

Models of Faith and Reason:  
Marginalization, Coexistence, or Integration  
Steve Wilkens  
Azusa Pacific University

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#### Marginalization, Coexistence, or Integration

There is a strangeness to this book that should not escape our attention. We are Christian educators, deeply invested both in our faith and in our academic vocation. The vast majority of us believe that no inherent contradiction exists between the mission to educate and our call to be Christian. Moreover, this intuition does not appear to be idiosyncratic to those directly engaged in educational endeavors. Wherever Christianity has taken root, one of the first things Christians have done is found, fund, and staff schools of all types. The universality of this practice would indicate to most observers that Christians believe that education is central to our identity. Despite this, the plethora of books about faith-learning integration (including this one) is testimony to the fact that we really are not quite sure how to do it, even though, as Christians, we feel a deep impulse to engage in this process.

I believe our instincts are correct—education is a natural facet of the Christian calling. Moreover, I will assume that the difficulty in working out the questions of integrating faith and learning are not attributable to some inherent tension between the two. Instead, my thesis is that perhaps we have some misconceptions about both faith and learning that stand as hindrances to the task of faith integration. This sets the three goals of this chapter.

First, I want to identify six models for understanding the respective roles of faith and reason. Like all models, these are rarely instantiated in pure form. However, my hope is that they will provide a helpful taxonomy for examining various approaches to faith and education, with all the possibilities and limitations inherent in each, and offer a mirror to discern and challenge our own approach. The first two, the Enlightenment/rationalist and the fact/value dichotomy models, are what I will call marginalization models because they relegate faith and

theology to the obscure corners of the university, and often offer that only grudgingly. The third paradigm is the value/fact dichotomy, which I categorize as a coexistence model. Unlike marginalization models, the value/fact dichotomy desires a partnership between faith and reason in the university. However, this model, even though it aspires to integrate faith and learning, lacks an intellectual foundation for accomplishing this task. As a result, it falls short of actual integration and defaults to a coexistence between the faith and learning. The last three models—separate spheres view, Augustinian synthesis, and the Thomistic synthesis—all offer grounding for integration, but have differing formulations of how reason and faith should interact.

My second aim is to argue that the fact/value dichotomy represents a major obstacle to faith integration. Because of the deep influence of the fact/value dichotomy in education, even when Christian scholars are offered the opportunity to integrate faith and learning, often we simply invert this model and adopt a value/fact dichotomy. While the latter moves faith out of the margins, it offers nothing better than coexistence. As a result, our attempts at integration are often incomplete and unsatisfying. Identifying this as a problem for integrative efforts explains why I have disrupted the chronological flow in which the various models of faith and learning arise. If we can problematize the educational assumptions that emerge from the more recent marginalization and coexistence models, it prepares us to re-consider older, more intentional models of faith-learning integration.

My third goal is to shed some light on why faith integration takes on different hues when placed in different theological contexts. This last concern helps explain why I have constructed my taxonomy in this manner. Other models are available to help us sort out various approaches to faith-learning integration. The best-known is probably that offered by Hasker (1992). Similarly, different sources examine how different theological traditions shape integration efforts

(Hughes, 1997; Hughes, 2003). However, my hope is that the approach below will fulfill both tasks simultaneously, although I will acknowledge that that space available only allows me to give an account of a few theological traditions.

### **Reason Defines What You Believe – The Enlightenment/Rationalist Model**

If we want to identify the source of at least some difficulties with faith-learning integration, I believe that the fact/value dichotomy—the separation of facts and values into distinct and non-overlapping realms—is a good place to begin. To illustrate how this works against faith integration, I will devote attention to the examination of Marx Weber’s seminal address, *Wissenschaft als Beruf* (Science as Vocation). However, to get to this, it will be helpful to briefly survey the Enlightenment roots of the fact/value dichotomy.

Much has been said about the tensions between Christianity and the Enlightenment. For our purposes, I will focus on two pivotal pressure points. First, the Enlightenment made reason the gatekeeper of what one should accept as true within religion. Second, because divine intervention with the natural order does not conform to the regularities demanded by reason, much that was super-rational in revelation was eliminated and true religion is reduced to rationally-defensible ethical belief. Kant is a prototype of the rationalistic model. The first principle—that religious belief should be justified by reason—is apparent before even opening the covers of his *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*. The second idea is found in his thematic claim that, “Morality . . . leads ineluctably to religion, through which it extends itself to the idea of a powerful moral Lawgiver, outside of Mankind, for Whose will that is the final end (of creation) which at the same time can and ought to be man’s final end” (Kant, 1960, pp. 5-6).

Thus, the essence of Kantian religion is belief in a moral God who places rationally-discernable moral demands on human agents.

As we will see below, the Enlightenment view of faith as subservient to and dependent on reason displaces earlier models of faith and reason. One reason for this displacement is that Christianity's claim that revelation gives unity to truth was seriously undermined by religious strife and warfare during the period. Proponents believed that by demoting theology from its role as "queen of the sciences" and elevating philosophy and, later, science (*Wissenschaft*) to this position, they could re-establish the unity to truth on a rational foundation. Second, most Enlightenment figures did not advocate reliance on reason in order to destroy or displace religion. Instead, the intent was to set faith on a reliable scientific basis that was open to examination by all, not just those who affirmed certain revelatory claims. In other words, the desire was to save religion from the scandal of conflicting and irrational revelatory and ecclesiastical affirmations.

The last point is important because, without recognizing the Enlightenment's desire to profess a scientific religion, it is difficult to grasp why so many American Protestant universities (perhaps one from which you received your degree) were well down the road toward secularism by the early twentieth century. The intent of these universities was not to undermine religious belief, but to provide it a solid, mutually agreeable rational foundation. However, on the intellectual level, confidence that autonomous reason would properly direct, support, and strengthen religious belief waned during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On the institutional level, the rationalistic approach to merging faith and reason failed to sustain Christian identity both confessionally and existentially.

The confessional problem is that the rationalistic approach to religion ultimately does not endeavor to preserve Christianity, even if most Enlightenment figures believed that Christianity was the best instantiation of the religion they sought. However, that which is filtered out of confessional Christianity by rationalism's grids includes super-rational claims about matters central to the Christian confession (e.g., Jesus' incarnation and resurrection). The so-called purified residue is a religion that can be affirmed by any clear-thinking agent, regardless of, or despite the absence of, any Christian commitment. In the end, this approach does not represent a merger of Christianity and reason, but a hostile take-over in which the former is slowly marginalized within or exiled from the university.

The existential failure of rationalistic religion involves its re-definition of faith. The Enlightenment approach demands disinterested neutrality as the route to truth. We must divest ourselves of all biases, desires, traditions and customs in order to achieve the Archimedean perspective of the enlightened. Only then are we allowed to commit ourselves to belief. In a sense, this view of faith reverses the pre-Enlightenment model of "I believe in order that I might understand" to "I must understand (rationally) before I might believe." However, placing cognitive prerequisites on belief had little appeal to the vast majority of Christian believers outside the academy whose faith was not dependent on supposedly unassailable cognitive foundations.

Moreover, confidence that religion and ethics could find firm moorings within philosophy or science carried decreasing levels of wallop for academics as we move toward the twentieth century. Contrary to the earlier assumption that reason would support religion, many scholars concluded that no form of religion, even when stripped of traditional doctrines, could pass muster with reason, especially as reason became increasingly identified with empirical,

scientific methods. Second, there was growing consensus within the academic community that religious claims could not be properly judged true or false because they did not meet scientific criteria for consideration as factual claims. They are, instead, statements of personal preference or belief that are subjective in nature. As a result, religion, which the Enlightenment had moved away from the domain of theology into the custody of philosophy and science, now increasingly shifts into the expressive disciplines within the humanities and the co-curricular realms of the university (Marsden, 1996; Reuben, 1996).

### **Public Fact and Private Values – The Fact/Value Dichotomy**

Because the Enlightenment had effectively intertwined religion with ethics, the rise of positivism further marginalized both religion and ethics within the university. Positivism codifies the growing notion that the category of fact includes only that which can be empirically tested and verified. Because ethical claims (e.g., lying is always wrong) or religious assertions (e.g., God is loving) are unverifiable and unfalsifiable by empirical means, they are considered non-factual statements. Instead, they are personal statements of value or preference. The notion that factual claims and value statements must be separated was quickly absorbed into educational structures. Often this occurred unconsciously. However, many quite consciously recognized the implications of the divorce of fact and value, reason and faith. Few, however, state it as clearly as does Max Weber (1946) in his address entitled “Science (*Wissenschaft*) as Calling (*Beruf*).”

The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the ‘disenchantment of the world.’ Precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have retreated from public life either into the transcendental realm of mystic life or into the brotherliness of direct and personal human

relations. It is not accidental that our greatest art is intimate and not monumental nor is it accidental that today only within the smallest and intimate circles in personal human situations, in *pianissimo*, that something is pulsating that corresponds to the prophetic *pneuma*, which in former times swept through the great communities like a firebrand, welding them together.” (p. 155)

Even before we exegete the rather lengthy paragraph above, Weber identifies one important implication of the fact/value dichotomy he proposes. He would be keenly aware of the religious connotations of the term “vocation” and clearly views *Wissenschaft* as a calling that stands in competition with all religions. “That science today is irreligious no one will doubt in his innermost being, even if he will not admit it to himself. Redemption from the rationalism and intellectualism of science is the fundamental presupposition of living in union with the divine” (Weber, 1946, p. 142.) However, under the assumptions of the fact/value dichotomy, one *can* serve two gods—*Wissenschaft* in the university, and any one of other gods on your own time.

Weber’s positivistic move of bifurcating scientific reason and revelation leads to a thoroughgoing fragmentation of every facet of life. The most obvious observation comes from our quotation above. For Weber, it is neither accidental nor tragic that “the ultimate and most sublime values” have retreated from academic life. While the university speaks *about* what people believe to be ultimate values (because this can be observed and quantified), Weber is correct that those voices that speak *from* such ultimate values are now heard only in *pianissimo*. This means, of course, that the values that give meaning to life, precisely because they are *ultimate* concerns, are to be treated as objects within the ivy-covered buildings, not as that which moves and directs our deepest desires.



Moreover, the academic community was no longer a social structure welded together by, as Weber puts it, some *pneuma*, as was the medieval university. If there is any unity within the university, it consists in the abstract notion of the search for factual truth. However, under positivist pressures, the Enlightenment's dream of maintaining the unity of Truth through Science evaporates into discrete disciplinary truths under the custody of discrete sciences, each with its unique methodology.

The fragmentation of public and private realms also has devastating effects on the Enlightenment's ideal of a universal ethics grounded in the transcendent. Weber anticipates that, when confronted with the separation of fact and value, listeners will ask: "what then does science actually and positively contribute to practical and personal 'life'?" His answer is three fold. *Wissenschaft* "contributes to the technology of controlling life by calculating external objects as well as man's activities." (Weber, 1946, p. 150) Second, it offers tools for critical thinking. Finally, and most importantly, *Wissenschaft* clarifies the rational implications of our worldviews in choosing between options. Recognizing the implications of certain decisions will help "you remain faithful to yourself" (Weber, 1946, p. 151.), the impact of which he immediately reinforces by adding that the meaning one draws from such a choice is ultimately subjective.

These tasks constitute something of a moral mandate in *Wissenschaft*. The teacher who forces an individual "to give himself an *account of the ultimate meaning of his own conduct*. . . stands in the service of 'moral' forces; he fulfills the duty of bringing about self-clarification and a sense of responsibility" (Weber, 1946, p. 152). However, this task requires the same arm's-length treatment of all scientific method. Weber says that the professor's moral duty is accomplished to the degree that "he avoids the desire personally to impose upon or suggest to his

audience his own stands.” (Weber, 1946, p. 152) Thus, Kant’s transcendental moral ideal that imposes categorical ethical demands on each individual morphs into a pragmatic tool under the weight of Weber’s positivism. Moral qualities such as honesty are simply a utilitarian necessity to assure that those engaged in *Wissenschaft* maintain a sense of neutrality and integrity in their investigative methods.

For our purposes, it is essential that we recognize a third implication of the fact/value dichotomy. By reducing values to the category of subjective preference, we undercut any possibility of explaining why *Wissenschaft* should become our vocation.

The natural sciences . . . presuppose as self-evident that it is worth while to know the ultimate laws of cosmic events as far as science can construe them. This is the case not only because with such knowledge one can attain technical results but for its own sake, if the quest for such knowledge is to be a ‘vocation.’ Yet this presupposition can by no means be proved. And still less can be proved that the existence of the world which the sciences describe is worth while, that it has any ‘meaning,’ whether it makes sense to live in such a world. Science does not ask for answers to such questions. (Weber, 1946, pp. 143-144)

In this quote, Weber signals awareness of two ramifications of his method. First, he understands that his own methodology requires unverifiable presuppositions. Thus he will say, “Whether . . . science is a worth while ‘vocation’ for somebody, and whether science itself as an objectively valuable ‘vocation’ are . . . value judgments about which nothing can be said in the lecture-room. To affirm the value of science is a presupposition for teaching there” (Weber, 1946, p. 151). For some unexplained reason, however, Weber seems less disconcerted about the unverifiability of *Wissenschaft’s* presuppositions than he is about unverifiability of religious

statements. Second, he is conscious that these presuppositions do not allow for discussion of what were once considered “ultimate questions.” These “ultimates” are now replaced by Weber’s “ultimate laws of cosmic events.” Such ultimate laws, however, have no direct bearing on the world of meaning. The latter is the domain of what Weber calls “seers,” “prophets,” “leaders,” and, when he is in a less charitable mood, “demagogues.”

There is so much to be said about this, but at minimum it should be noted that, by simply asserting that the pursuit of scientific endeavors is valuable, Weber has imported values into the university. Moreover, he has done so without offering any justification that would be deemed valid by the very methodology he subscribes to. To state it otherwise, whether he will admit it or not, Weber’s positivism implies a faith system. Thus, Christian educators might ask, “If one cannot help but bring some type of faith into the educational process, on what grounds can one bar Christian faith from the university?”

### **The Coexistence of Faith and Reason – The Value/Fact Dichotomy**

There are autobiographical reasons I have outlined Weber’s views at such length. In my educational pilgrimage, I had absorbed the assumptions stated so explicitly in Weber’s essay, despite the fact that both my undergraduate and graduate schooling came in evangelical institutions. In other words, even in institutions committed to faith, the fact/value dichotomy, which dismissed from the beginning the possibility of faith-learning integration, had made deep inroads even into Christian education. Perhaps more significant is that this bifurcation of fact and value was never explicitly advocated. Neither was it examined. I was never *taught* this view; I was *taught through* the filter of this view. By the end of my formal education, it seemed self-evident that this was how education should work. Since it was not a subject of critical

examination, the presuppositions of the fact/value dichotomy became even more deeply embedded and, until consciously extracted and challenged, exerted influence over my understanding of how an educator should function.

While I had absorbed the belief that faith and reason were best kept divided, as a Christian, I could not accept the idea that faith, the most important part of my life, should be kept on the margins. Happily, I found a position in a faith-based university that agreed, and strongly stressed the importance of integrating faith with every discipline taught at the school. However, though I teach in a discipline where faith and reason intersect on every issue (philosophy), I could not escape the uneasy feeling that I was not really engaged in integration, but was instead attempting a mash-up of two things that were of uncertain compatibility. My colleagues in areas where the intersections between faith and reason were even less obvious were in even deeper despair than myself.

In hindsight, I would not describe my early teaching endeavors as faith integration. Instead, I had only taken my fact/value assumptions and inverted them to come up with what I am calling the value/fact dichotomy. From my experience in working with faith integration, I do not think my experience is unique, so perhaps the idea of a value/fact dichotomy will spark some self-recognition.

The value/fact dichotomy, as I have stated above, rejects the marginalization of faith, ethics, and values within the academic structure. However, like the fact/value dichotomy, it assumes that our attempts at *informing* students are distinct from the institution's mission to *form* students. Thus, the content of classes may be almost indistinct from that found in a secular university except for a devotional thought, Scripture reading, and/or prayer at the beginning. On the curricular level, the formation duties would be most manifest in Bible and theology

requirements. Even here, however, faculty are torn between graduate training permeated by fact/value assumptions that instruct them to approach the Bible as text (information) versus institutional expectations that they come to it as Scripture (formation). Indeed, the bulk of the formation process is left to the co-curricular side via chapels, dorm Bible studies, mission trips, and other “spiritual” experiences. Thus, faith and learning co-exist institutionally in a manner described by Hamilton and Mathisen (1997) as a “value-added model” (270). However, little real integration occurs.

Not only does this model tend to structuralize fact/value assumptions, ironically, it can result in the university itself perpetuating anti-intellectual attitudes within students. If faith is different from and of greater importance than cognitive pursuits, we subtly (and perhaps overtly) communicate that the mission trip takes priority over research for the English paper. It also picks up another bad fact/value habit by agreeing that the value dimension of life is strictly personal and individual. Thus, the value/fact dichotomy cuts off the believer’s faith from the Church and its history and encourages a subjectivist foundation for belief. Finally, because we have not actively integrated the whole of the classroom, students draw the conclusion that they have to write certain things down to pass the psychology test that they could never affirm as Christians, again encouraging a compartmentalization of faith and learning. In short, the value/fact dichotomy causes Christian scholars to believe that we have achieved our educational mission because university structures provide a context in which faith is nurtured. Unfortunately, it generally does so primarily by enculturation, not education.

### **Faith Apart from Reason – The Separate Spheres Model**

Perhaps one way to register my concerns with the value/fact dichotomy as a useful model for Christian education is that it allows our assumptions about education to modify what we mean by “Christian” rather than allowing the adjective, “Christian,” to shape what we expect from education. The next three models represent conscious, reflective approaches that, if understood clearly, allow our faith to modify how we define education. In other words, each position believes that faith adds something to the educational process that will not be seen or understood apart from faith.

Many might wonder why the next model, which I will call the “separate spheres” model, could be properly defined as integration. After all, it starts in much the same place that the value/fact paradigm does; it believes that faith and reason have two quite distinct functions and rules. There are, however, two decisive differences. First, the separate spheres model builds on conscious theological and anthropological arguments for dividing these two realms while simultaneously holding them in dialectical tension. Because of this, while the value/fact dichotomy model accepts the assumptions of the fact/value model, the separate spheres view represents an active challenge to business as usual in the academy. Second, while the value/fact dichotomy often reduces faith to the subjective level, the separate spheres view understands faith as subjectivity.

The separate spheres view has deep roots in Christian history. Indeed, its most basic expression is found in Tertullian’s question, “What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church?” (Tertullian, *On Prescription against Heresies*, 7) His assumed answer is, “Nothing!” This answer begins from the theological premise that God is categorically different from creation. Therefore, attempting to ground any Christian belief in reason, even one as basic as that of God’s existence, represents a false start.

Reason is a fine tool for the created order, and will allow us to discover effective ways to fill a cavity, drill a well, or teach reading to a first-grade student. God, however, is not part of creation, but is Wholly Other. It would be presumptuous to believe that natural reason could pierce the supernatural realm.

If human beings know anything that is true of God, it is not because reason has discerned God's logic, but because God has willed us to know. God's willing self-revelation brings us to another important aspect of the separate spheres model. We know God, not as a rational being, but as a volitional being, revealed in Scripture. Thus, our point of contact with God is not reason, but will. This is how the separate spheres model understands Scripture's emphasis on faith. Faith is a volitional commitment, not intellectual assent to a set of rationally derived propositions. Our spiritual task, then, is to be shaped by the revelation of God in.

The emphasis on subjectivity within the separate spheres model also has a theological basis. Reason seeks objective knowledge. However, God is subject, not object. Personal beings are not known by distanced neutrality, the means of knowing in Enlightenment and *Wissenschaft*, but by relational means. This perspective helps us grasp the shortcomings of rational knowledge. It is never *knowing* in a personal sense; it is *knowledge about*. However, mere knowledge *about* God distorts God's essence. Only in relational knowledge do we encounter the true God as subject. The reason this form of knowing is described as subjectivity is that God is the one who initiates revelation. We know God on God's terms. In contrast, subjective claims of knowledge are based on impulses that arise from within us.

An example of the separate spheres view is found in Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*. Here Kierkegaard revisits the story of Abraham and Isaac in a direct response to the Enlightenment's notion that the realm of faith can be collapsed into ethics. Kierkegaard points

out that normal ethical demands, such giving rational explanations for our activities or engaging in actions that benefit the whole, are completely absent from Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac at God's command. Isaac's death benefits no one, and Abraham discloses nothing about his intentions as he leaves with Isaac for Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:1-19). Thus, instead of identifying ethics with faith, Kierkegaard contrasts them. If Abraham acts ethically, he cannot go through with the sacrifice of Isaac (which is murder according to the standards of ethics); if he acts in faith, he cannot act for the benefit of all or explain his actions (Kierkegaard, 1946).

By citing Kierkegaard as an exemplar of this position, we may recognize the appeal of the separate spheres view for Christians with existentialist inclinations. While this connection has validity, we should also remember that Kierkegaard was deeply Lutheran, and this theological background helps us link Lutheran educational practices with this concept of faith and reason.

Stated otherwise, it is not difficult to move from the idea that faith and reason are separate spheres to Luther's idea of the two kingdoms. Luther's two kingdoms model says that every Christian lives with one foot in God's kingdom, which operates according to grace, with the other foot firmly planted in the fallen world of nature. The paradox of our dual citizenship is never resolved in this life. Within the university, this means that reason represents a valid means of navigating the created order, but that faith has the important task of reminding reason of its boundaries and limitations. In this dialectical tension, faith stands as a witness that, despite reason's best efforts, none of our educational endeavors will bring about God's kingdom.

This approach, rightly understood, fosters Christian modesty about scholarship. In a sense, reason is used as a weapon against itself. We employ reason until it tells us where we have reached its limits. Because our rational efforts remain subject to the corrosive effects of



sin, it discourages pretensions of finality in our theories and strategies and fosters openness to academic views from all sources, secular and Christian. The separate spheres view also rejects the idea that any particular perspective or framework should be imposed on faculty or students. Instead, as Hughes puts it, “one seeks to bring the secular world and a Christian perspective into conversation with one another” (Hughes, p. 15).

The necessity of living in two distinct worlds requires a university design that balances the intellectual demands of the curricular with strong co-curricular program specifically intended to nurture faith. The difficulty of holding a dialectical balance between these two poles points to one of the difficulties of maintaining an educational structure that remains true to Lutheran roots. Over-emphasis on academics can result in loss of the prophetic witness provided by faith, while tilting toward the spiritual functions of the university can produce apathy toward learning and passivity toward addressing social evils and ills. Even when a structural balance is maintained, students and faculty can easily lose the theological mooring of this dialectic and lapse into the easy compartmentalization of the value/fact dichotomy.

### **Believe in order to Understand – The Augustinian Synthesis**

Our next two views suggest a more positive role for reason and a more robust potential for integration. Both views, as David Kelsey (1993) puts it, see “the world as an elaborate code of analogies, in which everything at the material level of reality refers to a higher level of spiritual realities, which in turn refers still higher to God” (p. 38). The two models diverge on a “chicken or egg” issue. Must one already have faith in order to understand, or does properly employed reason lead to faith. The Augustinian synthesis adopts the first option, taking its cue from his famous quote, “Believe in order to understand” (Augustine, 2001a, Sermon 43, 4), later rephrased by Anselm (1996) as, “Unless I believe I shall not understand” (*Proslogion*, 1).

In broad outline, The Augustinian synthesis argues that divine grace is the necessary condition of knowledge; the mind cannot employ its rational capacity apart from it. Thus, all people are recipients of general grace. “For you [God] are the true light, which illumines every human person who comes into this world.” (Augustine, 2001, *Confessions*, IV.xv.25). This general grace may illuminate the intellect so that one learns successful strategies to excel at Scrabble or acquire new languages with relative ease. This knowledge is good, but only to the extent that it draws us upward toward the God who is the source of all truth. Indeed, there is sufficient clarity within all truth that it should compel our intellect toward God. However, this proper use of reason is short-circuited by our sinfulness.

To state the problem in its most direct way, Augustine argues that we do not follow truth to its proper source because we do not want to. Our will is so deeply damaged by sin that our desires cannot turn toward God, that which best and highest. In this sinful condition, our intellectual endeavors will always be guided by prideful impulses. Thus, Augustine (2001) says, “if the rational mind itself is vicious, errors and wrong-headed opinion corrupt our life” (*Confessions*, IV.xv.25). The upshot of this is that, apart from a renewal of our desires, our intellectual endeavors ultimately mire us ever more deeply in sin’s trap. We use the mind’s powers, a gift of God’s grace, for self-aggrandizement instead of as a means of glorifying God.

The solution to our volitional problem is a saving grace that comes exclusively from the Godward side. Through this grace, our will is rehabilitated in a way that makes faith possible. As a result, “the will is healed and may be able to do what it could not do when it was weak” (Augustine, *Letter* 145, 3). Following faith, we may not have any more data than we possessed before, but we are now able to place our knowledge within its appropriate context. This form of knowledge is what Augustine refers to as understanding.

A similar view of the relationship between faith and reason is found in Calvin (1960), who states that, reason is a result of “the general grace of God” (II.ii.17) that “is bestowed indiscriminately upon pious and impious” (II. ii. 14). However, a “heart problem” limits what the mind can do. “Men become wise only when an understanding heart is given to them” (Calvin, 1960, II.v.4). Thus, Calvin (1960) says, “For even though the minds of the impious too are compelled by merely looking upon the earth and heaven to rise up to the Creator, yet faith has a method of its own peculiar way of assigning the whole credit for Creation to God” (I.xvi.1). Unless this is placed within the context of God’s loving providence, “we do not yet properly grasp what it means to say: ‘God is Creator’” (Calvin, 1960, I.xvi.1).

The close affinities between Augustine and Calvin reveal an approach to faith integration characteristic of the Reformed tradition. Unlike the Lutheran model that severs the spheres of faith and reason, the Calvinist/Reformed paradigm seeks an all-encompassing integration under the authority of a sovereign God. Perhaps no statement better encapsulates this notion than the proclamation of the Reformed theologian, Abraham Kuyper (1998): “There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry: 'Mine!'" (p. 488). This total sovereignty provides the believing scholar an over-arching worldview that gives integrity to truth. Under this umbrella, every field of study enhances our understanding of and gratitude toward the Lord of all Creation.

In addition to understanding and expressing gratitude toward God, Christians are called to transform society’s structures in accordance with a Christian worldview. As a subset of this, Christian scholars are called to challenge and redefine the methods, theories, and goals of the secular educational enterprise, reminding us that nature cannot be fully comprehended apart from the categories of creation, fall, and redemption.

While the Augustinian synthesis strongly affirms the role of the intellect, this strength can also be a vulnerability. First, it can reduce faith-learning integration to a purely cognitive activity and overlook the fact that faith involves more than our intellectual abilities, particularly those most directly linked to philosophical thought (Jacobsen and Jacobsen, 2004, pp. 26-28). Second, although the Calvinist doctrine of depravity offers ballast for overcoming intellectual arrogance, the Augustinian synthesis can fall prey to triumphalism and, in its insistence that only grace can purify knowledge, ignore advances in knowledge from non-Christian sources.

### **Grace Completes Nature - Thomistic Synthesis**

Thomas Aquinas is a well-known advocate of natural theology, which argues that some elements of the Christian faith, such as moral truth (natural law) and the existence of God (the “Five Ways”), can be discovered through proper use of our God-given rational powers. This is the first (and often the only) place where most encounter the thought of Aquinas. Unfortunately, this sometimes leads to the misconception that he champions a rationalistic approach to Christianity. However, while he gives reason a more prominent role than many Christian thinkers, from the outset of his massive *Summa Theologica* (1980), he states, “It was necessary for man's salvation that there should be a knowledge revealed by God besides philosophical science built up by human reason” (Ia,1,a.). This “knowledge revealed by God,” communicated through Scripture and preserved by Church tradition, is the foundation for Sacred Doctrine, which is accepted by faith.

While this reminds us that Aquinas sees validity in both faith and reason, it is important that we understand the workings of each in relationship to the other. Truths of God knowable by natural reason are not articles of faith, but are instead the “preambles of faith” (*praeambula fidei*) (Aquinas, 1980, *ST*, Ia,q.2,a.2). This knowledge is useful because it removes intellectual

obstacles to belief and points us toward the faith's higher truths. However, Aquinas is quick to point out reason's limitations. First, that known by natural theology does not necessarily lead to faith. Our will can fail to follow that which reason reveals as true. Second, "truth about God, such as reason can know it, would only be known by a few, and that after a long time, and with the admixture of many errors" (Aquinas, 1980, *ST*, a,q.1,a. 1).

Reason's truths pale in comparison to revealed knowledge that tells us, for example, that God is Trinity or that Christ's death is the means of our redemption. The latter cannot be discovered by reason alone, but rests on our faith in the authority of God. This does not mean, however, that such beliefs are irrational. Once revealed, reason serves sacred doctrine by "mak[ing] clear other things that are put forward in this doctrine" (Aquinas, 1980, *ST*, 1,q.1,a.8, resp.2.). Thus, Aquinas (1980) summarizes the relationship between the two: "Since therefore grace does not destroy nature but perfects it (*gratia non tollit naturam, sed perficit*), natural reason should minister to faith as the natural bent of the will ministers to charity" (1,q.1,a.8, resp.2.).

The most direct expression of the Thomistic synthesis is found in Roman Catholic educational systems. It agrees with the separate spheres view in asserting that secular structures and power have a valid place in Christian life. At the same time, by placing faith and reason in an interactive relationship, it sides with the Augustinian synthesis over the separate spheres view. The validation of nature as a realm that points toward faith allows Catholic scholarship to welcome non-Christian voices in intellectual pursuits. Since the realm of nature points toward grace and revelation, these voices can be drawn up into the work of Christian scholars in both intellectually and spiritually edifying ways. Thus, it has a strong hedge against the potential for triumphalism of the Augustinian synthesis.

Another feature of Catholicism's understanding of the connection between nature and grace is its sacramental view of education. Just as the sacraments transform nature into supernature, God's work offers the possibility of transforming all knowledge into knowledge of the divine. However, to protect it from too quickly adopting new ideas that arise within the academy, Catholicism's long history provides deep resources that help secure it from faddishness. Similarly, the global character of Catholicism helps it avoid succumbing to prevailing cultural ideas.

The most obvious vulnerability of Catholic educational structures arises in the delicate balance of openness to voices from all quarters and its reliance on Church Tradition and ecclesial structures. When untethered from its structures and history, Catholic universities often have lost their distinctly Christian character. On the other hand, as the Church's condemnation of Galileo illustrates, a tradition guided authority structure is often resistant to new discoveries, theories, and realms of investigation.

### **Conclusion**

Christians are called to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mk. 12:30). The "and" in this sequence sends a strong signal that this is not multiple choice. Instead, the Christian life should manifest an integrity in which each God-given dimension of our existence is brought under Christ's Lordship. The fullness and integrity of life is part and parcel of the abundance of salvation. The same impetus undergirds our efforts to integrate faith and learning. Our educational endeavors are directed at heart, soul, mind, and body people—image of God people—not heartless, soulless, disembodied minds. Thus, even though the university is focused on the development of intellectual capacities and technical skills, we cannot engage this task in a way that fragments our students' lives.

The Christian confession calls us to faith, a faith that shapes all that we see, think, and do. Thus, for those whose vocation is to minister through education, the way we understand the relationship between faith and reason is not a peripheral matter. Instead, it is at the center of the way we engage in our ministry. While Christians differ on the precise manner in which faith and reason relate to each other, it is imperative that we thoughtfully consider the models that fall short of the ideal of integration and recognize the possibilities of paradigms that provide guidance to our educational mandate.

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