes specific examples from Scripture aligned with scholarship applications in the areas of teaching, application, integration, and discovery. The paper closes in summary with a synthesis of fundamentals, a Christian scholarship philosophy, and a personal belief system.

Diversity of Perspectives

Today’s world of knowledge and reason are greatly centered on the work from institutions of higher education, academia. It is in this environment that knowledge is sought through the vehicle of scholarship. There are three basic worldviews which direct the perspectives of knowledge. In the first, Christianity has long regarded reason to be a gift from God (Stark, 2005). As well, Christians consider affirmation of God as Creator and Authority to be the stabilizing influences in scholarship so that knowledge can make legitimate progress (Adams Center, 1999). However, not all individuals and institutions subscribe to this perspective. In the second worldview is the belief that everything exists in terms of physical elements, forces, and processes with no involvement of an external supreme being (Rasi, 2000). In the third worldview, support is given to the perspective in which everything in existence consumes the divine. Divinity is within, and the dissimilarity between humanity and divinity are distorted (Sire, 1990).

Every person’s worldview provides them with a method of understanding life. The understanding of one’s worldview is critical because herein lies the beliefs and values of an individual. Such understandings impact priorities, choices, and attitudes (Rasi, 2000). On top of these three worldview perspectives is a Post-modernism paradigm within which we work and live.

Worldview Perspectives

Christianity considers humanity to hold obligation to a divine Creator, God. This worldview perspective, *theism*, has also been held by Judaism and Islam. All ability to reason and make contributions to society comes from God. The Creator and Sovereign of the universe is God (Sire, 1990).

From the *naturalist* perspective, human beings are a result of evolution. There is no significant reason or purpose for existence (Sire, 1990). This worldview was known by Greek philosophers, advancing in popularity, due to scientific and technological cultures during the last 150 years. Such a secular view has infused Western culture by way of scientific discovery. Other ideological concepts have grown from this perspective: Materialism, Marxism, and Atheism (Rasi, 2000).

God and human beings exist simultaneously together for the *pantheist*. Divinity and sacredness are in all things. It is in this perspective that we find many eastern religions. Pantheism in the west has morphed into Neo-pantheism where all lines between good and evil, Creator and created are blurred, dethroning a sovereign God (Sire, 1990).

Post-Modernism

In the early 1970's a youth movement, in Europe and the United States aimed at disillusionment of materialism and industrialization, instilled a new social order, a paradigm. Emphasis was placed on the importance of individual identity. By the end of the 20th century, idealism, which supports one divine authority, was discarded in favor of *Post-modernism*, characterized by fragmentation and rejection of systematic approaches. Subjectivity was god; truth was interpreted by individual experiences. Thus truth became ever shifting sand, relative to situations. Ultimate reality is unknown, truth is not accessible and academic freedom reigns. Only one rule applied, respect for all points of view. Scientific thought was to be resisted (Claerbaut, 2004). Lines between imagination and reality became indistinct indicating a connection to neopantheism (Rasi, 2000). Christianity, because of its attempts to explain humanity, did not fit into this paradigm. Christ was truth only to Christians (Claerbaut, 2004).

Christian Role

Contemporary Christians are commissioned with a call to action. Jesus speaks to us from Scripture, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15). If evangelism is the precedent task, then a close relative is the task of discovery. We should be asking what reasoning occurs in the minds and what is the condition of the hearts within the individuals we desire to teach. However, within the academia setting, reflecting the contemporary culture paradigm, the Christian will find minds and hearts are separated, a type of dualism. For this reason, the present-day intelligence is in a difficult dilemma. Anti-intellectualism is in danger of besetting the theistic worldview. In witnessing for Christ, Christians cannot tolerate an existence of marginalized responsibility towards intellectual existence. What faces us in academia today is saving the souls and saving the minds of those we teach. If we save the soul and not the mind, we will, in the end, also lose the soul. And if we save the mind and not the soul, then, in the end, we will also lose the mind (Malik, 2000). "In your

lives, you must think and act like Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5). It is only with the help of God that these two duties can be made possible.

The world of academia or higher education, usually involves the duties of teaching, service, and scholarship. Some institutions place more emphasis on teaching and others more on scholarship. But all three are required for today’s academia educator. What follows is a breakdown of these three duties to discover the Christian responsibility, how they interact with Post-modernism, and the concept of scholarship as applied to all three areas.

This presentation does not purport to be an exhaustive account on the topic. Rather, it endeavors to highlight pertinent topics supported by Scripture and current thought leaders. It is anticipated that the text can serve as a point of departure for further research and discussion.

Teaching

Most professionals in higher academia are drawn to the profession because of their love for teaching. Throughout Scripture, we as Christians are directed to teach others. “And the things that you have heard from me . . . commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). Along with teaching in academia comes an assumption of academic freedom. The curriculum may be prescribed by student performance outcomes sought, but the delivery of the curriculum is left in the hands of the educator. This is our opportunity to bring faith into the learning process. Spring (1998) has suggested valuable teaching creates a dynamic association between learner and curriculum, but creativity cannot be forced, it is an environment orchestrated by the teacher. Seven teacher characteristics are listed which can enhance this association:

1. Originality
2. Unselfconsciousness
3. Spontaneity
4. Responsiveness to materials
5. Openness to novelty
6. Concentration
7. Perception

Let’s compare some of the methods Jesus used in His teaching, as the master teacher, to this list. Jesus was *originality*. In the synagogue, the disciples and Jesus met a man with a shriveled hand. Jesus used the healing of this man to teach the Pharisees and the disciples what was lawful on the Sabbath (Matthew 12). *Unselfconsciousness* was evidenced in His passion for service. Coming down from the mountains after teaching the Beatitudes, Jesus healed a man with leprosy and also the servant of a centurion. He transformed these lives by His passion for souls (Matthew 8). *Spontaneity* was demonstrated by His pleasure in social life and children. Using an opportunity to teach, Jesus instructed His disciples to let the little children come onto Him. This was a surprise to those around; He used this moment to teach them how we need to be like children (Luke 18). Jesus was *responsive to the materials* used in teaching, from his love of nature. When teaching the disciples, Jesus drew upon nature to assure us all that He cares for the lilies of the field, the fallen sparrow, and even the number of hairs we have on our heads (Matthew 6 & Luke 12). His *openness to novelty* was indicated by his joyfulness and sorrow. Jesus used joy and sorrow to teach. Mary and Martha are examples of these. He was joyful when he came into their home and could sit and teach them, but also sorrowful when teaching them of His real mission to this earth upon their brother’s death (Luke 10 & John 11).

Concentration was proven by a reaction to the woman washing His feet. In the midst of a meal, He was able to use the woman's sacrifice to teach the others at the table (Luke 7). Finally, the area of *perception* shined through intuitive knowledge. When the Samaritan woman came to Jesus at the well, He transformed her life by teaching and the use of intuitive knowledge (John 4).

Jesus was the epitome of academic freedom in His teaching. He had no time for the governing Jewish body of the day. In fact, He referred to them as hypocrites and whited sepulchres. However, today academic freedom has been influenced by Post-modernism. Within Post-modern academia, pure academic freedom is scarce. It has evolved into a weapon to be used against those who may assert some claim to truth because rules are made by groups who make their own rules, the majority hold sovereignty. Individuals do not have the opportunity to make truth for others because everyone resides in their own truth, a sort of harmonious agnosticism (Claerbaut, 2004). At times, freedom can actually be used against the teacher if all points of view are not valued.

So how did Jesus react to authority other than His own? In Luke 12 the Pharisees and Herodians attempted to entrap Jesus by accusing Him of being a teacher with integrity, not swayed by men, but teaching only the Word of God. Jesus saw through their hypocrisy and stated "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." Matthew 12 tells the story of when Jesus and His disciples walked through a field of grain on the Sabbath. They were hungry so they picked the grain and ate it. The Pharisees accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath law. Jesus used this opportunity to teach that He was the Son of Man and Lord of the Sabbath, in other words Jesus is the authority.

Is it possible to use today's teaching environment as a means of scholarship? Scholarship is the act of finding answers to questions in a systematic inquiry manner. I would think that a classroom full of students who have bright minds wanting to learn would present the teacher with many questions to answer. This paper will use the Ernest Boyer concepts of scholarship found in his book *Scholarship Reconsidered; Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990). One type of scholarship described is the scholarship of teaching.

When a teacher approaches classroom instruction anticipating the potential for scholarship, the learning environment needs to be a culture of openness, searching for untried information and circumstances. The researcher needs to cultivate an atmosphere that values the untried spontaneous relationships (Spring, 1998). Boyer (1990) encourages the teacher to keep scholarship alive because the most highly prized instruction shapes thinking and doing.

Service

After teaching, a hallmark of Christian higher education is service. If "all truth is God's truth" (Sire, 1990, p. 142), then Jesus is the truth in action. He has walked and interacted with us as individuals who possess minds and emotions. New Testament Scriptural knowledge can be more clearly known by examination of His involvement in the daily lives of people (Sire, 1990). When God gives life, it is a stewardship of service to others. Our lives belong to Him, and what belongs to God must be used to serve and glorify him (Holmes, 1975; Page, 1994). Oftentimes when Jesus wanted someone to learn and understand, He either facilitated their service to others or taught the message within a story that included service. Jesus is our example of service to others. Matthew 25:40, "Whatever you did for

one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” Also Matthew 7:20, “by their fruit you will recognize them.”

Jesus sends out the twelve (disciples) with instructions; this narrative can be found in Matthew 10. The disciples are to go among the lost sheep of Israel, with instructions to preach of the heavenly kingdom, heal the sick, raise the dead, and drive out demons. Our service seems to dim in comparison to this work. But we should not be discouraged. Another example is the parable of the good Samaritan from Luke 10. Jesus’ instruction provided to the listener (an expert in the law) the importance of loving and helping your neighbor, especially when society deems the neighbor unworthy or untouchable. Paul in Ephesians 4:12 stated He, meaning Jesus, gave some to be . . . teachers, in order that people will be prepared for service. Is there a limit to service? If we follow the example of Jesus, He kept on serving others right up to the end of life without discrimination of anyone. It is through our hands that God’s work can continue. The greatest joy is found in service because it helps us to learn how He serves us. If we were to neglect this area of learning, it would be a great loss.

Academia, by the late 1800’s, was considered a democratic education and included service as a mission. In 1906 at the University of Chicago, William Harper characterized the essential definition of scholar in three ways. The British term scholarship was a means and measure of self-growth. The Germans on the other hand defined scholarship as an end in itself. It is the American definition that I find of particular interest; scholarship was the equipment for service. The contemporary concern is a need to carefully redefine and clarify what campus mission is and how to relate the work of service more directly to the realities of life (Boyer, 1990). If service in academia is related to Christlike behaviors, Post-modernism would most likely object. Service is couched in the attitude of applying the knowledge that you know. For example: how can learning be applied to solve social problems? How does this service advance the institutional mission? And how do theory and practice interact to renew one another? The truth is many institutions have rejected service because of the inability to define it. Service is sometimes called sponsorship of a campus club, sitting on a committee, or participating in a community council. Hall (1994) provides counsel in this area; service is not necessarily menial chores, instead it is a self-investment for the enabling and empowerment of others.

However, when we examine service in terms of scholarship, a sharper distinction can be used. Service closes the loop on theory. Application of knowledge provides validation of the theory. “Doing” is a critical component to knowing. Scholars in the classroom can have an impact on students that is not limited to lecture explanations. Christian scholars emulate Jesus’ model of service, personally and in their life and work (Adams Center, 1999; Smith, 2003). Scholarship of application takes the researcher into an analysis of “doing”. If service is to be linked with scholarship, it must be coupled directly to one’s specialized field of knowledge. This task is sobering, demanding, and rigorous. It holds all of the foundational accountability affiliated with research (Boyer, 1990).

Scholarship

Scholarship and higher education are synonymous, not just as a means of disseminating findings (Smith, 2003). In an academia setting floundering for want of stability, the Christian belief of God as Creator and Sovereign contributes steadfastness to scholarship so that genuine advancement is possible (Adams Center, 1999). How do we find scholarship examples in the life of Christ? The easy answer is to point out the four distinctions of scholarship made by Boyer (1990). Then we can understand how

Jesus uses the scholarship of teaching and the scholarship of application as previously presented. But, there still remains the scholarship of integration and scholarship of discovery. One example from Christ for each approach will allow us to view Scriptural support.

The scholarship of integration is the connection of ideas and facts pulled together into a meaningful new insight. It is through the linkages that the authenticity of research is supported.

In Matthew 5 we find the story of Jesus sitting on a mountainside teaching his disciples and the crowds that had gathered. The sermon, broken apart, presents individuals who are “poor in spirit”, “those who mourn”, “meek”, “merciful”, “pure in heart”, “peacemakers”, and “persecuted”. Most educated individuals would not connect these characteristics with success. Jesus, however, makes a new connection, a linkage most had not thought of previously. He, in divine authority, states these individuals will, “obtain the kingdom of heaven”, “be comforted”, “inherit of the earth”, “be filled”, “shown mercy”, and “see God”. Certainly this collection of ideas brought new meaningful insights to the listeners.

The scholarship of discovery is to investigate in a disciplined fashion. The passion of learning, processes employed, and outcomes sought provide meaning to the effort. The discovery of new knowledge is crucial to learning.

The story of Jesus and His temptation in the wilderness supplies us with an example of the scholarship of discovery (Matthew 4). Jesus had been fasting for 40 days. Satan came to him with hypotheses: “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread”, “If you are the Son of God throw yourself {from the top of the temple}”, and “All this I will give you {the kingdoms of the world}, if you bow down and worship me”. Jesus responds to Satan by using Scripture, which is the research base of this example. He says in response to the “bread” temptation, “Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” (Deuteronomy 8:3). Jesus responds to the “top of temple” temptation, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test” (Deuteronomy 6:16). The response Jesus gives to “worship me” temptation, “Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only” (Deuteronomy 6:13). Jesus used his research base to engage in a dialogue with Satan. Satan provides us with the hypotheses or problems, which can be turned into questions, and Jesus draws upon Scripture to answer the questions. Surely there was passion on both sides of the dialogue, a specific process of turning away temptation with Scripture was used, and the outcome desired by Jesus was realized. In this way we are provided with the discovery that Jesus turned away temptation by using Scripture. Can these findings be generalized to our human lives, which is often the question of scientific inquiry? The answer is yes, for we are called to follow the example of Jesus. We also can study the Scriptures and use the inspired words to turn away temptation and find answers.

Original colonial colleges were expected to provide instruction in knowledge and moral values. Today the university or academia has become a place of detachment. Research and the professor could be unrelated to teaching and service. Yet, every scholar today must establish credentials of inquiry and original research. It is interesting to note that as the 21st century has unfolded, Post-modernism seems to be losing its grip, a crumbling culture. In fact, from the international vantage, the term is often deemed a western concept. Still the contentions of academia dynamics and politics have transcended into autonomous individuality associated with Post-modernism. The goals of this paradigm are to provide alternative answers and solutions to problems while avoiding conflict (Poe, 2004). It is a

dichotomy on shaky footings, however. Today the critical obligation for academia is to break free from the old teaching versus research politics, and identify, in innovative ways, scholarship definitions where the two can be intersected (Boyer, 1990).

Boyer's Definitions of Scholarship

Boyer in *Scholarship Reconsidered; Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990) describes the myth of academia. The idealized description blends the three traditions of teaching, service, and research. Yet almost all institutions pay this balance of responsibility only "lip service". The evaluation of professionals seldom weighs all three equally.

Historically scholarship involved academia performing research to determine cause and effect or co-relationship, followed by publication, and dissemination through presentations and classrooms. This path seems to be linear, however, causality can frequently point in multiple directions, for theory informs practice but practice informs theory as well.

In a survey of eight hundred institutions of higher education, a paper was presented at Stanford University (1990) where the faculty were overwhelmingly in support of changing the perception of scholarship. Such findings further emphasize increasing dissatisfaction with academia priorities.

Boyer asserts the change of perception is in response of need to define the legitimacy of inquiry with four distinct yet coinciding forms: scholarship of teaching, scholarship of application, scholarship of integration, and scholarship of discovery. Scholarship is reliant on the vigor of each professor in academia. The finding of new knowledge should be absolute.

Scholarship of Teaching underscores the significant importance of teaching, for without it we lose a form of understanding. When a professor enters a setting in which reason is to be shared with the learners, the professor must have a "knowing" of the topic at hand. Thus, teachers are the learners as well as the doors to information. An example would be for teachers to investigate how the addition of on-line discussions to a class structure, such as history, would affect the student outcomes sought. Upon gathering the information, implementation occurs and measurement can be taken on student performance and compared to previous courses where on-line supplements were not employed. Teaching is transforming and extending the mind, new and resourceful directions can be realized. Scholarship comes to full flame in the teacher-student dynamic.

The Scholarship of Application is not just service; rather, the process is dynamic with new knowledge developing from the act of application. An example, the study of what the needs of a community are in terms of housing. Finding a need, putting into place a plan to bring Habitat for Humanity, and the building of homes, the process of which you as a professor and your students participate. The data collected can be authentic voices from all involved as well as the potential for pre and post numerical based surveys. No longer can academia use the "ivory tower" to separate thinking and doing. They go hand in hand in a meaningful, purposeful, mission-driven service to the world.

Scholarship of Integration involves more than one discipline. An example is investigating how faith and learning can be integrated into the teaching of biology, a two-dimensional inquiry. This type of research is fundamental and controlled, designed to bring fresh insights from previous study. This type

of scholarship is intensifying in merit as a means of confirming or even compelling new knowledge topologies.

The Scholarship of Discovery is the most well-known form of inquiry. It is the heart of intellectual culture for academia, and as such, must be married with creative ever-changing thought. Basic science has in fact supplied a vast informational bank. An example of such would be to determine if the requirement of church and/or chapel on a Christian campus significantly alters the lives of students, and in what way. Several variables could be employed, gender, age, residential or non-residential, undergraduate or graduate to name a few. The discovery or substantiation of new knowledge is crucial to the learning process.

Vital Importance of Faith Integration

Rasi (2000) states “In a Seventh-day Adventist setting, its aim [integration of faith and learning] is to ensure that students, by the time they leave school, will have freely internalized a view of knowledge, life, values, and destiny that is Bible-based, Christ-centered, service-oriented, and kingdom based” (p. 12). The responsibility for this student outcome falls on the shoulders of the student as well as the professor; it is not an isolated journey but rather an obligation of the academia community. The task of all life and reasoning, thought and deed must be viewed from the Christian perspective (Badley, 1994). The whole human stance of Christian education demands excellence in teaching, service, and scholarship. As we have learned this trilogy is enmeshed one within the other. Therefore, the professor must not marginalize God when engaging in all areas of responsibilities. For divinity is the very reason the world is systematic enabling inquiry and understanding. God is the every present premise of all Christian scholarship (Sire, 1990).

Misalignment of Christian Perspectives

Socio-historical Reality Disconnect

When it comes to scholarship in public and many private universities, there is a disconnect between what is wanted or needed and the reality of the tenure system. Universities claim they want scholars “committed to the public good”, faculty who are engaged in the community, and students who use their learning in a practical way to better the communities. Higher education claims to desire committed creative scholars. Yet public scholarship is not taken seriously. A broader framework with more flexible definitions of scholarship and research are needed in order to reconsider what constitutes excellence (Cantor & Lavine, 2006). Boyer (1990) believes this disconnect is directly related to the institution’s need for prestige among other universities and the increased desire to attract top notch professors. If excellence in traditional teaching and service roles are touted as being as important to the professorate promotion process, then they should be given equal stress and importance in driving that process. The reality however, is that the institution’s desire for standing and ranking within academia has created the concept of ‘publish or perish’ among their faculty, which in turn limits work toward excellence in delivery methodologies to students and their ability to engage in meaningful community service opportunities or, scholarships of teaching and application (Boyer, 1990). It is as if a three-legged stool had two legs shorter than the third. This overall problem can be seen as a disconnect between rhetoric and action.

Academia has set up rules and structures of acceptable practice whereby promotion is achieved. Individual faculty can complain about the inequities in the tenure system, yet nothing seems to happen because administrators, policy makers, and academia itself refuses to either acknowledge the problem or cannot implement change due to political and internal pressures. Ganssle (2002, p. 4) states “Orthodox methodology is that which determines what is real scholarship and what is spurious.... The community has defined which methods or approaches are acceptable and which are not”. It would seem academia receives verification of its tenure process from the process itself. Some believe this as a type of circular reasoning (Ganssle, 2002). Two questions arise; Does orthodox methodology limit new discoveries or interpretations of findings? “Is it possible to stray so far as to remove oneself from the community altogether?” (Ganssle, 2002, p. 4). Unfortunately, in the majority of academia, the established standard seemingly has been set in concrete. The tenure system as generally applied does not promote nor value the application or integration of research in a meaningful context back to the community or society at large.

The solution to this problem, in Boyer’s (1990) opinion, is for the tenure process to recognize the “exceptional contributions” in other areas such as teaching, application, and integration, not just discovery. In this way teachers of excellence and faculty with exceptional service can work side by side with those faculty engaged in all types of research. In Boyer’s solution, all three legs of the stool are of equal length.

Christian Culture Disconnect

In some Christian universities traditional research and publication has become the stated top work priority similar to secular academia, with little or no emphasis connects research into practical community or society applications. In actuality, Christian higher education often tends to place a great deal of emphasis on traditional teaching and service roles with almost no link to scholarship, in fact to the exclusion of scholarship. At the least, scholarship seems to be marginalized or is seen by some as incompatible with Christian belief and practice of teaching and service. Is it possible to inhabit and work within both the Christian and academia scholarship communities without compromise to teaching and service? Is it possible to be a Christian and a scholar using Boyer’s (1990) definitions of scholarship, and remain faithful to both missions and disciplines? (Ganssle, 2002). Do we as Christian scholars suppress our religious views in order to gain the acceptance of peers or institutional tenure? An observation from The Adams Center (1999, p. 4) says, “The onslaught of secularism and humanism that define ‘Post-modernism’ bombard us with messages that cause us to shrink back from our convictions”. Woodard-Lehman (2006), cautions Christian scholars about the abandonment of distinctive identity as a means of gaining a recognizable and accepted voice. He states our seat is at the table of Christ, and as scholars we should be ‘prophetic pilgrims’ inviting others to a scholarship of Christian possibilities for the world.

Christian researchers need to interface and dialogue with colleagues in other specialties as well as search the Scriptures in order to discover other patterns and connections within their own projects and expertise. “By itself, abstraction will always lead us away from what is truly real. Divorced from the Biblical narrative, a purely abstract knowledge becomes not only self-referential but also self-defeating, fatuous, and sterile” (George, 2005, p. 25). This theme is reiterated by Boyer (1990, p. 18, 19) when he says about the scholarship of integration, “...we underscore the need for scholars who give meaning to isolated facts putting them in perspective. By integration, we mean making

connections across the disciplines.... It is through 'connectedness' that research ultimately is made authentic”.

How can this problem be addressed? How can a change of attitude and practice in Christian higher education be effected? Estep (2002) believes that integration of faith and learning must come from the top. He believes that historically, academic administrators are responsible in large part for the secularization of an institution, and therefore, administration must take positive steps to rectify the tenure situation on their campuses. Additionally, administrators must be committed to integration of their faith into their practice of inquiry and administrative positions. Leading faith integration and scholarship by example can have a powerful effect on an institution.

Basis for Philosophy of Scholarship

Rationale

First, the Christian scholar must believe that God exists. Second, the Christian scholar must believe God is the beginning of knowledge and meaning. Third, the Christian scholar must believe meaning is divine and eternal. Scholars can only find meaning because God created within humanity the ability to reason. God is truth and wisdom, and through Him we also can find understanding (Sire, 1990).

“Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do” (White, 1903). Scripture, the Word of God, is the beginning of wisdom; it is our authority. Immersion in the study of Scripture assists in the understanding of priorities and values we hold as ambassadors for God (Ganssle, 2002; Sire, 1990). Frequently there is distance between religion and intellect, a great divide, but Christian scholars can link these polarities using the integration of faith and learning (Burse, 1996). We have the opportunity to participate with Christ in creative activities which go beyond knowing and reasoning, but also into faith and doing (Page, 1994; Sire, 1990). If we only know with our minds, and do not put this into action, we are not completing the full circle of faith and learning, for learning is the analysis part of reason, and faith is the action. Scholarship can be an “act of worship” revealing God (Sire, 1990). An examination of Biblical accounts can demonstrate for us individuals who integrated faith and learning, meaning they took reasoning beyond analysis and put it into action.

Biblical Accounts

Paul, a changed man, engaged in scholarship of Scripture and the life of Jesus so that he could carry the message of salvation to both Jews and Gentiles. His work is the epitome of analysis and action (scholarship of teaching) (Acts 13-28 & books of the Bible written to believers). Peter is an example of one who followed Jesus, listened to Him, and yet did not fully understand until Jesus was no longer with Peter. It was then that Peter increased in his scholarship of seeking truth. He served God and man through action with unfaltering faith and purpose (scholarship of application) (Acts 8-11). Certainly Joseph was a man seeking wisdom and truth. By means of scholarship, learning to connect each event with a divine authority, Joseph increased in wisdom and understanding of all God's intricate dealings with humanity. Joseph also took action with his analysis (scholarship of integration) (Genesis 30-45). Lastly, Noah was given certain information by God to prepare for a flood, but certainly he had to engage in further research to complete his task. He had never built an ark

previously, never preached to the world before, and certainly had never filled a ship with animals and survived a violent ocean storm. He had to inquire of God and put these words into action believing the proof would hold tight (scholarship of discovery) (Genesis 6-8).

Model of Christian Scholar's Role: Bible Teachings

Sire (1990, p. 94) states "scholarship is... an illuminating of what is near and dear to God himself". Yet the Christian educator is often consumed by teaching obligations. How is it that Christians can engage in scholarship? There are three principles of thought that I would like to share. First, there are many kinds of scholarship that are recognized as valid inquiry. We need to think of how these can be applied to what we as Christian educators are already doing. The second is the possibility of collaborative scholarship. This can occur with individuals who are in our own academia setting, others who may work in our similar content area but working at another Christian institution, or possibly colleagues who have similar interests as ours, but are employed in secular arenas. However, when collaboration occurs with secular scholars, care should be exercised in order to preserve Christian ethics (Galusha, Luxton, McVay and Rasi, 2004). The third principle, I believe is the most potent. It is something I refer to as the "marshland" or "marsh". I will explain the three dimensional meaning of the word and then give an example. When two rivers come together and join to make one, there is often an area created at the merger that is not quite a river and not quite a lake. It is shallow, slowly running water that is part of both rivers, and situated between them prior to their merger. This area is filled with rich soil, tall grasses, and abundant wildlife. It is here original thought for scholarship can be found. The example I want to share with you is not a Scripture story but a real life experience. I strongly believe in the value and dignity of each individual person that God created. This is the first river. I use a specific classroom management structure that has been supported by valid and sustained research to teach teacher candidates. This is the second river. The first river is going to merge with the second river and become a classroom management structure, which values the individual person. Where is the marshland? It is where the two concepts come together. It is here that I insert into the marshland the scholarship of application. What is produced is original research based on my Christian worldview, an empirical methodology of classroom management, and useful data drawn from my employment, which involves the training of teachers. I completed this research and presented it at a national refereed secular conference in Mississippi, 2003. Remember, Sire (1990) instructs us to be stewards of creation, influencing culture by our actions. In fact he states "We are to be "salt and light to the world" (p. 189). This is my goal every time I reach out with scholarship to the secular world. Often times we have no idea of the seeds we plant. But in this case, I recently received an email this past week from one of the attendees, currently a professor at Texas A& M University who was in my Mississippi session. These are her words. "Several years ago . . . you presented a program that you had at your university in the area of classroom management. Have you published anything in this area or done subsequent presentations? Your program was one of the few that focused on the design of a model for teaching classroom management while still holding the dignity of the child. I would be interested in getting a copy of any publications or presentations you have done in the last couple of years." Dr. Stough.

What follows are Scriptural case studies with marshland applications between a concept, the Bible account, and usage of scholarship. The areas of scholarship are teaching, application, integration, and discovery.

Sanctity of Conscience

Boyer (1990) includes the *scholarship of teaching* as an area of recognized scholarship. Aristotle said, "Teaching is the highest form of understanding." We often forget that good teaching includes not only the transmission of information, but also the duty of teachers to learn. According to Boyer (1990, p. 24), "Inspired teaching keeps the flame of scholarship alive". It is the teacher's responsibility to address the knowing and learning process with honesty and intelligence so all can learn. In the area Sanctity of Conscience I find a marsh with the teaching of Jesus and the rich ruler (Luke 18).

The illustration begins "A certain ruler asked Him {Jesus} . . . what must I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus responds to him, "You know the commandments: do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother." The ruler responds, "All these I have kept since I was a boy." Jesus again teaches, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor . . . then come follow me." Following this teaching, the ruler needed to draw upon his conscience to make a decision. "He {the ruler} became very sad because he was a man of great wealth." But indeed Jesus did not let go of him yet, "how hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God." The story continues with Jesus teaching the larger group, "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

The research problem: The ruler indicates he wants to learn, and Jesus is more than willing to teach him. However, the honesty with which Jesus taught did not bring about transformation in the listener {ruler}. The method used: Jesus and the rich ruler were the sample, the intervention was to teach the ruler the information he needed in two parts, and the data collected was the dialogue between Jesus and the ruler. The scholarship of teaching results: the ruler's rejection of the knowledge Jesus provided, and Jesus taking advantage to teach the lesson to a larger listening audience (so others could engage in the dialogue) so that someone would understand the meaning of His words.

Nature of Man

Boyer (1990) includes the *scholarship of application* as an area of recognized scholarship. This type of inquiry asks for an understanding of how knowledge can be applied to significant problems. Within this type of scholarship comes the application of service. Such service should hold accountability and be linked to one's professional knowledge (Boyer, 1990). In the area Nature of Man I find a marsh applied to the Scripture story of Samson.

In the Genesis story (Genesis 1:27-28; (Genesis 3:22) we find that "God created man in his own image . . . male and female he created them". The instructions provided before sin were, "fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground". After sin, the Scripture account states, "Lord God said, The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil". Nowhere is this knowing more distinctive than the life we shall now examine from Judges 13-16.

"The angel of the Lord appeared to her . . . you are going to conceive and have a son. Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean . . . No razor may be used on his head . . . set apart to God from birth . . . he will begin the deliverance of Israel from . . . the Philistines." "The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the Lord blessed him and the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him." The story goes on to tell how Samson tried

to marry a Philistine woman. Things did not go well; acts of revenge occurred. “Samson said to them, Since you have acted like this, I won’t stop until I get my revenge on you.” “Samson led Israel for twenty years in the days of the Philistines.” During this time he was a judge of Israel. “He fell in love with a woman . . . whose name was Delilah.” Scripture continues with the details of how the Philistines pressured Delilah to determine the source of Samson’s strength. The reader might think the end of the story occurs here, “the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes . . . , set him to grinding in the prison.” However, God’s will was fulfilled regardless of human nature. Samson obviously had a change of heart during his incarceration. When he was brought out to a Philistine celebration, Samson prayed to the Lord “. . . Remember me . . . strengthen me just once more . . . with one blow get revenge.” “He pushed . . . down came the temple . . . and all the people in it.”

The research problem: Samson’s life was a special gift from God. God wanted to use Samson in service to Israel to overcome the Philistines. But Samson was a man of human nature, and his decisions were often flawed. The method used: Samson and the Philistines were the sample, the intervention was a continual learning process with Samson making good and bad choices, but trying to find his way to serve God, and the data collected was the gift of Samson, the decisions and consequences he experienced, and the unexpected final fulfillment of service to God and man. The scholarship of application results: Samson, even though a special instrument of God, was human and using his freedom of choice made mistakes, yet his service to God and to the Israel nation was significant and purposeful.

Learning Process

Boyer (1990) includes the *scholarship of integration* as an area of recognized scholarship. This type of inquiry underscores the need to find meaning by gathering isolated facts and synthesizing this into a perspective; a sort of connectedness that contributes to the results. The difference between integration and discovery is in the type of questions asked, which are derived from the problem (Boyer, 1990). In the area of Learning Process, I find a marsh intermingled with integration and the Scripture story of Jonah (Jonah 1-4).

The Book of Jonah begins with the unfolding of his changing perspective. “The word of the Lord came to Jonah . . . Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it”. “But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish . . . to flee from the Lord.” The words unfold to tell us Jonah was on a ship when a great storm came. The sailors thought they would all die. It was decided lots would be cast to determine responsibility for the storm. Jonah was accused. He responded, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea . . . I know that it is my fault.” “they took Jonah and threw him overboard.” “the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah . . . inside the fish for three days and three nights.” Then Jonah began to integrate the facts and determine that God just might be his answer. “I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you . . . I have vowed I will make good.” The fish vomited Jonah onto the land, and he obeyed God, going to Nineveh to preach for 3 days a message of destruction. However, “God saw . . . how they {Nineveh} turned from their evil ways . . . and did not bring destruction.” Jonah became angry. He told God, I could have just as well stayed at home; I knew you were going to save them. He then went away to sulk. God sent a vine to shade him; Jonah was so thankful for the shade. Then God destroyed the vine; Jonah was so angry he wanted to die. Finally the lesson came from the Lord “You have been so concerned about the vine. Nineveh has more than a

hundred and twenty thousand people . . . Should I not be concerned?” The book ends here. We are left to assume that Jonah did use his reason to finally get the central point from all the facts.

The research problem: Jonah did not seem to be able to connect all of God’s actions into a purpose, what does it all mean when the pieces come together. The method used: Jonah and the Ninevites were the sample, the intervention was to use multiple techniques (overt – possible death, and covert – mercy toward humanity) in attempting to help Jonah understand, and the data collected was to examine Jonah’s responses to the interventions used. The scholarship of integration results: Nineveh was saved by Jonah’s obedience and God’s mercy, as well as Jonah learned in his mind (experience with the storm and fish) and heart (salvation of Nineveh and the vine) of God’s purposes towards humanity.

Intellectual Rights

Boyer (1990) includes the *scholarship of discovery* as an area of recognized scholarship. This method comes closest to what is meant by disciplined inquiry, research, and seeking answers regardless of what is believed to be the outcome (Boyer, 1990). In the area of Intellectual Rights I find a marsh between discovery and the Scripture story of Daniel with his three friends (Daniel 1).

As we began “They {Daniel and his three friends in Babylonian captivity} were trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king’s service.” “Daniel resolved not to defile himself . . . and he asked . . . for permission.” Daniel then said “. . . test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance . . . and treat your servants in accordance with what you see. He {the guard} agreed . . . and tested them for 10 days.” At the “. . .end of the tenth day they {Daniel and his three friends} looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men. The king talked with them . . . he found none equal. In every matter of wisdom and understanding he found them ten times better than all.”

The research problem: Daniel was unwilling to eat the king’s food, and wanted to prove that his chosen diet was better than what the king had to offer. The method used: Daniel and his three friends were the sample, the intervention was to eat vegetables and water for 10 days, and the data collected was to compare appearances. The disciplined inquiry or scholarship of discovery results: Daniel and his three friends were found 10 times wiser than all others and appeared healthier than their peers.

Summary Synthesis of Fundamentals

In advancing the faith of Jesus, it is our duty to engage in scholarship. This can be accomplished by teaching, application, integration, and discovery. Scripture tells us faith without works is dead (James 2:17). As a Christian our research should meet the highest standards of ethical integrity. These guidelines are provided for Seventh-day Adventist educators:

1. Employ transparent honesty in the use final interpretation for scholarship findings
2. Explore personal truths that can be expanded to appropriate dissemination sources
3. Ensure appropriate resources for scholarship do not infringe upon institutional purposes
4. Fulfill responsibilities to institutional stakeholders (students, parents, faculty, organizations)
5. Protect the privacy of research participants, yet seek refereed publication for dissemination of knowledge

6. Respect the rights of all contributors to the scholarship endeavor, allowing rights of authorship appropriately
7. Use review boards for institutional research in order to respect all potential restraints (World Education Directors' Consultation)

Christian Scholarship Philosophy

The Christian philosophy of scholarship is defined as a responsibility for all believers. Scholarship maintains a newness of learning, an advancement of wisdom into new front lines of knowledge. The avenue to service is by means of active scholarship for the objective of reason is to intersect faith and learning, knowing and doing. Romans 12:2 tells us the mind will be transformed in the experience of faith. The difference between secular and sacred scholarship is often in the attitudes and approach of the inquiry. Guiding principles in this endeavor can be found as part of the Seventh-day Adventist and Scholarship Statement:

1. Be inquisitive, with an open mind to exploring the world
2. Seek excellence in each area of the investigation
3. Apply persistence to find truth
4. Insist on rigorous examination of all variables and interpretations
5. Hold an attitude of teachability and collaboration
6. Consider how the field of study will be advanced through the integration of faith
7. Incorporate the highest levels of integrity and ethical practice
8. Restrain from introducing divisive or overly sensitive ideas (Galusha, Luxton, McVay, & Rasi, 2004).

There are threats and profits within Christian scholarship. Seekers can lose sight of God's larger picture for our lives. If not purposeful, scholarship can consume unnecessary resources. There is the potential for scholarship to entertain destructive and divisive discussions. However, when engaging in scholarship one can gain a deepening knowledge of God and a synergy of analysis and action. An institution which promotes scholarship will itself be energized by both students and faculty who engage in the interaction of faith and learning through scholarship. Excellence in scholarship can also increase thinking and discovery in the church bringing a vibrancy of increased conviction for truth. Scholarship as described by Boyer (1990) can assist the systematic investigation of God's revelations both at the theoretical and applied levels (Galusha, Luxton, McVay, & Rasi, 2004).

Personal Belief System

I believe it is the responsibility of each individual who claims to be a Christian, regardless of the status within culture, to teach others in the world about Jesus and the messages from Scripture and nature. "Go and make disciples of all nations, . . . teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19, 20). I believe it is the responsibility of each individual who claims to be a Christian to serve others as Jesus has served us. "Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men" (Ephesians 6:7). I believe it is the responsibility of each individual who claims to be a Christian, and who works in the academia environment, to seek and advance knowledge based upon Scriptural foundations. "I will give you wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict" (Luke 21:15). This is a large task. I also strongly believe that it is our duty to prioritize our time in a

balanced fashion so that all three areas of responsibility can be fulfilled. May we not be “weighed in the balances and found wanting” as was Belshazzar (Daniel 5:24).

Some may think, I teach and serve (traditional views), but I have not time for scholarship. Or possibly, even if I invested my time in scholarship, if I tried to publish in the secular world it would not be taken seriously. And another might think, I do my part in the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) academia in which I am employed and therefore, my scholarship can be within SDA publications. It is my belief that these ideas should be challenged. This is not to say that as SDA Christians we should not seek to advance knowledge in our own publications, but in addition to this, it is our responsibility to push the envelope of our comfort level and reach beyond this limited scope.

Jesus tells us, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37). This is clear instruction that we are to study and learn using our entire mind; clearly investigative reasoning is required. “Be very careful, then how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil” Ephesians 5:15, 16). In this passage, Paul provides counsel to the Ephesians, obviously Gentiles and not Jews. He advises them to live in wisdom, taking on opportunities to increase in the wisdom of God. “Although I am less than the least of all God’s people, this grace was given to me; to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery” (Ephesians 3: 8, 9). Here again Paul is writing to the Ephesians stating the information God provides to us is not just for the Jews but also for the Gentiles.

In my work as a scholar, I have found that there are many Christians, holding theist worldview perspectives who are not employed in SDA academia. These individuals are seeking intellectual wisdom and truth just as we are in our journey toward eternal life. It is when we reach out and witness to the world at large, that we find these seekers. If we do not reach out in intellectual endeavors, we miss this opportunity to share God’s wisdom with other Christians and secular researchers.

I will conclude with a few questions for your consideration:

- (1) If we only teach and serve, then where do we find the excellence of knowledge that we are seeking to teach our students? From secular inquiry based on nontheist worldviews?
- (2) If others before us had said, I cannot do this or that because I may be rejected, how far would the gospel have been spread to this date?
- (3) If I do not spread God’s message using a theist worldview to support my research questions, ethical data gathering, and interpretation of findings, and publish this information in other Christian as well as secular circles, then how am I to enlarge the territory for God to intervene?

It is my prayer that these words will speak to your heart. That you will know God has intellectual responsibilities for you when He allowed you to advance your education both soul and mind. That you will seek God in using your voice of reason in the area of scholarship for Christianity.

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