

# **The Pietist Idea of a Christian College**

June 12-13, 2013

Bethel University

CC 430

**Reading Packet**

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## Workshop Schedule

All sessions in CC 430 unless otherwise indicated.

### Wednesday, June 12, 2013

9:00 Large group session: An overview of the history of Pietism

*Reading: editors' introduction and Olson chapter in The Pietist Impulse in Christianity; selections from Brown (chs. 1, 7) or Clifton-Soderstrom (chs. 1, 5)*

10:00 Roger Olson: Pietism and Pentecostalism

11:00 Small groups: themes in the history of Pietism (CC 430/431; cont. over lunch)

*Reading: at least two additional chapters from The Pietist Impulse in Christianity, Clifton-Soderstrom, and/or Brown*

1:00 Large group session: Pietism at Bethel and other universities

*Reading: Anderson and Olson articles from Bethel faculty journal; Peterson/Snell chapter in The Pietist Impulse in Christianity*

2:00 Small group discussions: Pietism in Bethel's history

*Reading: 1-2 earlier attempts by Bethel faculty and administrators to define the school's identity in relationship to Pietism (Carlson, Fagerstrom, and Gehrz in reader; Barnes foreword to The Pietist Impulse in Christianity)*

3:00 Conclusion

### Thursday, June 13, 2013

9:00 Large group session: continuation of themes from first day

10:00 David Williams: Pietism, faith, and reason

*Reading: Paris article on Pietism and love in cultural anthropology and her critique of Mark Noll's Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind*

11:00 Small groups: scholarship, teaching, service, etc. (CC 430/431; cont. over lunch)

1:00 Roger Olson: implications of Pietism for Bethel as a learning community

*Reading: Olson talk from 2006, on convertive piety and community at Bethel*

2:00 Small group discussions: communities

2:45 Writing projects: pitches and feedback

## Pietism and Bethel University

At multiple points since Bethel College became a four-year college in 1947, certain of its leaders and faculty have appealed to the Pietist tradition as a source of distinctive identity. Early examples of the theme came from incoming dean Clifford Larson, whose 1955 talk on Pietism and education at the University of Halle has yet to be recovered, and history professor **Dalphy Fagerstrom**, whose March 1956 address to the college faculty identified “useable elements” from European Pietism and explored their meaning for Bethel — what he called “a dangerous attempt to measure some present elements at Bethel against my version of a pietist yardstick.”

The two staunchest defenders of the Pietist tradition at Bethel in this period were long-serving president **Carl H. Lundquist** (1954-1982) and seminary historian (and later, college dean) **Virgil Olson**, who — with his father Adolf — introduced Pietism into the historiography of the Baptist General Conference. Several of Lundquist’s annual reports to the Baptist General Conference are available online through Moodle; included here is current History Department chair **Christopher Gehrz**’s 2011 article drawing on those reports and other documents from Lundquist to compare his use of Pietism to that of his contemporary, North Park College president and Evangelical Covenant historian Karl Olsson. Virgil Olson is represented by the historical sketch that he delivered to the College Faculty retreat in August 1988. (Responses from historians Jim Johnson and G.W. Carlson are available on Moodle.)

As Lundquist gave way to George Brushaber (1982-2008), some long-time faculty complained that Bethel traded in a distinctively Baptist Pietist identity for a more generically evangelical one. This section of the reader concludes with two examples of that theme published in the school’s faculty journal: philosophy professor **Stanley Anderson**’s 1985 article asking, “If Bethel College did not exist, would we invent it?”; a decade later, **G.W. Carlson** warned that the “new generic evangelicalism may not be compatible with many of the traditional, pietist, Baptist distinctives.” (Olson’s 1988 talk may also be understood as part of this reaction.)

CHL Papers, box 31

D. Fagerstrom,

Thoughts on the Pietist Heritage and the College

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My contribution to this session is not in the form of an historical survey. Instead, I am attempting to find in the pietist heritage a starting point for a discussion of values that are present or that I think ought to be present at Bethel. This subject has been discussed informally on many occasions. I am attempting to translate some of the assorted, informal exchange on the character of Bethel into an on-the-record statement. Needless to say, I can speak only to the college.

A beginning in the systematic use of the pietist background for thought about the college was made in a faculty meeting last fall when Dean-elect Clifford Larson discussed aspects of pietist philosophy of education exemplified at the University of Halle in the early years of that institution. No doubt I will repeat some of what he said, but I hope to indicate some principles which may be useful guidelines in additional areas, and I will make a dangerous attempt to measure some present elements at Bethel against my version of a pietist yardstick.

I am aware of the danger of exaggerating the pietist element in our past, since that element is not the total history of the Swedish Baptist movement. But in this discussion, pietism is assumed to be of special significance to our inner history. Any group which is unified through common aspirations and practices has certain common memories. The general history of the world, of western civilization, of the Reformation, of the movement of peoples with their cultural baggage to America, the history of all of these is a part of the history of Bethel College and Seminary. Within this outer history is that narrower segment of experiences which caused a group to form a community or family of like minded people sharing aspirations and in time sharing a special, common past and who produced, among other works, Bethel College. The togetherness of our group, as of any group, is strengthened when there is a persistent memory of important events or values in the past life of the community. If the community is vital, newcomers to it, in entering into its life, absorb its historic spirit and character. Thus the history of the group endures.

If we assume that the course of events that resulted in Bethel occurred under God, the history of these events, it seems to me, can be studied fruitfully to help us to understand ourselves and also as a source for inspiration and ideas for the college character that we are trying to build. In thinking about our past, I have been interested primarily in this inspiration and source of ideas. I am not trying to prove anything about the school on the basis of its history; I am not proposing a theory of pietist determinism in the life of the school. Certainly the pietist element left an enduring mark on the Conference and on the school, but this pietist past could be ignored without Bethel College as an institution coming to an end. In that case, however, with a substitute set of values in the institutional shell, the Bethel of our inner history might very well come to an end in a spiritual sense. Hence the pertinence of an examination of our Providential past for ideas to incorporate into our thinking about the school and its future.

While insisting upon the relevance of the past, I find it necessary to make the obvious qualification that not everything in any past is good. Therefore, I will be selective concerning our pietist past and will reject any pietist emphases that I consider essentially provincial, provincial in that they were responses to local and contemporary circumstances. I am attempting to select out useable elements from our past, as I see them, and will try to bring these to bear on the situation of change and, we hope, progress that obtains at Bethel today.

I raise the question, then, what aspects of our pietist heritage, of special relevance to our college, should we try to preserve in the conviction that our history has been purposeful, that what developed under God should not be lightly forgotten or discarded, in the belief that these aspects of our history have enduring value for us today and tomorrow?

In order to find the "useable elements" of our past, I have looked generally at the pietist movement in German Lutheranism, its extension to Scandinavia, and its migration to America. Many groups have shared beliefs and practices with this movement. Many similar elements are found in English Methodism for example, or in the middle colony pietist groups in eighteenth century America, or in the awakenings and revivals of eighteenth and early nineteenth century American history. Each of these expressions has also its distinctive features, some of which I presume are embodied in institutions born from them. For insight into the nature of our particular inner history we are fortunate to have as systematic an account of our past as is found in Professor Olson's history. I think it is also possible to make judgments from some degree of personal acquaintance with the Conference, from persistent reading of the Standard, and from a few years of immersion in the college.

Apart from the orthodox theological tenets which were basic in pietist belief patterns but which I shall not discuss, relevant characteristics of the movement often cited are the following:

First, the pietists were concerned about the spirit rather than the forms of Christianity. They were interested in personal religious experience rather than in assent to dogma or participation in sacraments; they emphasized personal individual conviction rather than collective authority. Consequently their movement involved a reaction against theological forms which seemed to them to be substituted for experiential faith. As a result of this reaction they were critical of the institutional church, although they were slow to separate from it.

A second theme of the pietists was their insistence that the believer live a new life which should be as "holy and as nearly perfect as possible." Thus they expected a radical change in individual lives--not, indeed, a life of sinlessness, but they expected in Christians a contrast to contemporary worldliness. In some instances this emphasis led to a "sour faced somberness, an exasperating interference in other peoples' private affairs," and a pharasaical self-righteousness. It led to some sectarian emphases such as those of a group in early 18th century Stockholm called the "Greycoats," a group which "dressed in utmost simplicity in expectation of an immediate last judgment." It sometimes led to a rigid discipline such as that exercised at the Scandia, Minnesota, Church in the third quarter of the 19th century. Here worldly speech and Sunday reading were banned and "no member was to bring a case against another before a court of law until it had been acted upon by the church." On the other hand, the new relationship between the individual and God could and did "find expression in a quiet happiness and neighborliness," such as that of a Stockholm pietist and naval chaplain of whom a contemporary rationalist wrote, "The love of God shone in his eyes."

The pietist emphasis on the individual has already been implied in their stress on personal experience in contrast to institutional forms. Their individualism deserves additional mention because, from a secular point of view, the greatest contribution of the pietists was their antipathy to authoritarian forms and hence the democratization of their branch of the church. Furthermore, it is generally agreed that pietist and Methodist elements supported the democratic movement in England and America. They were also interested in humanitarian reforms which have been an integral part of the democratic movement.

Their individualism had other consequences. The pietists demanded a "large authority for the laymen in the affairs of the church and...active participation by laymen in religious meetings." This in turn opened the way for at least minor doctrinal vagaries, of which the Pietists were quite tolerant because "their emphasis was chiefly on the convert's purity of life," and on the power of the gospel in the hearts of men. Doctrinal differences were secondary to the new life in Christ. Theological disputes, in fact, were considered "irrelevant and detrimental" to the extent that they caused a "loss of vitality within Christianity." This is not to say that doctrinal disputes never arose and it is not to minimize Pietist insistence upon orthodox Protestant theological tenets. However, in the movement down through our own Conference, there has been a reluctance to draft detailed credal statements into every corner and crevice of which everyone's beliefs must be squeezed.

The Pietists have historically had a humble view of their prospects for outward success. They did not expect to change the world. They did hope to change--even to transform--the churches, and this they expected to accomplish through the small communities of the truly saved and redeemed within the churches. In Germany and Scandinavia the pietists were cell groups, practicing the presence of Christ within the church, but slow to go outside to build new church structures. When expedience demanded new church organizations--such as the Baptist and others--the new structures were usually on the very modest scale dictated by small numbers and smaller resources, especially in the American west in the 19th century.

Finally, there has been in Pietism an inherent simplicity. This was most evident in a simple faith based on experience and on a common study of the Scriptures rather than on intricate, systematized theological forms or ritual or sacraments. This simplicity is evident in many ways, and sometimes graphically. At the Scandia, Minnesota, church again, some 75 years ago, a protest arose against ritualism because two deacons were seated on either side of the pastor at the Lord's Supper. I am certain that this type of simplicity has been demonstrated frequently. I recall an occasion when the pastor in my home church requested members taking communion to hold the bread in their hands until all had been served instead of consuming the bread as soon as it was received. My father protested publicly in the church against this innovation. He declared that it was formalism.

The simplicity was expressed in other ways. The godly life was regarded as one that was unostentatious in dress and conduct. Allowing for the loopholes in any generalization, Pietists were content with a minimum of adornment in their places and forms of worship as well as in their dress.

These elements in the pietist outlook--while not exhaustive--will serve as departure points for comment relative to our school. They can be summarized as: concern with the spirit rather than the forms of Christianity; concern about the consequences of faith in daily life; an emphasis on individualism which had democratic implications in church and in social and political life; a humble and unostentatious bearing. I derive another principle from these, namely, that inherent or incipient in the movement is a continuous criticism of the whole cultural environment.

The question still remains, "so what?" Precisely what directions based upon our Providential history can we give to the institution of higher learning that has issued from this history? I cannot make letter by letter applications from

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past experience, in part because the characteristics I cited are generalizations, not blueprints, in part because some elements once important are not pertinent today, and in part because I think excessive literalism would be contradictory to our "inner" history. But two themes are especially important for us. One is the absence of an authoritarian spirit. The other is the emphasis on alienation from the world.

I think that we can expect first and most obviously that the religious outlook at Bethel will not be authoritarian. Our movement has been a carrier of what we may call orthodox Protestantism, and our outlook and instruction and contention for the faith will continue within this framework. Our emphasis, however, will be upon the Christian commitment of the individual and on the working out of the consequences of that commitment in the maturing total personality of the student. This will be the emphasis rather than an imposition of a detailed blueprint of belief and conduct upon the skins of our students.

The non-authoritarian outlook of Pietism has been generally true of Bethel. I noted in an article on the Seminary in the Standard only a few months ago that Professor Reuben Omark made appreciative mention of the undogmatic atmosphere within which he worked. I am sure that I am laboring a point frequently made and discussed, perhaps even taken for granted. But so long as this outlook prevails, we do well to be aware of it, and to appreciate it. (I think that we would be out of character if we boasted about it, if we blazoned it in huge letters in billboard type advertising. Our heritage of quiet simplicity suggests that we refrain from such noisy self-acclaim. But, I repeat, we should appreciate this outlook.)

Furthermore, we must recognize that we could lose this character. Failure to appreciate our history in this as in other regards may make us vulnerable to insistent, shifting winds which are more the product of contemporary tensions than of historical development and testing. Or, more likely, in the continuing growth of our institution, the character can be eroded, little by little, and lost by default.

A recent episode, small and perhaps of no importance, may be cited in the hope that it will be illustrative. Claims were made in the Student Senate and in the Clarion that the student lounge should be open during chapel hour since chapel, after all, is not compulsory. The issue led the administration to define for the students what is meant by voluntary chapel attendance, and the definition turned on the distinction between a right and a privilege. Absence from chapel was termed a privilege, not a right, and attendance at chapel was said to be as much required as attendance in class. In response to President Lundquist's request for faculty comment on the ruling, I must express regret that the legalistic distinction between a right and a privilege was ever brought into the discussion on chapel attendance. It is a legalistic ruling which eliminates the voluntary principle. I am sure that students without background in political science cannot appreciate the distinction, and for many it must bear the marks of subterfuge in that it actually involves a claim that attendance is voluntary at the same time that it claims attendance is required. I think the definition is implicitly if not explicitly authoritarian.



I think our character can be better served if the student questions on this issue are answered by a simple, clear statement of the importance that the school ascribes to chapel. This importance is great indeed. Chapel at Bethel should be a primary means through which our historical religious outlook is demonstrated and taught. Consequently, from the viewpoint of all who are interested in Bethel, it is very important that students attend, regularly and voluntarily. So important is this agency in the school life and objectives that the administration can properly subordinate any other activity during the chapel hour, can make all other activity secondary during this 40 minute period, in order to underline the importance of chapel. On this basis I consider it reasonable to close the coffee shop and lounge, and I think that the students could understand and appreciate this situation. Such an approach seems to me wise and appropriate to our circumstances, particularly because of the role chapel should play in perpetuating and developing a valued outlook. Beyond this I think we cannot go, because compulsory chapel would be self-contradictory. We cannot teach the voluntary, personal character of pietism by authoritarian means. Least of all should we use a legalistic device that compels students to volunteer to attend.

Further comment of a similar kind could be made with regard to conduct, dress, etc. Some elements in our history have codified conduct and dress. In my view these elements have to be gently reprimanded in retrospect and their example not followed. I think those who have a special responsibility on the campus for student deportment can derive useful principles from the non-authoritarian aspect of our heritage. These principles should take account of the inevitability of change in our social environment, and they should be appropriate to an educational institution in that they involve provision for a setting within which young people learn judicious conduct by growing into it. Specific delineation of these principles must be left to a future Dean of Students but I think they should include a recognition of the force as well as the temporariness of fashions in contemporary life, and they should not confuse good grooming with sin. Also the rules for conduct should be guiding principles rather than laws. These guidelines would be justified in terms of the traditional concern for consequences of faith in daily life but they would recognize that faith does not grow out of conduct, but conduct out of faith. As faith grows, we can look for a responsible pattern of living. I think, further, that means for expressing approval and disapproval will ideally be indirect and designed to enlighten rather than to restrict. Since virtually all young people find a challenge in laws which restrict dress and anything but the most drastic kind of conduct, principles rather than laws would avoid a situation in which psychological challenges to engage in immature conduct are built into the campus.

Some of the most important implications of the non-authoritarian heritage relate to the problem of freedom for the teacher and scholar. Among commentators on higher education there are different viewpoints regarding religious or any other commitment requirements for faculty members. Some insist that no such requirement of any kind can be squared with essential and necessary academic freedom. Others insist that since every one has commitments of some kind, the solution to the problem of academic freedom cannot lie in eliminating commitments nor does it lie in bringing all varieties of commitments on to one campus. The solution lies, it is asserted, in awareness on the part of the instructors of their commitments and conscientious effort in the light of these to teach fairly and accurately. Competent people interested in Christian higher education have published statements on this problem worth our attention. I hope our faculty will sometime devote formal attention to the question.

At this moment I am assuming that a faculty of committed Christians can teach fairly and effectively in the liberal arts, and I am assuming that this can be done coordinately with the Christian instructor's effort to relate the arts to the Christian faith. If this be granted, the fact remains that the instructor in a Christian institution of higher learning must still be free to grow as a scholar and he must be free to teach the subject matter and the principles and ideas which, as a result of his scholarship, seem to him the important things to teach. This does not make for anarchy. At the very least, since we claim to be a liberal arts college, we certainly must include liberal arts subject matter in our offerings. Then there is a necessary, basic framework of departments, courses, objectives, experiences or materials agreed upon by the faculty, academic dean, and appropriate committees as essential. This framework a faculty member accepts when he joins this particular community. Within the community framework the instructor must have a maximum of freedom. It is my view that such a condition of freedom follows naturally from our heritage.

I think that I need not dwell more upon implications of the undogmatic and uncreedalistic temperament of our movement. The applications I have attempted to make are illustrative, intended to indicate that this facet of our past is a relevant value. It would be pointless to add more instances since ideally this value in practice will not normally be isolated and brought out from cold storage for review as concrete issues bring it in question. Rather it will pervade, permeate, subsist in this community. If I may be so bold, I submit that ideally this non-authoritarianism will be an integral part of the love of associated Christians.

The second broad area in which our history can be brought to bear upon the potential character of our school is the area of democratic impulses implied in the reaction against formal state churches. There are obvious elements here that it is unnecessary to dwell upon. Numerous historians have cited democratic forms of church polity as a source for democratic procedures in other areas such as social relations and political organization. I am thinking of a more subtle kind of democratic contribution which I think should always flow from Christians but which actually appears only sometimes, namely, criticism of the socio-cultural environment. The pietist example for this lies in their criticism of an institutionalized Christianity which was closely tied in with the social and political structure. It also lies in their insistence that the Christian life means a new way of walking in contrast to the world. We have advantages which enable us to extend the scope of their example: we have historical retrospect--or hindsight--and we have degrees of training in analysis and criticism of our environment. I think that we can and should take a lead from these early non-conformists and in the areas of instruction which deal with our environment we should be persistent, insistent critics. I think, for example, that the Christian approach to American history is not to search for divine providence in American affairs, but simply to try to understand in order as a Christian to criticize. Of course I should not, in my courses, spend all my time running down snivelling inconsistencies in American life. But there are cultural pressures which seek to sanctify American history in the interest of American nationalism and subtly to bend churches to the service of political and cultural nationalism. When reference is made to founding fathers laboring under God to establish the American way of life, I find it necessary to suggest that these fathers were not so different from men of later periods, including our own. Commentators do not stress the religious aspects of President Truman's administration, but Truman was probably as much a Baptist as George Washington was an Anglican. When Benjamin Franklin in the

Constitutional Convention suggested at a crucial point that sessions be opened with prayer, a number of members objected on grounds that this would lead to "disagreeable animadversions" and Alexander Hamilton is reputed to have said at this point that the Convention was not in need of foreign aid. More important, the contemporary literature on the constitution--the literature in which the adoption of the constitution was debated--ignored God almost entirely. The arguments for and against the Constitution were secular. These founding fathers were mainly concerned about such things as a sound currency.

In these remarks on the sanctification of American history I develop a straw man, of course, but the example serves to illustrate the point that we should not accept as good what our environment declares good until we have first subjected it to the most critical examination of which we are capable and then have tested it by Christian criteria. (For the benefit of the Curriculum Committee, this suggests that courses in Christian ethics and on Christianity and the Social Order have an important place in the curriculum, and since frames of reference are inevitable, I think it proper, even essential, that these courses be developed within the frame of reference that our inner history implies.)

The role of the man of God as a critic of the world has been asserted from Old Testament times. This role is relevant to any institution of higher learning, but our institution ought to seize the role from an inner compulsion and make it a continuing part of our character. Within and from our college there should be a constant stream of social criticism.

There is at least a third area that deserves mention before I bring this to a close. I think we can draw from our inner history an inspiration for our art, that is, for our music, order of worship, decoration, or architecture, or wherever in our community esthetic experience can contribute to our program. Few would dare say that our history has been notable here. No doubt until recently beauty has been a negligible consideration in the design of far too many Conference churches, not to mention the college. Reaction against formalism plus the difficulties of immigrant life in America may be sufficient explanation. But I offer for the consideration of the art and music departments and for the overall planning powers that be this idea: that the simplicity that has characterized Pietist and Conference history can be made a central theme in design. If some will not go so far as I go in asserting that simplicity per se is beautiful, at least most will admit that simple lines can be beautiful, that simplicity is not hostile to beauty, that beauty can be contained within simple forms. What the music and art departments can do in a practical way toward searching for useful emphases or forms which express this simplicity I do not know, although I think some effort in this direction would be worthwhile. I think Howard Smith would agree that in the area of church music simplicity need not be confused with inanity. I think competent architects can design campuses--as well as churches--which express the genius of the institution. Intricate gothic structures would be contradictory for our campus, but the alternative is not necessarily barns and warehouses. Surely the simple, equalitarian, religious beauty of our movement can be built into our campus. A specified quantity of building materials can be made into either a beautiful or an ugly building. Since the buildings on our campus are inevitably a part of the educational environment of our students, I think it possible and important to make the very buildings teach by their reflection of our Providential history.

I have referred to the humble view pietists held concerning their prospects for outward success. Through their small circles they hoped to bring about changes in individual lives and in the churches. They did not expect to turn the world upside down. With like modesty, to say the least, I suggest we are unlikely to become a Heidelberg, Sorbonne, or Uppsala. But whatever our external insignificance, our institution, its character and its potential, emerged in the stream of Christian history and therefore deserves our best possible efforts toward its spiritual and intellectual vitality. Values from our past brought to fruition can give our college a character that is significant in the Christian cause both in the Conference and more broadly in the world of learning.

My remarks on this subject may be viewed as mere shoptalk. Some minds may be asking, "Is it realistic for us to consciously seek to develop the character that I have suggested can follow from our history, to seek to develop conditions combining great seriousness of purpose with freedom, conditions that are conducive to the growth of a community of scholar teachers committed to Christ, committed to learning and to a Christian use of learning, committed to teaching? Is such thinking visionary in a utopian, escapist sense?" I find myself asking, "What is the alternative?"

D. I. Fagerstrom  
March 21, 1956

138 bodies in the areas of body enhancement, relating to others, and spiritual formation.

The jurors praised the article on several levels. One juror writes: "The essay generates creative suggestions on how a more fully developed theory of embodiment, one that is grounded in both social science research and biblical insights, can have profound implications for both our relationships to others and our spiritual formation." Another juror adds: "[The essay] is a thought-provoking holistic viewpoint of the human experience in relation to God and in community. She provides a clear thesis, drawing upon the social sciences, cultural, historical, and theological perspectives. Her assertion of the integration of body, soul, and spirit challenges customary ways of thinking about embodiment."

We commend Ms. Hall for an article that is a model of insightful, interdisciplinary Christian scholarship. CSR thanks this year's jurors, Naomi Larsen (Spring Arbor University) and Todd Steen (Hope College).

## Recovering a Pietist Understanding of Christian Higher Education: Carl H. Lundquist and Karl A. Olsson

By Christopher Gehrz

"Why a Christian college?" Arthur Holmes' answer to this question is so familiar on evangelical campuses as to seem timeless: "Its distinctive should be an education that cultivates the creative and active integration of faith and learning, of faith and culture."<sup>1</sup> Christian higher education inculcates a Christian worldview, as the foundational assumptions of academic disciplines are integrated with the foundational beliefs of Christian faith, equipping graduates to play redemptive roles in society. Holmes' "integrationist" answer remains an important one, admired even by those who disagree with it: "This is a powerful vision of faith and scholarship, and it has spawned perhaps more sustained reflection on faith and learning than any other Protestant theological tradition," grant two critics.<sup>2</sup>

"But," asks philosopher James K. A. Smith, "...what if this line of thinking gets off on the wrong foot? What if education, including higher education, is not primarily about the absorption of ideas and information, but about the *formation* of hearts and desires?" Rejecting the rationalist contention that humans are primarily thinking animals ("containers for ideas") and questioning the Reformed tradition's response that we are, still more fundamentally, believers, Smith insists that "our primordial orientation to the world is not knowledge, or even belief, but *love*." The failure to recognize this orientation has been costly. Smith laments that the integrationist-worldview model, which "doesn't touch our core passions" and is "unhooked from the thick practices of the church," rarely forms disciples of Christ who most deeply desire his kingdom. Graduates of colleges and universities following this model can articulate a "Christian perspective," but they act much like everyone else.<sup>3</sup>

Smith's critique is particularly striking because it comes from a leading scholar

In this paper, Christopher Gehrz explores the educational philosophies of two leading figures in the history of Swedish-American pietism: Carl H. Lundquist (president of Bethel College and Seminary, 1954-1982) and Karl A. Olsson (president of North Park College and Seminary, 1959-1970). While Olsson and Lundquist disagreed on several points, their common emphasis on "convertive piety" resulted in a distinctively pietist understanding of the purposes of the Christian college and its nature as a Christ-centered community. Mr. Gehrz is Associate Professor of History at Bethel University.

operating within the tradition (Reformed) and institution (Calvin College) that have most profoundly shaped and modeled faith-learning integration. But it may resonate most strongly with the many Christians for whom, as Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen have argued, the Reformed language of worldview is quite alien. Especially if they come from traditions that stress the experiential and affective dimensions of Christianity, non-Reformed scholars "will probably feel they are speaking a second language of sorts if they try to adopt the integration model in its entirety." Pietists, for example, are likely to be suspicious of any approach attaching special importance to the examination of philosophical presuppositions and theological propositions "because for them the real nub of faith is to be found in the heartfelt experience of God."<sup>4</sup> As in seventeenth-century Germany, today's Pietists worry that thoughtful belief amounts to nothing more than "dead orthodoxy" if the thoughtful believer's heart is not transformed by the experience of conversion and regeneration.

But do Pietists have anything to contribute to an enlarged conversation about Christian higher education other than suspicions and concerns about the Reformed model? If not the integration of faith and learning, what do Pietists see as the purpose of Christian higher education? Have Pietists defined distinctive educational models of their own? Unfortunately, neither Smith nor the Jacobsens seem all that interested in these questions. In the midst of his argument that we should recognize Christian higher education as an ecclesial task of *kardia* formation, Smith admits that "for some... such talk seems to come with the baggage of fundamentalist Pietism. It seems to make the Christian college an extension of Sunday school."<sup>5</sup> Instead of considering that something often described as a "heart religion" might provide resources for his "re-visioning" project, Smith seems simply to associate Pietism<sup>6</sup> with fideism. Also seeking to move beyond the Reformed language of integration and worldview, Douglas and Rhonda Jacobsen encourage all Christian scholars to explore a wide variety of theological, spiritual and socio-political traditions. But while they teach at a college in whose history (as written by Douglas Jacobsen, among others) Pietism was a key influence,<sup>7</sup> they lump Pietists with Baptists and evangelicals into a "primitivist tradition" whose ability to sustain mean-

<sup>1</sup>Arthur F. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 6.

<sup>2</sup>Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen, *Scholarship and Christian Faith: Enlarging the Conversation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 26.

<sup>3</sup>James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 17-18, 46, 219. Italics original.

<sup>4</sup>Jacobsen and Jacobsen, *Scholarship and Christian Faith*, 26, 28.

<sup>5</sup>Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 219n.

<sup>6</sup>At least, "fundamentalist Pietism," a definition or examples of which are not provided. Smith tried to clarify his use of "Pietism" in a review symposium on *Desiring the Kingdom* featured in *Christian Scholar's Review* 39 (Winter 2010): 231.

<sup>7</sup>Douglas Jacobsen, "The History and Character of Messiah College, 1909-1995," in *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Success in the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 327-45.

ingful scholarship they doubt.<sup>8</sup>

Like all Christian traditions, Pietism has had anti-intellectual offshoots on its fringes, but more commonly Pietists have been dedicated to educational reform. Early leaders like Philipp Jakob Spener, Nikolaus von Zinzendorf and especially August Hermann Francke devoted ample attention to schools, universities and seminaries, as did leading thinkers of cousin-traditions like Moravianism (especially Johann Amos Comenius) and Wesleyanism.

This article will survey the ideas of two Pietists who are less familiar than those early modern leaders, yet speak more directly to contemporary debates in Christian higher education. In the late nineteenth century, Pietists joined a massive migration of Swedes to North America and there founded new denominations, including the Baptist General Conference (BGC) and my own, the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC). These two groups established seminaries that have since grown into small universities: Bethel and North Park, respectively. As these schools completed the transition from two-year junior colleges to four-year liberal arts colleges in the 1950s and 1960s, their presidents were, respectively, Carl H. Lundquist and Karl A. Olsson.

Though little known today outside of their traditions, Lundquist and Olsson were thoughtful, articulate leaders who drew on recurring themes in the pietist tradition to help define the purpose and nature of Christian higher education in an era of profound changes for their denominations, their colleges, and the larger church and academy. Most fundamentally, each defined the purpose of higher education in what can only be called salvific terms, believing that God worked through education to transform the whole person—heart and soul, not just head—as part of the process of conversion. After introducing how what Olsson called "convertive piety" shaped his and Lundquist's theories of education, we will consider two important criticisms of Pietism: that it focuses on the individual to the neglect of the church, and that it strives so hard to avoid "dead orthodoxy" that it breeds heterodoxy. Olsson and Lundquist's responses to the first of these concerns will help flesh out further similarities in their understandings of Christian higher education by defining the church-renewing mission of the pietist college, its features as a community sharing devotion to Jesus Christ, and the role of the professor in that community. However, their answers to the second will show them parting company over what remains a challenge for Pietists: how to reconcile dual emphases on freedom and holy living.

The two men were not regular correspondents, so we do not have the benefit of years-long conversation to help sharpen our image of their similarities and differences in philosophy. But comparing and contrasting how each Pietist president answered the question, "Why a Christian college?" yields a dialogue that still has much to contribute to the larger conversation about the purpose of Christian higher education.

<sup>8</sup>Jacobsen and Jacobsen, *Scholarship and Christian Faith*, 89-90.

While the recent proliferation of Pietism studies on both sides of the Atlantic has resulted in a much more complex picture of that tradition than this article could convey, church historians within (including Karl Olsson) and without the Swedish-American pietist tradition underline its continuity with the familiar story of pietist reform in Germany after the Thirty Years War.<sup>9</sup>

Lutheran pastor Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) is often credited with founding Pietism, owing to his encouragement of conventicles (*collegia pietatis*) in Frankfurt and his publication of *Pia Desideria* in 1675. For Spener and his followers, confessions of propositional belief such as the Lutheran "Symbolical Books" had to be tested against the rule of Scripture alone and accompanied by holy living and heartfelt devotion; absent orthopraxy and orthopathy, orthodoxy was "dead." The "Pietists" (so called by their critics) did not reject Luther's model of forensic justification, but they did emphasize soteriological ideas viewed with suspicion by Lutheran scholastics: God's work of regeneration in what the Lutheran mystic Johann Arndt (1555-1621) had called the "new life" of the Christian, which required a personal conversion to Jesus Christ and led to sanctification. In addition to the inner life of personal piety, the love-activated faith of the Pietists took the external form of social action. Most famously, August Hermann Francke (1663-1727) established an orphanage, publishing house, missionary center and educational institutions in the city of Halle.

Pietism moved north to Scandinavia in the time of Spener and Francke, and the appearance of small groups independent of the Church of Sweden led to an edict against conventicles in 1726. Though pietistic Moravian missionaries continued to arrive throughout the eighteenth century, Pietism did not develop into a mass movement in Sweden until the 1830s, when the English Wesleyan evangelist George Scott led a revival. Even after Scott was forced to leave the country in 1842, Pietism flourished both in Stockholm, under the leadership of Carl Olof Rosenius (1816-1868), who edited the newspaper *Pietisten* and helped organize the Evangelical National Foundation in 1856, and in the countryside, where small groups of *läsare* ("readers") studied Scripture in their homes.

While such conventicles were no longer illegal, Swedish Pietists struggled with their relationship to the established church. Baptist preachers like Fredrik Olaus Nilsson (1809-1881) and Gustaf Palmquist (1812-1867) were the first to break off; as historian Mark Granquist points out, "in denying the validity of infant baptism, [the Baptists] eliminated the keystone of the whole Swedish religious-political system."<sup>10</sup> Rosenius and most other Pietists remained within the Church of Sweden

<sup>9</sup>Virgil A. Olson, "The Baptist General Conference and its Pietistic Heritage," *Bethel Seminary Quarterly* 4 (May 1956): 54-66; Karl A. Olsson, *By One Spirit* (Chicago: Covenant Press, 1962), 7-34; Jonathan Strom, "Problems and Promises of Pietism Research," *Church History* 71 (Sept. 2002): 544.

<sup>10</sup>Mark Alan Granquist, "The Swedish Ethnic Denominations in the United States: Their

and did not require immersion of believers, but, like the Baptists, they emphasized the necessity of conversion and regeneration and continued to meet independently for Bible study. Rosenius' successor as editor of *Pietisten*, Paul Peter Waldenström (1838-1917), appealed to his own reading of Scripture to challenge the Lutheran doctrine of penal atonement and questioned whether unconverted individuals ought to receive (or serve) Communion. In 1878, he and other Rosenian Pietists formed the Swedish Mission Covenant, retaining nominal ties to the state church.

The revival soon spread across the Atlantic Ocean, as Pietists were among the 1.3 million Swedes who migrated to North America between 1850 and 1930. Leaving behind persecution in Sweden, Nilsson, Palmquist and other Baptists founded their first churches in Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota in 1852-1853. State conferences began to organize in the 1850s and 1860s and came together as the Swedish Baptist General Conference in 1879. Waldenströmian "Mission Friends" began to arrive in America in large numbers in the 1870s and formed new Lutheran synods. After deciding not to unite with the more confessional Lutherans of the Augustana Synod, they organized as the Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant in 1885.<sup>11</sup>

### Bethel and North Park, Lundquist and Olsson

Like other Scandinavian immigrants, Swedish-American Pietists took a keen interest in education. Within one generation of arriving in the United States, the Conference Baptists and Mission Covenanters had each founded an institution of higher learning that became more than the "simple preacher's college" that some descendants of the *läsare* movement would have preferred. Bethel and North Park followed similar trajectories of development: both started as small seminaries (Bethel in 1871; North Park in 1891) and added junior colleges (North Park, 1901; Bethel, 1932) that evolved into four-year liberal arts colleges after World War II (Bethel, 1947; North Park, 1956).

In 1959, North Park welcomed its first fourth-year students and its fifth president, Karl A. Olsson (1913-1996). Mentored as a young student and instructor at North Park by the school's founder, David Nyvall (1863-1946), Olsson pastored churches in St. Paul and Chicago and served as an army chaplain during World War II before completing his doctorate in English literature at the University of Chicago. He returned to North Park in 1948 to teach literature, church history and homiletics. As president, Olsson sustained a prolific, varied writing output, producing regular columns for the denominational magazines of the ECC and the American Lutheran Church, as well as devotional works, fiction and the official

Developments and Relationships, 1880-1920" (PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1992), 73.

<sup>11</sup>On the development of the two denominations in the United States, see Adolf Olson, *A Centenary History, As Related to the Baptist General Conference of America* (Chicago: Baptist Conference Press, 1952), and Karl A. Olsson, *Into One Body... by the Cross*, 2 vols. (Chicago: Covenant Press, 1985-1986).

Covenant history, *By One Spirit* (1962), in which he placed Pietism at the heart of Covenant identity. In 1970, Olsson left North Park and joined the ecumenical ministry Faith at Work.<sup>12</sup>

His contemporary Carl H. Lundquist (1916-1991) lasted significantly longer as president of his *alma mater*, remaining in office from 1954 to 1982.<sup>13</sup> Before returning to Bethel, Lundquist studied and taught at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and was pastor of Elim Baptist Church in Chicago. Lundquist also played a prominent role in the National Association of Evangelicals, serving a term as its president from 1978 to 1980. After retiring from Bethel, Lundquist shifted focus to promoting Christian spirituality as founder of the Evangelical Order of the Burning Heart, but also headed the Christian College Consortium until 1990.<sup>14</sup>

As presidents of new four-year colleges, it should not be surprising that Olsson and Lundquist left behind numerous reports, articles and speeches reflecting on the nature of education. Everything from objectives and curriculum to their school's size and location came up for debate during their tenures. Of course, the most fundamental question for any Protestant college president in the middle of the twentieth century was whether his school would loosen or drop ties to its founding church, or otherwise drift toward secularity. Neither Olsson nor Lundquist allowed that North Park or Bethel might follow what Olsson termed the "mournful example of scores of church-related colleges" and have "our historic devotion to Christian objectives and programs be watered down to a pale affirmation of religious values,"<sup>15</sup> but the sheer importance of the issue led them to devote much time to rethinking and rearticulating what was distinctive and valuable about the education their institutions offered. Consistently, one finds that Pietism shaped their visions of the Christian college.

Since Lundquist and Olsson's educational philosophies emerged primarily in communications with their own constituencies, it is important to understand that growing shares of their audiences were unfamiliar with or indifferent to Pietism. As the BGC and ECC sought to outgrow their immigrant origins (for example, both deleted "Swedish" from their names), they drew newcomers influenced more by fundamentalism or Reformed evangelicalism than Pietism. Bethel and North Park, too, began to welcome more students and faculty of non-Baptist or non-Covenant backgrounds. Olsson described the meeting at which he was elected president "hinge time" in the ECC's shifting ethnic and theological identity, and in 1962,

<sup>12</sup>On Olsson's life, see Philip J. Anderson, ed., *Amicus Dei: Essays on Faith and Friendship* (Chicago: Covenant Publications, 1988), 4-29.

<sup>13</sup>Bethel's development under Lundquist is recounted by G. William Carlson and Diana Magnuson, "Bethel College and Seminary on the Move," in *Five Decades of Growth and Change: 1952-2002, The Baptist General Conference and Bethel College and Seminary*, eds. James and Carole Spickelmier (St. Paul, MN: The [BGC] History Center, 2010), 29-39.

<sup>14</sup>Lundquist had been instrumental in founding the consortium in 1971; see James A. Patterson, *Shining Lights: A History of the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), especially ch. 2-4.

<sup>15</sup>*The Covenant Companion*, September 9, 1966, 5.

one former Bethel professor observed a sharp decline in agreement—among BGC leaders and Bethel faculty—that Swedish Baptist Pietism provided a unifying heritage.<sup>16</sup> By presenting a distinctively pietist vision of Christian higher education to BGC/Bethel and ECC/North Park audiences, Lundquist and Olsson were not simply mouthing pious platitudes that evoked misty-eyed nostalgia. On the contrary, they were reinterpreting, in light of contemporary concerns, what they found valuable about a tradition that, for many of their readers and listeners, was unknown, forgotten or irrelevant. Above all, they returned to the question that had preoccupied Pietists since the seventeenth century: How are we saved?

### "The Salvation of the Whole Man": Conversion and Higher Education

As a graduate student, instructor, and assistant dean at the University of Chicago in the 1930s and 1940s, Karl Olsson was in good position to come under the influence of that school's controversial president, Robert M. Hutchins, whose educational philosophy Olsson summed up as nothing but "the classic function of training the intellect." Yet when he addressed North Park professors at the beginning of the 1961-1962 school year, Olsson placed their college in radical opposition to Hutchins:

By tradition but much more by conviction, the institution we serve is committed to a more comprehensive view of education. North Park has always lived in the Platonic or Augustinian tradition of learning. It has believed that education is linked not only to the training of the intellect but to the salvation of the whole man.

In his conclusion, Olsson made clear that the earlier use of the word "salvation" was no mere rhetorical device:

...we seek to bring the student to personal fulfillment and to his eventual salvation. The school is not solely or even primarily interested in the training of cooks and bakers, engineers and physicists, teachers and preachers; it is not even interested primarily in giving its students the zest and the joy of intellectual and aesthetic adventure: the burning corolla of the world, the ravishment of line and color and tone, the bitterness and delight of ideas, the ice and luxuriance of style. It is primarily interested in pointing beyond itself and beyond all created things to the Source of life and truth, who by giving us Himself to us [*sic*] sustains within us the hunger for salvation.<sup>17</sup>

As he had said when installed as a seminary professor at North Park, Olsson wanted Christians to wield learning "as an instrument of deliverance whereby men are freed from bondage to the creature and hence from sin and death."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup>Olsson, *A Family of Faith: 90 Years of Covenant History* (Chicago: Covenant Press, 1975), 108; Robert Sandin, "The Transferential Motif in the Christian Idea of Liberal Education," *Bethel College Faculty Journal* (Feb. 1962): 2. Sandin later served as dean of North Park College.

<sup>17</sup>Olsson, "The Meaning of Comprehensive Education," Sept. 7, 1961, Olsson Ministerial Papers (OMP), series 6/1/2/1/32a, box 19, Covenant Archives (CA), Brandel Library, North Park University, Chicago.

<sup>18</sup>Olsson, "The Church and the Advancement of Learning," *The Covenant Quarterly* 8 (1948):



Not accustomed to seeing education clothed in soteriological garb, we should pause to consider how Olsson understood salvation. In his first faculty address as president, he emphasized the centrality of conversion and regeneration both for the ECC and its college:

The faith which underlies the intellectual process at North Park... is articulated in a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.... This "faith encounter," which is the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual, endows his existence with a new quality. He views existence from a new perspective.<sup>19</sup>

What he called "convertive piety" Olsson saw as essential to all Pietists. If the "pietist is by definition committed to the call to the unconverted to turn and live,"<sup>20</sup> so the pietist college must point "beyond itself and beyond all created things to the Source of life and truth" in order that its students might turn to Him and find new life.<sup>21</sup>

A convertive, Christ-centered piety also marks Carl Lundquist's writings on education, foremost of which are his unusually philosophical annual reports to the BGC. Consider how he described the ideal Bethel graduate in his 1965 report: "His own Christian journey began with God's miracle of inner regeneration. Awareness of this personal salvation has imparted to him both a sense of certainty and an evangelistic zeal."<sup>22</sup> And Lundquist's 1959 report seems to anticipate Olsson's 1961 address in its explanation of the fundamental purpose of education:

The simple intention of our people is that its college is to be Christocentric. This ignores many other basic issues being discussed today, but it sets in place a keystone for a Christian philosophy of education. It affirms that the unifying center of the academic program is neither Truth nor the Pursuit of Truth but is Jesus Christ Himself. Ultimately, in our Christian view, Truth and Christ are one, and the important thing about Truth is that it ought to point to Christ.<sup>23</sup>

Lundquist's belief that truth is "ultimately personal," to be found in "God, Who is Truth," served as the first assumption undergirding a mid-1960s redrafting of Bethel College's objectives.<sup>24</sup>

200.

<sup>19</sup>Olsson, "The Idea of a Christian School," Sept. 25, 1959, OMP, 6/1/2/1/32a, box 19, CA.

<sup>20</sup>Olsson, "Pietism and Its Relevance to the Modern World," *Moravian Theological Seminary Bulletin* (Fall 1965): 44.

<sup>21</sup>For an extended discussion of the role of conversion in Karl Olsson's educational philosophy, see Kurt W. Peterson and R. J. Snell, "Faith Forms the Intellectual Task: The Pietist Option in Christian Higher Education," in *The Pietist Impulse in Christianity*, eds. G. William Carlson et al. (forthcoming from Cascade Books).

<sup>22</sup>Carl H. Lundquist, "Report of the President, 1965," published in *Annual-Baptist General Conference of America, 1965* (Chicago: BGC, 1965), 129.

<sup>23</sup>Lundquist, 1959 Annual Report, 137. See also his 1963 Annual Report, 87.

<sup>24</sup>Draft of Bethel Objectives, undated [likely Jan. 1968], Lundquist Papers, "Bethel Objectives" folder, Baptist General Conference History Center (BGCHC), Bethel University, St. Paul, MN.

An important implication of so closely identifying truth with a personal God is that love, as well as faith, becomes a cardinal epistemic virtue. While at the University of Chicago, Olsson contended that Christian higher education had to transform the affections, not just the intellect:

To know and to will the good are the ends of Christian education, and knowing and willing ultimately depend upon the love which energizes both. The Christian college thus seeks not only to make truth understandable but to make it lovable in order that it may be willed and done. And since for the Christian, truth can be made lovable only by an act of faith which joins the soul to Christ, faith in Christ becomes the presupposition for knowing, willing, and loving the truth.<sup>25</sup>

Olsson, who understood faith in terms of the mysterious experience of regeneration, had little interest in integrating learning with a faith defined largely in terms of theological propositions or systems. Lundquist did employ the integrationist language associated with Reformed scholars like Arthur Holmes, but ultimately deemed their efforts to synthesize propositional faith with cognitive knowledge insufficient:

Truth... is personal as well as propositional. Truth, in fact, is truth—a way of loving. And it is motivated not only by curiosity and the desire to be in control but by compassion. Truth is meant to be personalized through our response of obedience to it. Surely this is a natural implication of Christ's insistence, "I am the truth."<sup>26</sup>

### Pietist Colleges as *Ecclesiolae in Ecclesia*

Thus far, there seems to be considerable affinity between Olsson and Lundquist's understanding of the purpose of Christian higher education and that of James K. A. Smith. They would certainly share his anthropology of the human person as a creature that loves (and is loved) and his overriding interest in how education can form our "ultimate loves—that to which we are fundamentally oriented...." But it is telling that, unlike the two Pietists, Smith does not frame education in terms of individual salvation. Indeed, he emphasizes that he is not offering a "picture of just what it looks like for me to be 'saved,'" since the "individual is always already embedded in a nexus of social relationships and institutions." Instead, he insists that the *telos* of individual desire is a "social vision."<sup>27</sup>

We do not have space in which to consider Smith's argument that education forms disciples ready to "[follow] the example of Jesus' cruciform cultural labor."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup>*The Covenant Weekly* (Sept. 12, 1947): 8.

<sup>26</sup>*The Burning Heart* 7 (June 1986). Emphasis mine.

<sup>27</sup>Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 50-51, 53, 71. Italics original.

<sup>28</sup>Suffice it to note, first, that Smith again dismisses Pietism as an ally, since he defines it as a kind of culture-rejecting quietism (Ibid., 190 n82) and, second, that Lundquist and Olsson would vigorously dispute that definition. See Lundquist, 1970 Annual Report, 120-34, and Olsson's letter of May 11, 1970 in defense of student anti-war activists, Olsson Presidential Papers (OPP), 9/1/2/6, box 9, CA.

But if he is right to understand Christian, or "ecclesial," universities as "extensions of the mission of the church—as chapels that extend and amplify what's happening at the heart of the cathedral,"<sup>29</sup> then we should consider a common criticism of Pietists: that, fixated on the subjective experience of individual conversion, they care little for the larger church. For example, Harry Lee Poe and James T. Burtchaell are critical of Pietism's influence on Christian colleges in part because its "emphasis on spiritual experience and the individual believer leaves little place for the church beyond one's own personal associations," substituting instead a "generic and lonely discipleship" detached from the church.<sup>30</sup>

Olsson and Lundquist would surely scoff at this assessment of Pietism and join Smith in understanding Christian higher education as an extension of the church's mission. At a time when the gap between college and church in the United States was becoming a chasm, Olsson discouraged any notion of severing or weakening North Park's ties to the ECC, and Lundquist routinely described Bethel as an "educational ministry" of the BGC and "the church on mission in higher education."<sup>31</sup> At the same time, each president simultaneously claimed an independent, even prophetic voice for his college, since it had the responsibility to "[raise] disturbing questions, [engage] in rigid self evaluation, [express] dissatisfaction with the status quo and [seek] less popular but more consistently Christian solutions to the problems that vex mankind" — not out of disdain for the larger church but concern for its continued vitality.<sup>32</sup>

Though some Pietists were, like the Swedish Baptists, hounded out of established churches, Spener, Francke, Rosenius, Waldenström and other "churchly" Pietists saw theirs an internal renewal movement; pietist conventicles were meant to be "little churches within the church" (*ecclesiolae in ecclesia*), not breakaway sects. As Olsson and Lundquist understood it, the pietist college functions like an *ecclesiola*, distinct from the *ecclesia* but seeking to revive it from within—not entirely unlike Smith's vision of the "ecclesial university" as a chapel connected to the cathedral.

But what kind of *ecclesiola*? What does Christian community look like in a pietist college? Or does an educational model that focuses on converting individuals tend to produce hermits devoted to working out their own salvation in their own way? For Arthur Holmes, such radical individualism threatened the purposes of Christian higher education: "Individualism therefore becomes excessive when individuals without essential community of value and purpose fragment the life

<sup>29</sup>Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 220.

<sup>30</sup>Harry Lee Poe, *Christianity in the Academy: Teaching at the Intersection of Faith and Learning* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 48, and James Turnstead Burtchaell, *The Dying of the Light: The Disengagement of Colleges & Universities from their Christian Churches* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 846-47, respectively.

<sup>31</sup>For example, in Lundquist, 1965 Annual Report, 120. See also note 49 below.

<sup>32</sup>Lundquist, 1961 Annual Report, 137. For a similar perspective, see Olsson's discussion of the North Park-ECC relationship in "What Shall We Do to be Saved?," 1967 address to North Park faculty, OMP, 6/1/2/1/32a, box 19, CA.

## Recovering a Pietist Understanding of Christian Higher Education

and frustrate the goals of an institution."<sup>33</sup>

Olsson would see no conflict between conversion and community, since "Pietism also understands the *koinonia* as a necessity. The converted man seeks the fellowship."<sup>34</sup> Indeed, convertive piety anchored his and Lundquist's conceptions of life together in the pietist college. During a 1970 faculty and staff retreat, Lundquist identified shared commitment to Jesus Christ as the first "point of unity" holding together a Bethel community buffeted by Vietnam-era conflicts:

He has become the supreme affection in our lives. As a result we enjoy a personal and intimate relationship with the Lord that adds the warm overtones of deep spiritual devotion to all of life. This New Testament teaching has been intensified for us at Bethel by the pietistic heritage in which our school was born.<sup>35</sup>

Responding to similar tensions two years earlier, Olsson had likewise urged his faculty to place Jesus Christ at the center of life at North Park:

I would like to propose for this community the recovery and the cultivation of devotion to the living Christ who is the Lord of history and whose presence in history makes meaningful what we seek to do.... This revelation in Jesus tells us that God accepts us as we are. Such an acceptance helps us to accept ourselves and to accept others as persons.<sup>36</sup>

The pivotal role in this community belonged to professors, converts well along in their walk with Christ who played a formative, even pastoral role in the lives of their students, in and out of the classroom. Indeed, Lundquist, if forced, would compromise in hiring faculty "at the point of scholarship before [he] would at the point of Christian character" because

we believe that in the end the impact of one life upon another is probably greater than the impact of an idea or a method of teaching or a favorable physical setting.... At Bethel we want our young people to enter into personal contact with their teachers, and we hope to keep such academic paraphernalia as the curriculum, course credits, class hours, and examinations from getting in the way of this relationship.<sup>37</sup>

Olsson cautioned that the "teacher is not primarily *in loco parentis*, or counselor, or tennis partner, or fellow pub crawler, or buddy," but still described the North Park professor as someone who "will see his student as a person and will be a steady, firm, but gentle midwife of the soul."<sup>38</sup> Olsson found it "unthinkable that a Christian teacher should be as confused as his student.... If he is to be a midwife of

<sup>33</sup>Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, 78-79.

<sup>34</sup>Olsson, "Pietism and Its Relevance," 42.

<sup>35</sup>Lundquist, "Bethel as Community," *The [Baptist General Conference] Standard* (Oct. 5, 1970): 16.

<sup>36</sup>Olsson, "Polarization on the Campus," Sept. 27, 1968, OMP, 6/1/2/1/32a, box 19, CA.

<sup>37</sup>Lundquist, 1959 Annual Report, 144.

<sup>38</sup>Olsson, "The Teacher as Professional," Sept. 20, 1963, OMP, 6/1/2/1/32a, box 19, CA; and *idem*, "The Meaning of Comprehensive Education" (1961), respectively.

the soul, he cannot himself be caught up in the travail of birth."<sup>39</sup> At the same time, North Park (unlike Bethel) admitted non-Christian students and required no doctrinal test in faculty hiring. Again placing convertive piety over assent to theological propositions, Olsson trusted the "Christian vitality" of its faculty rather than "Christian dogmatics" to sustain North Park's distinctive mission and character and keep it from becoming "something sub-Christian or pseudo-Christian."<sup>40</sup>

### The Challenge of Seeking Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy in Freedom

This does raise a second important criticism of Pietism, and of the pietist educational model that we see emerging in the thought of Lundquist and Olsson: that an emphasis on subjective experience as the basis for knowledge and community risks substituting living heterodoxy for dead orthodoxy. Assessing the influence of German Pietism on modern European thought, historians have blamed it for enabling everything from theological liberalism and rationalism to humanistic romanticism and nature mysticism. Both Mark Noll and James Burtchaell, for instance, credit the German Pietists with reinvigorating moribund Protestant churches, but lament that succeeding generations constituted, in Burtchaell's words, a "subversive influence." Noll suggests that later Pietists sometimes found it "difficult to distinguish between those forms of feeling that remained within the Christian orbit and those that had spun off as meteorites with no fixed center."<sup>41</sup> To Noll and Burtchaell, Pietism tended to overturn all objective authority in favor of emotion and experience, leaving belief to drift further and further from orthodoxy.

Olsson and Lundquist were aware of this danger and certainly did not intend a North Park or Bethel education to lead young Christians into heresy or apostasy. Decrying secularization at other church colleges, Olsson thundered that he would "rather be a Jesuit" than embrace modern Protestantism's seeming dissolution into "amiable nothingness."<sup>42</sup> Lundquist took pains to reassure BGC audiences that Bethel would remain conservative and orthodox in theology, making this the thesis of his first and last columns as Bethel president for the denominational magazine.<sup>43</sup> And in an early chapel talk, he warned that there was "no virtue" either "in being orthodox simply because we know no other point of view" or "in having an open mind toward that which God has closed."<sup>44</sup>

Although Olsson disliked the biblicist "intransigence" of neo-evangelicals like

<sup>39</sup>*The Covenant Companion* (Sept. 10, 1965): 9.

<sup>40</sup>Olsson, "The Volcanic Campus," Sept. 21, 1962, OMP, 6/1/2/1/32a, box 19, CA.

<sup>41</sup>Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 48-49; Burtchaell, *The Dying of the Light*, 838-47.

<sup>42</sup>*The Lutheran Standard* (Mar. 22, 1966): 30.

<sup>43</sup>*The [BGC] Standard* (Sept. 17, 1954): 4, 8; and (Nov. 1981): 44-45.

<sup>44</sup>Lundquist, "The Limits of Tolerance," undated [1954-1955, but misplaced in "Messages, 1975-" folder], Lundquist Papers, BGCHC.

Lundquist,<sup>45</sup> both men appealed to the authority of Scripture to help keep their colleges within Noll's "Christian orbit." Olsson contended that North Park's founders defined "new life in terms of classical Biblical faith."<sup>46</sup> Lundquist believed it possible to contain subjectivism with the "objective authority" of Scripture.<sup>47</sup>

Save for maintaining this "norming norm" of "classical Biblical faith," the two presidents hesitated to limit the freedom of inquiry of their faculty and students. Like most Pietists, they preferred irenic dialogue to heresy-hunting, valuing voluntary, heartfelt devotion over intellectual assent. Though Lundquist vaguely reported to the denomination that "all of our teaching is carried on within the framework" of the BGC Affirmation of Faith, he (like Olsson) defended the academic liberty of his faculty against fundamentalist criticism.<sup>48</sup> And when he identified individual freedom as one of two key features distinguishing Bethel from other evangelical colleges,<sup>49</sup> Lundquist could also draw on the Baptist doctrine of soul liberty, insisting "that every believer be allowed the privilege of freely interpreting for his own life the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the light of the Scriptures."<sup>50</sup>

Valuing individual freedom to this extent carried the risk of tearing apart the Christ-centered community. As Lundquist admitted, "The right to answer to God alone means also the right not to answer at all. The right to accept Jesus as Savior means also the right to reject Him."<sup>51</sup> As the ECC's leading historian, Olsson understood that his denomination's tradition of "almost total freedom of thought and action within the boundaries of Scripture" had resulted in "doctrinal spaciousness... [bordering] on anarchy."<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, he embraced turbulent uncertainty as the cost of trusting the movement of the Spirit:

To embrace Christian vitality is to invite the visitation of the Holy Ghost and to live and think in the presence of wind and fire. It is not a very tolerable experience. It is conflict, anger, bitterness, humiliation, and endless toil. And it is joy—of a sort. Let the buyer beware!<sup>53</sup>

In the same speech in which he proclaimed his desire that education contribute to

<sup>45</sup>Olsson affirmed the authority of Scripture, but not verbal inerrancy; on his critique of neo-evangelicalism, see Olsson, *Into One Body...*, 2:313-320.

<sup>46</sup>Olsson, "The Volcanic Campus" (1962).

<sup>47</sup>Lundquist, 1965 Annual Report, 122, 124.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, 121. On Bethel's belated entry into the modernist-fundamentalist debate in the 1960s, see Norris A. Magnuson, "A Decade of Progress in a Century of Educational Advance," in *The 1960s in the Ministry of the Baptist General Conference*, ed. Donald E. Anderson (Evanston, IL: Harvest, 1971), 125. On similar controversies in the mid-1960s involving North Park faculty, see Olsson, *Into One Body...*, 2:364-733.

<sup>49</sup>The other being Bethel's unusually close relationship with the BGC; Lundquist, 1960-1961 Annual Report, 132.

<sup>50</sup>*The [BGC] Standard* (Apr. 18, 1960): 18.

<sup>51</sup>*The [BGC] Standard* (June 20, 1952): 14.

<sup>52</sup>Olsson, *Into One Body...*, 1:x-xi.

<sup>53</sup>Olsson, "The Volcanic Campus" (1962).

the salvation of the student, Olsson accepted that free discussion of any question might lead students into doubt:

We do not believe that the academic play should be encumbered by frantic endeavors to make every discussion come out 'right' or that creative doubt is an evil. The class session may well end in a mood of fear and trembling; no student ever matures who has not felt the earth shaking beneath his feet.<sup>54</sup>

Lundquist did not disagree, but on the larger question of student freedom we see a significant split with Olsson. Reflecting the influence of the Keswick movement in his own life, Lundquist emphasized the pietist interest in holy living to a much greater extent than did Olsson:

In my theology we are on the road to holiness. But while struggling for sinless perfection may be a heresy, contentment with sinful imperfection also is heretical. The Keswick understanding of Romans 8 is not that it is impossible to sin but that in any given circumstance it is possible not to sin.<sup>55</sup>

In part, this emphasis shows up in Lundquist's stated belief that "it is not enough to know that truth is. It must be manifested in its seeker. Truth can never remain an abstract, intellectual proposition but must become a personal, spiritual incarnation." The very act of seeking truth should foster the virtue of truthfulness.<sup>56</sup> But even outside the classroom, Lundquist wanted the pietist college to train its students in "the distinctive Christian life as one of voluntary self-discipline," set apart from the permissiveness of the larger culture. Among other practices, he warned of the evils of premarital sex, the use of alcohol and tobacco, social dancing and "indiscriminate participation in the average Hollywood or Broadway type of entertainment."<sup>57</sup>

Some of these proscriptions seemed outdated even in 1965. Still, if Olsson is right that we should understand education as leading to the "salvation of the whole man," it would hardly be unreasonable for Lundquist to expect a pietist college to seek the transformation of the "physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual impulses" that, for Olsson, made up the human person.<sup>58</sup> Orthopraxy, after all, is even more important than orthodoxy for Pietists.

So why does personal holiness rarely, if ever, appear in Olsson's discussions of the goals of a pietist college? First, recurring throughout his writing is Olsson's disdain for the self-righteous legalism and hypocrisy he had observed among Christians stressing sanctification.<sup>59</sup> Writing just after his resignation from North Park,

<sup>54</sup>Olsson, "The Meaning of Comprehensive Education" (1961).

<sup>55</sup>Lundquist, 1981-1982 Annual Report, *Bethel Focus* (Aug. 1982): 5. Named after the English town where its annual conventions have been held since 1875, the Keswick movement promoted a view of sanctification as leading to "victorious living" and service to the church.

<sup>56</sup>Lundquist, 1963 Annual Report, 87.

<sup>57</sup>Lundquist, 1965 Annual Report, 128.

<sup>58</sup>Olsson, "The Meaning of Comprehensive Education" (1961).

<sup>59</sup>See especially Olsson, *Passion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 52-53.

Olsson recalled how the strictness of his own upbringing set an impossible, crushing standard for much of his adult life—including his tenure at North Park.<sup>60</sup> (Lundquist, of course, denied the charge of legalism, claiming that rare instances of disciplinary action at Bethel were "redemptive and helpful to the student."<sup>61</sup>)

Second, Olsson found it increasingly difficult to reconcile a high view of freedom with the top-down legislation and regulation of behavioral norms. Even as he prepared to defend North Park's traditional "pietistic concern for student behavior" (specifically, chapel attendance and bans on smoking and social dancing) in the protest-filled year of 1969, he experienced a "little Damascus":

But while I was in the process of working out the defense of the Establishment, I found myself more and more in sympathy with the students. I began to understand the psychological and spiritual rootage from which they came; better than that I began to *feel* it.<sup>62</sup>

That same year, Lundquist both defended student activism and persisted in describing personal holiness as an educational objective.<sup>63</sup> He hoped Olsson would agree, as he concluded a letter inquiring about North Park's debate over social dancing:

I know that both of us are concerned about conserving the heritage of the past while being responsive to the needs of the new generation. The history of Christian higher education is marked with so much erosion, however, that all of us need to be vigilant. I am hopeful that we can mutually strengthen one another in the emphasis we place upon a distinctive life style appropriate to committed Christian young people in the twentieth century.<sup>64</sup>

Lundquist tried to steer a middle path between "authoritarianism" and "permissiveness," claiming in 1972 that Bethel both had "been historically ahead of the curve in granting freedom to students" and remained committed to a "distinctive way of life for its own community."<sup>65</sup> Three years later, a national newspaper profile found that most Bethel students strongly supported their mod suit-wearing president's vision of distinctive living.<sup>66</sup>

## Conclusion

Today, one may visit North Park University without ever realizing that Karl A. Olsson spent more than a decade as its president.<sup>67</sup> It would be virtually impos-

<sup>60</sup>Olsson, *Come to the Party: An Invitation to a Freer Life Style* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1970), 29-37.

<sup>61</sup>Lundquist, 1971-1972 Annual Report, excerpted in *Bethel Focus* (Oct. 1972): 9.

<sup>62</sup>Olsson, *Come to the Party*, 50-51. Italics original.

<sup>63</sup>See his 1969 Annual Report, 120-32, which explored the theme of personal freedom.

<sup>64</sup>Lundquist to Olsson, Apr. 25, 1969, OPP, 9/1/2/6, box 9, CA.

<sup>65</sup>Lundquist, 1971-1972 Annual Report, excerpted in *Bethel Focus* (Oct. 1972): 9.

<sup>66</sup>"The Wholesome Life Is the Only Life At Bethel College," *Wall Street Journal* (May 21): 1975.

<sup>67</sup>Olsson the historian minimized the importance of Olsson the educator, making himself

154 sible to tour Bethel University without encountering the name or portrait of Carl H. Lundquist. But while Lundquist's legacy as an educational leader is more visible than Olsson's, both men articulated distinctively pietist visions of higher education that deserve greater attention from Christian scholars of all traditions. If they hope to offer their own answer to Arthur Holmes' question, "Why a Christian college?," pietist educators especially can learn from Lundquist and Olsson's desire for the salvation of the whole person, their conception of the Christian college as a church-renewing community sustained by shared convertive piety, and their struggles to seek orthodoxy and orthopraxy without sacrificing a high view of Christian freedom.<sup>68</sup>

little more than a bearer of David Nyvall's torch; for example, in Olsson, *By One Spirit*, 615.

<sup>68</sup>The author would like to thank the Professional Development Committee of Bethel University for a grant that made possible his research in Chicago, Anne Jenner and Diana Magnuson for their assistance in navigating the archival records of North Park and Bethel, and Phil Anderson, Kurt Peterson, and Sara Shady for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

## "For the Sake of this One, God has Patience with the Many": Czeslaw Milosz and Karl Barth on God's Patience, the Incarnation, and the Possibility of Belief

By David Lauber

In a 1990 article, "Humility, Hope and the Divine Slowness," Richard J. Mouw relates an anecdote of a conversation among Evangelical and Roman Catholic scholars during an ecumenical consultation. During this conversation, the topic of "creation science" came up, and as Mouw tells the story, the Roman Catholics had great difficulty grasping the attraction of the "creation science" position of a literal six-day creation. Mouw writes,

Finally one Catholic scholar threw her hands up in despair, exclaiming in an agitated voice, "Don't these people realize that God likes to do things *slowly*?" Her rhetorical question brought the issues into sharp focus for me. What she took for granted is precisely what many of my evangelical kinfolk do *not* realize; they insist that God likes to work fast.<sup>1</sup>

As Mouw reflects on the clarity he gained from this exchange, he proposes that attention to the slowness or patience of God by evangelical theologians will contribute to faithful and fruitful reflection on modern developments in cosmology and the seemingly unfathomable age of the universe.

Following Mouw's suggestion, the main argument of this essay is that theological reflection on divine patience as related to creation, providence, and redemption is a significant way to address specific developments that call into question our place, meaning, and purpose in the universe. We will utilize Christian figures from distinct disciplines—philosophy (Charles Taylor), literature (Czeslaw Milosz and W. H. Auden) and theology (Karl Barth)—in order to describe changes in cosmology and their effects on belief in our contemporary age, to portray the effects of these changes on the self-understanding of people and their understanding of the

In this paper, David Lauber proposes that a Christocentric conception of God's patience with the world provides needed guidance in a Christian navigation of the darkness of the current secular age. Lauber uses the recent work of philosopher Charles Taylor, who characterizes the dark homelessness of this secular age. He also looks to the poetry and essays of Czeslaw Milosz, who articulates the anguish and anxiety that results from this homelessness, while pointing toward the hope of a Christological response. The paper concludes with Karl Barth's explicitly theological account of God's patience, which provides a conceptual articulation of hope in the face of dark homelessness and anguish. Mr. Lauber is Assistant Professor of Theology at Wheaton College.

# INFLUENTIAL FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF BETHEL COLLEGE

Paper presented to the Bethel College faculty at their fall retreat, August 24, 1988.

I was intrigued by the statement of George Marsden which was printed in the recent Christian Scholars Review (XVII:4, June 1988, p. 358-9). The first article in the Review is a transcription of Marsden's keynote address at a conference held at the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton, Illinois, in June 1987, which had for its theme *A New Agenda for Evangelical Thought*.

Marsden concluded his address by outlining some challenges for the evangelical academic community. One of these challenges is as follows:

**A step in the right direction...is that we American Protestants, lacking much sense of the authority of any church, attempt to recover some sense of tradition. This will always be an imperfect and not wholly reliable authority, but it could provide an important confirmatory test of our beliefs. Our sense of being part of a community of faith should involve a sense of being part of an *historical* community of faith. Our church is the church through the ages, not just churches today or all the evangelical churches we happen to like today. So one way critically to review our beliefs is to see which of our beliefs have stood the test of history. Which have been fundamental beliefs of churches in many times and cultures, not just the product of one era or social, political, or intellectual setting? ....This... may be a helpful test for sorting out the extraneous from the fundamental.**

The task to which I have been assigned for this session is to review the history of Bethel College. In recent years there has been a change in Bethel College personnel, so that it is possible that the majority of the faculty have little connection with or knowledge of the history and tradition of Bethel College. Marsden emphasizes the importance of members of a church becoming a "part of an historical community of faith." So, too, with the Bethel College personnel, especially the administration and faculty, it is important that they become a part

of the *historical community* of life and faith of this college. This presentation is intended to help those of you who are a part of this academic community and who are not too familiar with the history of Bethel College to become a little more knowledgeable of the spiritual, cultural and educational heritage of Bethel College.

Normally when the origins of the college and seminary are mentioned, great emphasis is given to Dr. John Alexis Edgren, the man, who when he was a pastor in Chicago, started a seminary in 1871 for the training of pastors to minister to the Scandinavian immigrants. At Bethel Founder's Week all historical attention is given to the founder of the Seminary with no mention of the founders of Bethel Academy out of which the college had its origin.

Edgren should be given credit for being the first to make the suggestion that a college should be started. This he did in 1884 when under his leadership the seminary became an independent school. He moved the seminary from Chicago to St. Paul, where it stayed for one year. Upon receiving the promise of new facilities for the school he moved the seminary to Stromsburg, Nebraska. When Edgren left Chicago he announced that he planned to add to the Seminary an Academy, or High School, and also a College. However, the breakdown of Edgren's health cut short his career as the leader of the seminary and prevented the realization of his fulfilling these noble aspirations.<sup>1</sup>

It was not until 1903 that plans to have an Academy began to take shape. It was at the annual meeting of the Baptist General Conference (Then known as the Swedish Baptist General Conference of America, or Svenska Baptisternas I Amerika Allmänna Konferens) that two conference leaders addressed the delegates, proposing a high school academy. These men were Dr. Frank Peterson and Dr. Eric Sandell. C. George Ericson, who was associated with the BGC literature board for many decades and who only recently passed away, living up into his 90's, recounts these days as follows:

**The time seemed ripe, and a committee was appointed to make a survey. A report was submitted to the Conference the following year (1904) in Kansas City, Mo. The committee was instructed to proceed with the work and to organize an academy to be located in Minnesota.**

**As a result Bethel Academy opened its doors for the first time October 2, 1905, with Dr. Arvid Gordh as its first principal and Dr. J. O. Backlund as the second member of the original faculty. For its first two**

**years the new school found a home in the Elim Baptist Church, Minneapolis.**

**At the end of the first school year it was reported that no fewer than 224 students had been enrolled, including 29 regular students in the academy department, 20 in the department of music, 70 in a special Bible class, and 105 in Bible classes held in the various churches of Minneapolis and St. Paul.<sup>2</sup>**

A few words should be mentioned about these founding visionary leaders.

Frank Peterson was an enthusiastic leader of missions and education in the Swedish Baptist General Conference at the turn of the twentieth century. For many years he served successfully as the pastor of the Bethlehem Baptist church in Minneapolis, welcoming more members into the church than any other pastor in its history. Following this pastorate he served as a district secretary of the American Baptist Missionary Union, later to be known as the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. Peterson (who happens to be my wife's, Carol, great uncle) traveled among the Swedish Baptist churches, encouraging them to send their sons and daughters to the mission fields and to support them with tithes and offerings. He was an eloquent spokesman for education and for missions.

Dr. Eric Sandell was a popular professor at the seminary. My father, Adolf Olson, who wrote the Centenary History of the Conference, praises his former teacher with eloquent words:

**Eric Sandel had few equals. As far as his formal education was concerned, he was practically a self-made man. However, by reason of an extraordinarily brilliant, inquisitive, and alert mind, and with an amazing capacity for hard work, as well as an almost unlimited amount of self control and sustained concentration in his search for truth, he became one of the best informed persons in many different branches of knowledge in his day and generation. He became widely known as a philosopher and a profound thinker, undoubtedly the most prominent in the Swedish Baptist fellowship.<sup>3</sup>**

Dr. Arvid Gordh, who was on the survey committee that recommended the founding of an academy, was selected as the first principal. Gordh was a refined, deeply spiritual man. He was much influenced by A. J. Gordon, the famous pastor of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church in Boston and the founder of the college which



bears his name. Gordh received his doctorate from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Gordh served as principal of the academy until 1912 when he went to serve a church as pastor. He later returned to the Seminary to become professor of New Testament and to serve as its dean for a short period. Gordh was without a doubt the most popular Bible teacher in Conference churches in the 20's and 30's. He was crystal clear in his expositions and deeply spiritual in his speech and character.

When the new high school was chartered and incorporated, it was given the name of Bethel Academy and College. The founders, Peterson, Sandell and Gordh had dreams. And they transformed their dreams into a faith venture in Christian education. If they could return to the campus today they would rejoice to see that their vision had become a successful reality.

A brief mention should be made of another educational enterprise that started the same year, 1905. This was Adelpia College which was located at Seattle, Washington. A few prosperous businessmen sponsored this college and Emmanuel Schmidt was elected president. The ambitious plans for the future called for an academy, a four year college, a school of theology, and a commercial department. Only two of these projects were realized, the commercial department and the academy. For several years the school was maintained with a good program and a capable faculty, but hard times financially fell on the program during World War I and the school was forced to close in 1918. Schmidt was called to Bethel Seminary to become a professor of Hebrew and Old Testament in 1919. He brought with him the Adelpia library, including a collection of rare volumes.<sup>4</sup>

The founders of Bethel Academy announced an educational program that would be respectable and challenging. Study would follow three lines, the initial catalogue stated: the classical, the scientific and the philosophical. Under the heading "Expenses," there was an encouraging note: "The expenses are much less than any other place."

In 1907 Bethel Academy moved from the Elim Baptist Church in northeast Minneapolis into a new building, located in North St. Anthony Park, St. Paul, at Como and Carter Avenues, only three or four blocks from the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. My father, who had emigrated from Sweden in 1905 as a seventeen year old, was a member of the class of 1907. There were 36 students in the high school, most of whom lived in the thirteen dormitory rooms on the second floor. Class rooms and a few offices were on the first floor and dining facilities were in the basement. The students organized a Boarding Club, a student cooperative that continued until the 1940's. Women from the Twin City churches and surrounding area filled up the kitchen larder with home canned

goods. Rural churches delivered potatoes and other vegetables to help the poor students at Bethel.

In 1907 Alfred J. Wingblade (Commonly called A.J.) came to the Academy. He served as an assistant principal to Gordh. When Gordh resigned in 1912, Wingblade was chosen principal, a position he held until the Academy was discontinued in 1936. Some of you know Eugene and Janet Johnson. A.J. was Janet's father. A.J.'s brother, Henry C. Wingblade (or H.C.) came to teach English at the Academy in 1911. In 1941 he became the president of Bethel College and Seminary, succeeding G. Arvid Hagstrom, serving until he retired in 1954, when he was succeeded by Carl H. Lundquist. It is interesting now the initial designation became popular during the academy and seminary history. There was A.J. and H.C. Then there was C.E. (C. Emmanuel Carlson, who was the third dean of the college) and then the beloved dean of the Seminary was always referred to as K.J. (Karl J. Karlson, who served as dean for a quarter of a century.) Somehow we never got into the habit of calling President Lundquist by his initials C.H.

The seminary left Stromsberg in 1888 and became affiliated as a Scandinavian department of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. In 1914 it was decided to move the seminary from Morgan Park, Chicago, to St. Paul. Actually the University asked them to either pay their own way at the University or move. So they moved. Dr. G. Arvid Hagstrom, energetic pastor and conference leader was called to be the first president of the independent schools. He was called to unite the seminary and academy under one administration on a new campus on North Snelling Avenue and attempt to raise money for this educational project among the Swedish Baptist churches. The new schools were now called Bethel Academy and Theological Seminary.

The seminary building on the new campus on North Snelling Avenue, across from the Minnesota Fair grounds, was ready for occupancy in 1914. Two years later the academy building was finished. The seminary building cost \$35,000 and the academy building totaled \$50,000. The new academy building was very modern. The catalogue boasted that there was a gymnasium, 42' x 72' feet, with a running track gallery around the sides. Another feature, according to the catalogue, was that "there are showers, with hot and cold water. Boys and girls have separate entrances with equal shower facilities and use the gymnasium on alternate days." To young farm boys, accustomed to a Saturday night bath in the washtub located in the family kitchen, this announcement I am certain sounded very attractive.

During the 1920's the academy was a very active high school. In October of 1921 the first edition of the Clarion came off the press. In 1922 the editor of the Clarion threw out the challenge that a junior college should be added to the

educational program of the Conference. Nine years later, 1931, the junior college became a reality.

During the depression of the thirties the schools went through hard times. A decision had to be made to cut back. The Academy was dropped in 1936. I was a student in the Academy during those difficult years. I graduated from the Academy in 1934. It seemed as if the school always lived on the brink of extinction. A. J. Wingblade, principal of the Academy, would repeatedly have us sing in chapel the old gospel song, "Never Give Up."

Walfred Danielson, who had at one time taught in the Academy and then went to Assam, India in the early 1920's to start a high school, was called in 1931 to be the first dean of the new Bethel Junior College. Danielson was a creative, careful administrator. All his skills were taxed trying to start a new school in the beginning of the depression. He had at one time been an accountant. It now paid off, for he went through the books with a sharp pencil, cut out waste, trimmed the programs. He developed a good relationship with the academic deans at the University of Minnesota who gave him every encouragement in his administration. Danielson, after he got the college program started on a good basis, having served five years, decided to leave the college to become an associate secretary with the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. In 1944 Danielson was once again called upon by the Conference to be a pioneer. This time to head up the new World Mission program of the BGC, to become the first Secretary of the World Mission Board. (I am proud of the fact that Danielson was my uncle. I had the privilege of being one of his successors as college dean and also to follow him in service as secretary of the Board of World Missions.)

Danielson was followed in the deans's office by Emory Johnson, who had taught biology in the college. He served through the depression years and through World War II. C. E. Carlson, who had been a teacher in the Academy and in the College since 1927, became dean of the Junior College in 1945. His great achievement was to encourage the Conference to approve a four year college program, which became a reality in 1947. Two years later the college graduated its first class with the B.A. degree. In 1953 Carlson left the college to accept the position of director of the Baptist Joint Committee of Public Affairs in Washington, D.C.

Clifford Larson, who had joined the faculty in 1949, was invited to be the fourth dean of the college. During his decade tenure Larson was able to develop the programs of the college so that in 1958 the college received its recognition by the North Central Association of Colleges. Larson left the dean's position in the college to become a professor of religious education

at Bethel Seminary, later to move to Fuller Theological Seminary. Yours truly in some ways stumbled into the office of the deanship in 1968, lasting through a North Central ten year review, several periods of unrest created by the Vietnam tensions, etc., a move to a new campus in 1972, and attacking some treasured professorial rights by engineering a revision of the so-called classic curriculum. (For a time I thought it would be easier to revise the sacred text of the Bible than to revise a college curriculum.) I left at the end of 1974 to travel around the world via the office of secretary of the World Mission Board of the BGC.

The Brushaber years as dean and now president speak for themselves. This history is easily attainable, and I leave it to later historians to add their comments and evaluations.

Where does this chronology lead us? Bethel, any institution, is more than a recital of people, places and events. What is behind the history? How do you understand the spirit of the school? In the second half of this paper I want to deal briefly with some "influential factors" in the history of Bethel College.

## I The Ethnic Factor

The basic purpose of Bethel Academy was to provide high school training for the young people in the Swedish Baptist churches. All of the basic elements of high school education would be provided plus the spiritual and distinctive religious features of the Swedish Baptist immigrant culture.

Bethel was Swedish. In the early years Swedish was spoken as much as English among the students. English was used in classroom instruction, for one of the purposes was to prepare the immigrant young people to communicate correctly in the new American world. In the Seminary, however, the Swedish language held on tenaciously. Classroom instruction was in Swedish until the late 20's, and the seminary catalogue was printed in Swedish until 1931. I guess the seminary leaders felt that it would be a long time before Swedish would not be used in the Conference churches.

There was a binding quality in being unified in nationality and language. As long as the Swedish element predominated there was a homogeneous spirit in the academy and seminary. You could differ on almost anything and still accept each other because you belonged to the same ethnic family. In the Swedish Baptist churches the Swedish language became as important, or perhaps more important than doctrine. The seminary, and this characterized the academy too, could tolerate Calvinists, Arminians, Dispensationals (The

Scofield type), Pre and Post millennialists, and even A-mills. It didn't matter as long as the basics of the faith were accepted. More churches were divided over the language question than over doctrine.

Because nearly all of the students came out of this ethnic, Swedish Baptist culture, there was a strong sense of belongingness with each other. Young people at Bethel who fell in love and married no doubt came from very similar backgrounds. For many years a key promotion for studying at Bethel was to perpetuate the importance of finding a life's companion from a Conference Baptist Church.

This ethnic identity had a strong influence on the character of Bethel, even to the cheers at basketball games. When I played on the Academy and the Junior College teams we were regularly cheered on with the rouser:

Mama, Papa, Va skall vi ha?

Baskets, Baskets, Ja, Ja, Ja.

After World War II and the beginning of the four year college, the ethnic element began to disappear. Even the Swedish language course was dropped from the curriculum, and it has only been in recent years that a course in Swedish has been occasionally offered in the college.

## II THE PIETISTIC FACTOR

Pietism has been much studied and much maligned in recent decades. Without attempting to deal with the larger subject of pietism, let me point out some characteristics of the Swedish Baptist form of pietism.

First of all, Swedish Baptist pietism grew out of reaction to the cold formalism, dead orthodoxy of the national church in Sweden. All over Sweden lay people gathered together in small Bible reading cells (Läsare, Readers, as they were called). Among Swedish Baptists there was a strong emphasis on the authority of the Scriptures that must be followed and obeyed above church councils, ordained clergy, and the decrees of the legal Rikstag. Formalism was to be feared, for it marked the Läsare's disappointing experiences with the State churches in Sweden.

Second, pietism was a revivalistic movement that stressed the need for a person to have a vital born-again experience in Christ. The pioneers debated against Lutherans about the evils of infant, baptismal regeneration. Consequently among the Swedish Baptists and at Bethel Academy, College and Seminary, there was an important emphasis on evangelism. Students

upon entrance to Bethel Academy and College were required to indicate that they were believers in Jesus Christ. Years ago young people from Swedish Baptist churches knew what that meant. I am not so certain that many of our young people understand today what it means to have a vital experience with Christ as an identifying mark of being a Christian.

Third, as pietist, Swedish Baptists stressed very strongly the importance of the laity in the church. Jokes would be made about calling someone a bishop. At Bethel and at the Swedish Baptist churches the idea of ruling elders would be considered heresy. If our forefathers knew that we have given the title of President to the leader of our BGC, they would turn in their graves. The early Baptists saw to it that no denominational leader, even the Seminary Dean at Bethel, who through the development years of Bethel was a kind of theological and ecclesiastical primate, was given too much authority. The Swedish Baptists maintained rule by the people. A number of years ago an older Conference Baptist complained about the annual meetings. "I would like," he said, "to once again hear delegates get up on the floor and say, 'I make a motion.' Now all we do is approve recommendations from the trustees." The early Conference Baptists people wanted participatory democracy.

An interesting incident from dormitory life at Bethel speaks to this point: The literary society at Bethel was called Alexis, after the name of the Seminary founder. A recorder kept a journal of the happenings at the Academy and Seminary. On October 30, 1919, the recorder, Fred Moberg, father of David Moberg, one-time sociology professor at Bethel College, wrote the following entry into the journal: "The janitor came around this day and fastened an elaborate and thoroughly comprehensive set of orders and rules of conduct, prescribed by our beloved Dr. Hagstrom. It is needless to say that our President's order sheet was down from every door, almost as soon as the janitor had it up." Moberg could not resist making his commentary. He adds, "We believe in rules, but not in mandates!"

Fourth, the pietists were people of strong convictions, shaping their theological opinions and Biblical interpretations out of vigorous dialogue and debate. At Bethel there were teachers with opposing positions--- Calvinist, Arminian, Pre, Post millennial, etc. The doctrine of the atonement was discussed long into the night in dormitory rooms. The question was whether the substitutionary view or the moral view of the atonement was right. The early founders of the Seminary and the Academy debated many issues. The Swedish denominational papers, Nya Vecko Posten (The New Weekly Mail) and the Standaret (The Standard), carried long articles by pastors and teachers who debated through its columns the pros and cons of

issues and practices. I felt that my education at Bethel Academy and the Junior College might have been short on some academic counts, but in terms of the vitality of intellectual discussions on religious themes and current topics I was not cheated.

Today pietism is often depicted as being passive, irenic to the point of being irresponsibly pleasant and harmonious. The early founders of Bethel College would not despise the pleasant, harmonious, and the good fellowship, but they would not hold back from vigorous debate on things that they thought were essential to the Baptist faith and practice.

### **III The Missionary Factor**

Bethel Academy and the College in the early days were considered primarily as preparatory schools for Christian service. Before the College came into being the Seminary only required for entrance a high school diploma, preferably one from Bethel Academy. When the Junior College started in 1931, the entrance requirement was raised to two years of college. And in 1947 the requirement for seminary matriculation was a bachelor's degree.

All through the years at Bethel the emphasis was on service in and through the Baptist Conference churches. When my father graduated from Bethel Academy in 1909, there were four in the class. Three of them, including Walfred Danielson, served as missionaries in Assam, India. My father was the only one who did not make it to a foreign field. He stayed with Bethel for forty years and taught the heathen there.

Up until the time of World War 2 nearly two hundred Bethel graduates had gone out to serve as missionaries in various parts of the world, supported by the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and other foreign mission boards. When the Baptist General Conference initiated its own foreign mission program in 1944, it was the young men and women trained at Bethel College and Seminary who took the leadership in the formation of this new world mission movement. In the late 40's and early 50's you didn't ask students at Bethel if they were going out as missionaries. You simply asked what country they were going to. There was a high sense of calling and commitment to be involved in the mission of the Great Commission.

This mission enthusiasm at the College has gone up and down throughout the years. I am glad to hear of the reports of increased interest in global missions on the campus today.

### **IV The College/Conference Factor**

In the first fifty years of Bethel Academy and College, the school was very closely bound to the Swedish Baptist denomination. There was a familiarity of identity, of understanding, of purpose. It was difficult to separate school and denomination.

However, as the college began to develop in the fifties and sixties, the distance between the school and the denomination began to widen. Fewer and fewer students were coming to the College from the BGC churches. Increasingly faculty members were brought on board who had little or no knowledge of or relationship with the Baptist General Conference churches. Bethel became a college increasingly separate from the denomination.

Founder's Week was one effort to bring people from the churches on to the campus and for faculty and students to get a look at some of the enthusiastic and interesting alumni. For several years Founder's Week was held in February, close to the birthday of John Alexis Edgren. Conference meetings were conducted on the campus when the College was trying to carry on with a schedule of classes. It was a small chaos. President Lundquist wanted the students to meet Conference Baptists and for Baptist visitors to get in personal contact with Bethel students. When the 4-1-4 schedule was instituted, President Lundquist resisted having Founder's Week moved to the vacation week between the January interim and the spring term. I, together with the faculty, held out for the vacation week and we won this decision. But we did lose something that was important. The president knew it. And I knew it.

During the late 60's many of the students, usually the vocal leaders, expressed some rather devastating criticism of local Conference churches. The churches, they said, were irrelevant, out of touch with the needs of the world. They felt that there were few pastors who were addressing the Christian message to the needs of a fractured world. I must say that I tended to agree with them on many counts.

One Sunday evening several of the college leaders came to our home to rap with their new dean. They came in their dirty jeans, torn blouses, spoke loudly, sat on the floor. The articulate leader of the group, who now is a practicing lawyer with one of those terrible establishments which was vilified in the '60's, had with him the last issue of THE STANDARD. It was underlined generously with red pencil. He waved the paper at me and read with cynical passion from Don Anderson's editorial and from several other articles in that issue. He tore the articles apart as being mundane, meaningless pap. I later told Don Anderson that he should know that THE



STANDARD is being carefully and critically read at Bethel College. And it should be stated that these students, perhaps in a way that many did not appreciate, did take the BGC seriously. They were wondering if they could do anything for and through the BGC. At least they were involved in protest. That is more than can be said for many students today.

Let me follow up a little farther this *College/Conference Factor*. While a change was taking place in the College as it was becoming more sophisticated, academic, secular, a change was also taking place among the Baptist General Conference churches. The ethnic, pietistic glue that had held the BGC together was rapidly melting away. Unfortunately nothing came upon the scene to take the place of ethnicity, to capture and polarize the imagination and loyalty of the Conference constituency. Instead, with the hope of rallying churches and people there has been a parade of a conglomeration of short term programs together with the promotion of evangelical contemporary slogans that are about as long-lived as the current TV commercials. The strength of a solid core identity in the BGC, which was true when Bethel became a four year college forty years ago, is not present today. How or when a new kind of cohesiveness will come together remains to be seen. Maybe it will never come.

I felt, even for the few short years when I served as the dean of Bethel College, that the college was drifting farther and farther away from the Conference. I think that I was so concerned about the security of the college in its educational integrity, its spiritual purposes, and its orderly move to a new campus, that serious, creative relationships with the BGC were not placed in an important priority. I tended to think that the people at the BGC headquarters and the Conference pastors ought to be more interested in me and the college. I am not certain how much interest I initiated in them. I realized the distance that had developed between the College and the BGC leadership when I moved from the dean's office to become one of the BGC secretaries in Evanston, later Arlington Heights.

As indicated already, it should be said, the Conference was drifting from its historic character and I found it difficult to determine the nature and the extent of the drift. In this situation of uncertain directions, it was easy for the College to draw a circle around itself, declare its own environment, its own existence. This is essential and appropriate for a non-denominational college, but it is dangerous for a school like Bethel if it becomes too disassociated from its parent organization, the Baptist General Conference.

Thus I believe that both Bethel, College and Seminary, and the BGC are at a point in history where new directions need to be explored. There is a new

generation in charge, both in the College and the Conference, to give leadership to a fellowship of churches that has tremendous potential for marking out the revolutionary and spiritual paths of the Kingdom among the global nations and cultures.

This change concept is not necessarily a profound observation. The same statement could have been made in 1914 when the seminary joined with the Academy on Snelling Avenue, or in 1931 when the Junior College program was initiated, or in 1971 the year of the centenary observances of the founding of the Seminary. Each one of these times was important in the history of Bethel. On each occasion there were challenges to be met and dangers from within and from without to be dealt with. We are the beneficiaries today because some good decisions were made at these important turns in history.

I believe that Bethel College, together with Conference leadership, can make directional decisions that can produce well conceived objectives. It will mean for the College the commitment to expand the learning of the best and the finest from the liberal arts coupled with the creative development of Kingdom values and mandates for this present age. It is always easy to be distinctive in items that really have no significance for this world. The events and pressures of the day easily mold institutions into the cultural similarities of the so-called safe and acceptable patterns of the evangelical ethos. But it takes creative study, laborious research, and the daring of faith to be a leader. Bethel College, I believe, has the opportunity to be a leader for our denomination and for the larger evangelical movement.

Thus the prophetic tune is echoed once again: "These are important days." Out of the discussion of this hour you and I need to ask: What are the factors behind the forming of the college's mystic and mission that has relevance for the closing days of this century and the opening decades of the 21st? And, what are the factors of influence that Bethel College is currently building into its life-style and mission that should make a difference for our denomination, for our nation, for our world in the days to come? You are the ones who will form these factors which will influence this college for the future and which could have a profound influence on the Baptist General Conference and the world at large.

Bethel College has the possibility to provide leadership, to provide research, to provide critical awareness to the needs of the world that the church should address and seek to minister to. Bethel College certainly does not have to hang on to its past, but as I pointed out from Marsden as I began this paper, it is important that we realize we are a part of an "historical

community of faith." Perhaps as we review our traditions and history we can sort out the extraneous from the fundamental. Building on the past Bethel College should be a light for creative and sacrificial service and mission for the future. I wish you well.

Virgil A. Olson, Th.D.  
 Professor Emeritus  
 Bethel College and Seminary  
 St. Paul, Minnesota

- 1 Adolf Olson, Centenary History, Chicago: Conference Press, 1952, p. 422.
- 2 C. George Ericson, "From Immigrant Tailor to Seminary Dean," THE STANDARD, March 22, 1971, p.17.
- 3 Olson, Op. Cit., p. 486.
- 4 Ibid., p. 499.

## WHY BETHEL?

*By Stanley D. Anderson, Philosophy Department*

If Bethel College did not exist, would we invent it? Many of us who are on the faculty would invent it because of the jobs it provides. I have been a member of the Bethel College faculty for nearly a score of years and treasure the friends I have gained, both faculty and students, and the lessons I have learned. I hope that my three children will attend Bethel to share in the type of education it provides. I question, however, whether faculty jobs are a sufficient reason for a Christian college to exist. In fact, the kingdom of God might be better served if I and other Christian scholars would become part of the secular educational scene.

It is easy to come up with reasons why Bethel Theological Seminary should have been established in 1871. Swedish immigrants needed to be prepared to serve as pastors, missionaries and church workers for a founding Baptist denomination. There were also good reasons for establishing an academy in 1905 and a junior college in 1932. Immigrants needed education in basic skills for life in a new culture both in their native language and in English. In 1946, good reasons existed for changing the junior college into a four-year program. A decision was made in 1944 by the Swedish Baptists to launch their own missionary program, and a denomination independent of the Northern Baptist Convention was formed. Thousands of veterans with the G. I. bill in their pockets were looking for colleges to attend. Many of these were Christians who had gained a vision for world missions during their time overseas, but

few good evangelical colleges existed outside of the south.

The situation is quite different in 1985. The Baptist General Conference is no longer a denomination of immigrant churches. Many good Christian colleges exist. The number of students who are looking for a Christian college to attend is decreased. Why then should Bethel College exist? Presumably, Christian colleges are established because needs exist. Men and women need liberal arts colleges to prepare them for life in the home, the church, the workplace and the world.

Bethel College has been very effective in providing a quality education and preparing its graduates for life in the world. One of the most gratifying results of my tenure at Bethel has been what has happened to those who took my classes and graduated with majors from my department. They are serving throughout the world as pastors, journalists and agents in social ministries. Many have gone on to graduate school; some are now completing their doctorates with distinction. I find, however, that my job at Bethel is becoming increasingly difficult. There are fewer good students to go around, and most of them seem to be interested primarily in careers that will provide financial security. I am not sure that I will be as proud of the graduates of the eighties as I am of the graduates of the seventies.

This leads to the key question: is the maintenance of an educational institution that has been effective in the past a sufficient reason for it to exist in the future. I would answer "yes," but only if there is something unique about Bethel College and its educational programs.

I have heard it said about differences between marriage partners that if

two agree on everything, then one of them is unnecessary. If Bethel College is not distinctly different from other American Christian liberal arts colleges, then maybe Bethel ought not to exist because we may have too many of them. Most successful colleges have something that identifies them and distinguishes them from other institutions. Wheaton College is identified by its long traditions that send children and grandchildren of graduates back by the hundreds. Calvin College is identified by its unified theological and cultural stance. Mennonite schools are identified by their emphasis on Mennonite history. Gordon College is identified by being an evangelical Protestant college in New England, an area of the country historically dominated by Roman Catholicism, liberal Protestantism and Unitarianism.

The most important question confronting Bethel College is not an organizational one, or even one of strategic objectives; it is a question of identity. To put the matter succinctly, Bethel College is suffering from an identity crisis. We have too many visions of who we are and what we ought to be doing. We have a diffused image both externally and internally. When we're not sure of who we are and what we are doing, we have difficulty communicating our image and making strategic decisions. To use the military analogy: we must decide on our basic mission in the world before we can do effective strategic planning.

But shouldn't we have agreed on our identity before we attempted to develop a new academic program? Maybe so, but a decision was made three years ago to push ahead on a new academic program for three reasons. First, we needed a new academic program as soon as possible, and the

resolution of the more theoretical questions would have taken a number of years to accomplish. Second, Academic Policies Committee, a small group of faculty members, administrators and students did not have the authority or even the ability in and of itself to develop this sense of mission and identity; the direction needed to come from higher levels. Third, a discussion of academic programs was a way to get at the questions of educational mission. It is interesting, of course, that the issues that have generated the most faculty interest and discussion have been those relating to faculty work load. It has been quite difficult to get many of the faculty to discuss the more theoretical educational questions.

We must realize, of course, that Bethel is a denominational college. The legal documents state that it, along with Bethel Theological Seminary, is a department of the Baptist General Conference. This relationship is an important factor in our identity crisis for two reasons. First, the Baptist General Conference is also facing an identity crisis so that it is difficult for the denomination at this time to provide Bethel with keys for its identity. Second, a large number of the current Bethel faculty have little direct experience with Conference churches and no knowledge of Conference and Bethel history.

Where will we find our identity? Where will we discover our distinctives? In the same way individuals do. We must study the past to learn who we are and what we have been. We would find more of value in Conference and Bethel history than most of us think is there; the Conference was not just another American fundamentalist denomination.

We must then look at the world of the present and the future to determine what is needed. We must analyze the strengths of our faculty and other institutional members to determine how we can best contribute to these needs. We must study the Scriptures to discover anew what God calls those who are under his rule to do. Those of us who belong to Conference churches should work to help the Baptist General Conference find its identity within the American church scene, because the identity of the denomination and the identity of the school are tied closely together. It might be a helpful heuristic device for a small group of people to gather together for an intensive period of time to re-invent Bethel College.

When we have determined our unique emphases and justified their value, only then can we say, if Bethel College did not exist, we would invent it.



## The Recovery of the Baptist Pietist Tradition: An Investigation of Its Meaning for Education at Bethel in the Twenty-First Century

G. William Carlson, History and Political Science

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### Introduction

A Christian who is a historian and political scientist has much to contribute to both the Bethel community and the larger world in which we live. There is no need to deny one's convictions and beliefs in order to be effective in one's vocation. However, we often live in a world that either denies the legitimacy of the relationship between faith and learning or denies the legitimacy of Christian pluralism and replaces it with an authoritarian Christianity in the search for such a linkage. Two illustrations can illustrate this tension.

During the 1960's, I was quite active in the anti-Vietnam War movement. This involved exploration of the Biblical witness, including the teaching of a course entitled Christian Pacifism and the organization of teach-ins on the campus. In the Bethel community I was asked how I could support the peace position, when in order to do such, I was opposing the legitimate government in their efforts to stop the spread of communism. At the University of Minnesota, my friends in the anti-war movement asked me why I found it necessary to bring my religious perspective into the debate. I told them that the basis for my anti-war position was found in the "peace tradition" of the Christian church. It was founded in the ideas of the early church, St. Francis, the Anabaptists, the Society of Friends and such modern activists as Martin Luther King Jr., Clarence Jordan and Dorothy Day. (Bainton, pp. 66-84, 152-172)

In a recent article in *Christian Century*, Diana Butler, a Professor of Religious Studies at Westmont College, reflected on the same concern when she explored her role as an evangelical feminist, a position that both many evangelicals and many feminists would reject. She wrote the following:

I am an evangelical woman with a Ph.D. in religion who is pursuing an academic career. By attending graduate school and following my academic interests, I feel as if I have left my home planet and my internal navigation systems have been thrown off. Like the Robinson family in the old television series "Lost in Space," I face strange and hostile aliens. On one side I am challenged by fellow evangelicals who question whether a woman should have a career outside the home, much less one teaching church history and theology; on the other, my academic colleagues doubt that the words "evangelical," "female" and "academic" can be used in the same sentence -- unless that sentence reads, "Evangelicals hate female academics."

A conservative friend who listened to me groan about the rigors of graduate school gave me the following advice: "If you would just submit to your husband, God would take away your desire for a Ph.D." Another friend, a graduate school colleague, upon learning that I considered myself an evangelical, stared me in astonishment and pronounced, "I don't see how any self-respecting woman could associate with such a repressive, patriarchal religious culture." (Butler, p. 231)

The issues with which Professor Butler dealt are potentially alienating ones if one lets the current debate solely inform the discussion. It may be wise to explore the various Christian traditions and their historical manifestations to interpret and expand the range of contemporary options. For example, Professor Butler could evaluate the work of Francis Willard and other evangelical feminists of the nineteenth century. Willard was a strong evangelical who was active in the temperance movement. As she attempted to deal with temperance issues, she found it necessary to advocate for women's suffrage and the ability for women to play leadership roles in church life. At that time she received strong support from a number of Christian leaders in the evangelical community. (Willard, pp. 1-13)

Willard went on, late in her life, to learn how to ride a bicycle. She used this experience to write a philosophical reflection on women's roles in nineteenth century American life and culture. Many opposed women riding bicycles because it destroyed their femininity, granted them an unhealthy mobility, and created a class of reckless women. (Willard, pp. 86-89) She saw it as an expression of her love for adventure, an illustration of her ability to overcome personal obstacles and a model for younger women concerning what they could do with their God-given talents. These were issues similar to the reasons why Professor Butler wished to develop her God-given talents.

The words evangelical and feminist need not be incompatible with each other if one lets history inform us that current trends and debates are not always the only options. The hierarchical and paternalistic approach to women's roles in current American evangelical church life was a product of changes in viewpoints developed in the early and mid-twentieth century; a viewpoint that was based on fear of modernity and the need to restore alleged patriarchal views of Scripture. (Hassey, Bendroth) This debate also took place in the Baptist General Conference. There was an active participation of women in the early history of the Baptist General Conference ministries. However, after World War II this activity subsided and it took from 1943 until 1982 for the next ordination of a woman to take place. (Winqvist, p. 7)

As a historian and political scientist, I understand that it is not whether or not one values tradition, but *what* tradition one values and *why*. Over the past few years I have taken the opportunity to further explore my own Swedish Baptist pietist heritage, which has roots in the pacifist and nineteenth century evangelical feminist opportunities, and to see whether it has any significant meaning to me as an educator and historian. The remainder of the essay is an effort to share the results of that search.

### Recovering the Pietist Baptist Tradition

My own Christian tradition is that of the pietist Baptist heritage. Dr. Virgil Olson, former Dean of Bethel College and former Church historian at Bethel Seminary, recently addressed the Bethel alumni in an effort to define some of the unique characteristics of the pietist Baptist heritage and their relationship to Bethel College. He defined issues related to five major aspects of the Bethel tradition: irenic pietism, Baptist heritage, academic scholarship in an evangelical context, global missions and evangelism, and community of faith. (Olson, pp. 1-5) Each of these are defined by their relationship to a Baptist Pietist Heritage--a heritage frequently referenced and valued. Dale Brown, Professor of Christian Theology at Bethany Theological Seminary, developed a positive definition of pietism, a definition that I would like to assert is reasonably useful in an understanding of this paper:

Protagonists have surrounded Pietism with other connotations: integrity, goodness, and holistic responses in terms of life styles; regeneration, sanctification, holiness, and the work of the Spirit in the context of biblical themes; and freedom, charity, tolerance, and equality in the areas of ecumenism and mission. (Brown, p. 10)

Pietism is not uniquely a Baptist heritage but has streams of adherents in the Reformed, Lutheran, Moravian, Catholic and Radical Protestant Communities. This paper will discuss its value in light of the Swedish Baptist communities, communities which were influential in the origins of Bethel College and Seminary. In an era in which history is frequently declared irrelevant, reference to this tradition is rarely articulated.

This heritage is one that ought not to be discarded with great ease. The new generic evangelicalism may not be compatible with many of the traditional, pietist, Baptist distinctives. One Conference Baptist pastor told me that the problem with my religious beliefs is that they are too Baptist and not relevant to the new wave of Christian converts in the church. They hinder church growth. However, before the pietist Baptist tradition is discarded, there must be some re-evaluation of its roots and current expressions to see if it is still capable of being effectively translated into the modern era or whether it will be forced to play a dissenting role in modern American culture. This essay would like to explore three themes of that tradition: the recovery of courageous Christian living, linkage of pietism to missions and social concern, and the value of the irenic tradition.

### *Recovering the Courageous Decision Making Processes*

Swedish immigration to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was based on two thrusts: economic survival and religious freedom. Several years ago, when the Swedish royalty was invited to Bethel College and Seminary, I wanted to boycott that event. I was not given the opportunity since I was out of town giving an academic paper to the Conference of Faith and History in Terre Haute, Indiana. If in attendance, I might have asked that the royalty apologize for the persecution of my forefathers and mothers and develop a several million dollar reparation scholarship fund for the great-grandchildren of those who fled Sweden for religious persecution. This event did cause me to reflect on the courage many Swedish Baptists exhibited when they were forced to leave Sweden by order of the Swedish government.

The story is told about Frederick Olaus Nilsson, who after accepting Baptist views, formed a church in Gothenburg, Sweden. By 1850, Nilsson was expelled from Sweden. The following is the official document that defines the circumstances of his banishment:

The Royal court has taken into consideration that concerns this question, and for that Frederick Olius Nilsson has freely confessed to having embraced the positions, that child-baptism, not being commanded in holy Scripture, is only a human institution; that baptism, therefore, ought only to be administered to men arrived at full knowledge of Christian doctrine; and then only with immersion of the whole body in water; and also that the holy communion can be received worthily only by persons of this persuasion; and for that Nilsson, having caused himself to be re-baptized at Hamburg, has in a society there founded, been received as an elder and teacher of the Baptists here in this realm...and has caused forty-seven or forty-eight persons to receive his doctrines, and form a separate congregation, to the members whereof, he, in the character of teacher, administers baptism, and the holy communion;...and having been admonished by the chapter of Gothenberg; yet has persisted in disseminating these his doctrines;...because, therefore, Nilsson has made himself guilty of the misdemeanor referred to in the code of offenses... the Royal court, in virtue of the said last command, justly condemns Nilsson, for that where he has offended, to be banished from the Kingdom. (McBeth, p. 481)

Nilsson eventually came to America in 1853 with some twenty-one other immigrants and planted new churches from New York to the Midwest. Although he drifted toward Unitarianism in the last decade of his life, he reclaimed his faith in Jesus Christ just prior to his death. (McBeth, p. 728) It is this history that provides the basis for such traditional Baptist commitments to religious liberty which "included the liberty of conscience, that every individual must be free to serve God according to the dictates of his conscience and his understanding of the Bible." (Olson, p. 2)

Stories like Nilsson's have caused me to look at other examples of Christians, Baptists and non-Baptists, whose lives illustrate courageous Christian living. What encourages men and women to engage in courageous Christian activity; activity that includes the pursuit of justice, peacemaking, human rights, and reconciliation? In a recent article in *Christianity Today*, David Gushee asked the same question concerning the "Righteous Gentiles" who helped the Jews during the Holocaust. Gushee argued that personal ties to Jews, moral influence of groups to which individuals belonged or valued, political convictions and faith are some of the reasons why courageous acts were taken. For many devout Christians, the life of Christ and the teachings of Jesus provided them with the Biblical mandate for rescuing Jews. (Gushee, pp. 34-35)

As one explores the courageous stories of other Christians, the same questions can be asked concerning why such activity was chosen. What led Rosa Parks to refuse to sit in the back of the bus? What gave Martin Luther King, Jr. the willingness to lead the bus boycott in response and help initiate the civil rights movement of the 1960's? What enabled John Woolman, a minister in the Society of Friends during the eighteenth century, to give up his law practice and business to go up and down the coasts of the Atlantic seaboard preaching a gospel of liberation for the slaves and just relationship with the Native Americans? What caused Dorothy Day to commit herself to the Catholic church after the birth of her daughter and to work to establish shelters for the homeless? What allowed Clarence Jordan, author of the *Cotton Patch Gospel*, to set up an interracial farm in Georgia (Koinonia Farm) at a time when racial segregation was the Christian norm in the South? What brought Andre Trocme, a Calvinist pacifist preacher in LaChambon, France, to hide Jews coming across the Pyrenees and direct his church to organize the effort while German troops were stationed in their town? What caused Francis Willard to become a leader in the Women's Christian Temperance Movement and eventually, as an evangelical feminist, organize for women's right to vote and play a leadership role in the church?

What do these people have in common? What allowed or constrained them to engage in courageous acts in the areas of justice, peacemaking, human rights and reconciliation? If one explores their lives, one could suggest several themes:

1. Each had several crisis experiences that allowed them to identify with persons who are "unwelcome" in the social structure of their society.
2. Each had the ability or was encouraged early in life to make courageous decisions in the small things of life.
3. Each developed a view of the Christian faith which valued the life and ministry of Christ as something to be imitated and supported a high view of the practical relevance of the Sermon on the Mount.
4. Each had a strong belief in the integration of intentional Christian spirituality and social action.
5. Each wished to relate themselves to a community of faith that would provide encouragement and discipline.

6. Each had a commitment to Christian discipleship and a willingness to "live in the world but not of the world." They all found useful the concept of the kingdom of God as a source for understanding how Christian reflection and social action are related.
7. Each had a high view of the sacredness of life and a commitment to value the principle that God's created world was to be used for the benefit of all persons.
8. Each saw materialism and hedonism as the prime reasons why Christians could not make courageous choices. They valued the restoration of a Biblical doctrine of "simplicity."

It is important that the modern age recover the value of courageous Christian living. When the History Department attempted to define its mission, they included in their statement a desire for students and faculty to appreciate and value "an intelligent, Christ-motivated nonconformity." The recovery of the pietist Baptist heritage can be helpful in doing so. Olson wrote:

Baptists were the leaders in blazing the trail for religious liberty, which included the liberty of conscience, that every individual must be free to choose to serve God according to the dictates of his conscience and his understanding of the Bible. These heroes of faith were willing to put their lives on the line when they voiced their convictions against the coercive religious controls of kings, parliaments, courts and ecclesiastical hierarchies. They held that believers should be allowed to worship in free assembly and that these autonomous communities of faith should be congregation in polity. (Olson, p. 2)

This heritage must not be forgotten for it provides today's Christian with some real life role models. They encourage today's courageous Christian pilgrims who think about and cultivate the virtues of compassion, self-respect, courage, honor, generosity and patience.

### *Recovery of the Link Between Pietism and Social Concern*

Dr. Olson, in a second point from his essay, discussed the linkage of pietism and social concern. He noted the "world-wide" missions emphasis of Bethel. Olson quoted a lead editorial for the *Clarion* for October, 1937:

...Our tradition consists mainly in its spiritual emphasis; its scores of young sturdy spirit filled and guided students dedicated to the service of Jesus Christ. It points with pride to alumni who have spent decades in the service of the Master in home and foreign field. With lowered heads we recall the names, Marcus Fritzell, Olivia K. Johnson, Hilda Lund Morrish, whose graves are monuments to sacrificial missionary activity. Even now we hear of great work done in distant foreign fields to which are associated the names, Anderson, Tanquist, Holm, Olson and a host of others. (Olson, p. 4)

Over ten years ago, four Bethel faculty did a study of the relationship between Christian values and economic life in American culture in the nineteenth and twentieth century. That was when I first learned that many of today's options for integrating faith and political concerns about economic inequality were being articulated as far back as the late nineteenth century. These included such models as Success Theology, Christian Benevolence and Christian Radicalism. In that search, I came across three British activists who combined a commitment to pietistic Christianity and service to those who live in poverty, Charles Spurgeon and William and Catherine Booth.

William and Catherine Booth began the Salvation Army officially in 1878. They combined a strong commitment to soul winning with a desire to confront the terrifying social needs of London. Much of this was found in their book *In Darkest England and The Way Out*. The Booths wanted leaders that were committed to soul saving and preparing persons for everlasting righteousness and heaven. They supported many efforts to help persons in need through such programs as food depots, unofficial employment exchanges, overnight shelters, soup kitchens, and missing person's bureau. They combined a call for personal holiness with practical Christianity. They endorsed an intense devotional life with the need to carry the gospel where the people lived. They lived a commitment to a pietist lifestyle and found in it a basis for the Christian ministry to the whole person.

Probably a more intriguing expression of the integration of pietism with social concern came in the life of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, one of England's most popular nineteenth century evangelists and pastor of London's Metropolitan Temple. He supported the "temperance movement, Lord Shaftsbury's schools for the poor, and the extension of the voting franchise and public education. He aided many fund-raising efforts for noble causes and generally denounced slavery, war and British imperialism." (Duke, p. 47) Although Spurgeon generally supported traditional Victorian self-help ideology, which stemmed from a strong commitment to "individual regeneration," he carried his social concern ideas further than many of his evangelistic colleagues.

Spurgeon supported a doctrine of evangelism which committed him to involvement in social concern ministries. During an 1862 sermon, he appealed for aid to those in Lancaster impacted by the cotton famine. He gave five reasons for helping these victims: "(1) they were not responsible for their plight; (2) their suffering resulted from the cotton industry's link with what he called 'the national sin of slavery'; (3) the people were patiently dealing with their adversity (he viewed them as virtuous poor); (4) their suffering was extensive; and (5) those who have received God's bounty ought in gratitude to give to those in need." (Duke, p. 50) In 1870, he denounced leaders in the Franco-Prussian wars for their insensitivity to the destructive nature of war:

Did either of you ever see a man's head smashed, or his bowels ripped open? Why, if you are made of flesh and blood, the sight of one poor wounded man, with blood oozing out of him, will make you feel sick...Where's (sic) your hearts if you can think of broken legs, splintered bones, heads smashed in, brains blown out, bowels torn, hearts gushing with gore, ditches full of blood and heaps of limbs and carcasses of mangled men? Do you say my language is disgusting? How much more disgusting must the things themselves be? And you make them... (the souls of soldiers) are as precious in God's sight as yours, they suffer as much pain when bullets pierce them as ever you can do; they have homes, and mothers and sisters...Before the deep curses of widows and orphans fall on you from the throne of God, put up your butcher knives and patent men-killers, and repent. (Duke, p. 51)

Spurgeon echoed some of the themes of the pietist tradition when he emphasized "character" as a basic pillar of social concern. His social concern actions were shaped by his "absolute devotion to God" and therefore was wary of such ideological ideals as nationalism, which can undermine that devotion. It was grounded in a careful "study of the Bible and therefore an appreciation of its consistent themes of justice, mercy, love, peace and human dignity." Spurgeon also suggested that character is "informed by a commitment to every human being as a creature under God's care." (Duke, p. 52) It was Spurgeon's pietist commitments that allowed him to go beyond his colleagues' beliefs and limitations and provide for us a strong role model for contemporary American religious life and politics.

During the past few months I have had the opportunity to read J. O. Backlund's *Swedish Baptists in America*. He articulated well the relationship of intentional spirituality and social concern as part of the pietist Baptist tradition. As a youth growing up in New Jersey, I had frequent contact with the Klingberg Children's home. Haddon Klingberg was often in our home and the church was always involved in a clothing drive. I only recently read the history of its origins. I recognize that times have changed regarding how children's services are delivered; however, it is a fine example of the linkage between pietism and social concern. Backlund writes:

Rev. Klingberg had served the church of New Britain as pastor some three years when the great tests of faith and love had to be made. The first test came in the form of a question, after a homeless little girl had found refuge in his home for three days and then had been discovered and appropriated by relatives. The question was: "What about those who have no relatives?"

The second test came one Sunday afternoon when a fatherly old Swedish patrolman told the pastor of three ragged and starving little chaps that he had discovered and that had nobody to care for them. "And," added the policeman, "they need somebody to look after them." "Very well," said Rev. Klingberg, "I'll do it." The policeman tried to show him what a difficult task he was facing, with children of his own to care for. But Rev. Klingberg saw only his Christian duty; and so the three little ragged waifs were promptly installed in his home. And as one good deed leads to another, it did not take Dr. Klingberg long to find other children that need care and Christian love, and to give them a home in the name of the Lord.

Within a short time his own home became too small for the growing brood; so he rented another, and another, and still another. A matron was engaged to care for the orphans. Then it seemed wise to organize the undertaking into an association and incorporate it under the laws of the state. This was done September 23, 1905. (Backlund, pp. 118-119)

What has undermined this call for linkage of social concern and pietist commitments among many evangelical Christians today, especially those who are part of the Baptist General Conference tradition? Four trends seem to influence this reluctance to maintain this linkage: the emergence of the suburban church and clientele that is uncomfortable in dealing with the realities of people in need; the development of a fortress religious ideology among new-right conservatives in general; a strong commitment to an eschatology that provides little hope for the future and the co-optation of evangelicals by a strident American hedonistic materialism and failure to be near to and therefore respond to people in need. These developments relegate discipleship to an escapist religious lifestyle that still allows us to feel good while doing nothing about the manifest social and economic ills that surround us. The recovery of the pietist, Baptist tradition would successfully challenge these trends.

### *Recovery of the Irenic Spirit*

Dr. Olson, in his Bethel chapel address, emphasized the irenic spirit as a major characteristic of pietism. Although there is a basic commitment to a Biblically based theology, there is a tendency in the pietist tradition to greatly respect those who differ on areas of applied theology and are fearful of political tests for spirituality. Olson writes:

These irenic pietists had a respect for the spiritual integrity of others with whom they differed. And they were wise enough to understand that no one person has all the truth right. We were taught in the college and the seminary that we need each other in exploring and

discovering truths. It was engrained in us that the journey in faith is a life long pursuit, and not until the ultimate day of revelation will we really know as we are known. Irenic pietism allowed this existential tension to exist between structured, propositional dogmatism on the one hand and the personal, spiritual experiences of the heart and mind on the other. (Olson, p. 2)

During the past decade the evangelical community has been caught, on both sides of the political spectrum, with the development of political tests for religious authenticity. This means that one's political beliefs on such issues as homosexuality, abortion, nuclear weapons, environmental issues, and secular public education is the test of whether a person is "truly" a Christian. Incivility can first of all be explained by the existence of a new religious form of political correctness: the belief that theological rectitude justifies intolerance. Often individuals seem to conceive the conflict as a battlefield encounter where the job of the soldier is to wipe out the enemy. It means that all who disagree or are not with the religiously correct group are part of the enemy camp.

For example, Cal Thomas, a new right editorialist, questions whether a Christian can legitimately send their children to public schools and still fulfill their Biblical mandate to nurture in the guidelines of faith. He writes:

First, religious conservatives must separate their children from the failed public school system. Public schools have been invaded and captured by an alien philosophy. With their emphasis on "multiculturalism," rewriting history and "alternative lifestyles," they are hothouses in which young seedlings are converted into towering liberal oaks.

These schools cannot be revived. They must be shunned by those with traditional values if those values and ideas are to be preserved. Conservatives must educate their children with their own worldview and aim for an intellectually and morally superior school system. Public schools would then be forced to change or close. (Thomas, p. 13)

This growing incivility in the evangelical community is characterized by a tendency to politicize religious principles and beliefs. Too often evangelicals seek to explain the opposing forces in the world from a conspiratorial framework. For the right, it is generally a communist-initiated effort or the work of secular humanism. For the left it is the military-industrial complex or the corporate elite that are the villains.

A second reason why religious groups tend to slide into a religious incivility is their commitment to apocalyptic visions of the future which deny any hope for current public policy options. Charles Krauthamer, a moderate conservative political commentator for the *New Republic*, analyzes the dangers of reading the political events of a country through the eyes of inevitable premillennial eschatology. James Watt, when Secretary of the Interior, told the House Interior Committee that one need not be overly concerned about future environmental consequences because "I don't know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns."

This negative view of the future is not just a vision of the right. Persons such as Paul Ehrlich and Robert Lifton have developed secular apocalyptic futures around the crises of overpopulation and nuclear weapons with much the same consequences. Civility is never enhanced by "declarations of emergency" in which a chosen group of insightful citizens have seen the future, pronounced it catastrophic, and insist that only their solutions can save the day for the rest of humanity. Krauthammer comments that the threat of apocalypse can become an instrument of "political blackmail." He concludes that that is "reason enough to resist the sirens calling us to



the moral equivalent of war, and go on with our daily business." (Krauthammer, p. 15)

Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Theological Seminary, expressed his growing concern over the increasingly uncivil methods by which evangelicals conduct themselves both within the community of faith and between the community of faith and others. In a recent book, he quotes some of the sayings of both the religious right and the left. The right argues that "we are in a battle for the soul of our nation!" "There can be no compromise with falsehood!" "Satan's favorite words are 'toleration and pluralism.'" On the left one can hear such phrases as "the enemies of liberation must be confronted without fear!" "The struggle for justice is too urgent for us to worry about being nice." (Mouw, p. 32)

The pietist Baptist heritage suggests an alternative to this increasingly hostile rhetoric and diatribic pronouncements. It is incorporated in their commitment to the irenic spirit. The Baptist tradition adheres to the endorsement of the separation of church and state, the value of human volition in the salvation experience, and the desire to be careful in measuring one's theological correctness in finely argued creedal discourses. The true test of one's faith is found in a faithfulness lifestyle which emphasizes the need to spread the gospel in love and extend a hand of compassion to those who suffer. (James 2, I. John 4) As the Apostle Peter writes, "always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence." (I Peter 3:15-16) The old gospel song tells us that when "Jesus calls us to repent, he does so 'softly and tenderly.' That experience gives us our most important model of civility." (Mouw, pp. 44-45)

Dr. Virgil Olson stated in his paper:

The early pioneers of the Baptist Conference came out of nineteenth century pietistic revival movements in Sweden. These enthusiastic spiritual radicals went against the mainstream discipline and decor of the established church by insisting that the new birth in Christ is the beginning of the believer's life with God, that lay people should be allowed to read and interpret the Scriptures without the requirement of clergy present, that individual freedom of conscience be respected, even in matters pertaining religion, and that to share the faith in Jesus with the neighbor was an expected life-style of true disciple. (Olson, p. 1)

In an effort to explore the meaning of the term irenic spirit, I recently reread portions of Spener's *The Pia Desideria*. He provided the bases for a pietistic Christian view of relationships, especially with those who may disagree with you. Spener wrote in *The Pia Desideria*:

While we should indicate to them that we take no pleasure in their unbelief or false belief or the practice and propagation of these, but rather are vigorously opposed to them, yet in other things which pertain to human life we should demonstrate that we consider these people to be our neighbors (as the Samaritan was represented by Christ in Luke 10:29-37 as the Jew's neighbor), regard them as our brothers according to the right of common creation and the divine love that is extended to all (although not according to regeneration), and therefore are so disposed in our hearts toward them as the command to love all others as we love ourselves demands. (Spener, p. 30)

Dr. Lundquist, former President of Bethel College and Seminary, would frequently discuss the significance of the irenic spirit in faculty retreat lectures. Just before his death, I heard him state the pietist commitments in a lecture he gave to students in the Christianity and Western Civilization class. He articulated four of

Spener's pietist ideas that he thought Bethel students should continue to value: priesthood of the believers should receive renewed emphasis (i.e., the differences between laity and clergy should be minimized and no one should be assumed to be the articulator of truth just because they are in church leadership); truth is not established in disputes but through repentance and a holy life; sermons should not show the preacher's erudition, but attempt to edify believers and produce the effects of faith; and speak to those who disagree with you in non-offensive manners, respecting their integrity, devoid of invectives and personal insinuations and in heartfelt love.

Dr. Lundquist was a deeply spiritual person whose life exuded a strong belief in the pietist free church tradition. He often asked his listeners to value an extensive use of Scripture; a personal experience with Jesus Christ; a transformation of life expressed in a commitment to holy living and measured by desire to be like Christ; and a desire to reform the church and society. All of this must be conducted in an irenic spirit. The irenic spirit values a civility of discourse, a desire to listen well to what others say, explore ways to draft a consensus conclusion, interacting with others in the spirit of love and seeking the well-being of even those who disagree with us.

### *The Christian Historian's Role: A Conclusion*

All persons develop telescopes through which they see the events of their times and attempt to understand their roles within them. For the Christian, these telescopes need to include a lens which is informed by Scripture. It sharpens the focus and provides a framework for analysis. This framework is no less necessary for the Christian who also happens to be a historian and/or political scientist. However, other filters can be attached which provide additional insight and enlightenment. One might be the core principles of the professional discipline. These include rigorous scholarship, fairness of document interpretation, appreciation of diverse points of view and coming to judgments which provide valid insights into the subject matter. A second would be the filter of Baptist pietism, a filter which has become an important aspect of my own Christian journey. It is a filter which allowed me to avoid the dangers of secular alienation, a strident Christian rationalism, and a love for a comfortable American hedonism. It provided an alternative to a imperialistic Americanism and the attractions of apocalyptic arrogance.

A Christian life is one that is informed by a desire to make courageous Christian choices, to link an intentional spirituality to social concerns, and to develop an irenic spirit that will moderate the polemics of the religious culture wars so frequently engaged in by my evangelical theological and political friends. The pietist Baptist heritage encourages Christians to be peacemakers, establishes a commitment to justice and equality for all members of God's creation and adopts a commitment to civility as a basis through which the gospel is communicated.

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## Pietism, Scholarship, Teaching, and Community

While there has been a proliferation of research since the 1980s into the relationship among Christianity, scholarship, and higher education, with Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, Anabaptist, Wesleyan, Orthodox, and Pentecostal scholars reflecting on that relationship in light of their own traditions, Pietism has played little role in that discussion. (See Moodle for links to a bibliography and other resources on the literature about Christianity, scholarship, and higher education.)

Perhaps the first attempt to add a Pietist voice to this conversation was a 2006 article in *Christian Scholar's Review* by then-Bethel University professor **Jenell Williams Paris**, who primarily drew on the works of John Wesley to consider love as an intellectual virtue within the discipline of cultural anthropology. (Now at Messiah College, Paris is also represented on this section of the Moodle page by her January 2012 response to Mark Noll's *Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind*, published online at *Christianity Today.com*.)

But no scholar has been a stronger advocate for the relevance of Pietism than theologian **Roger E. Olson** — see his chapter in our *Pietist Impulse* book (debunking several common myths about Pietism) and his 2011 lectures at Luther Seminary, the first part of which was published at his blog (“Reclaiming Pietism”) and the second was adapted as a 2012 CSR article on Pietism and postmodernism (both on Moodle). In this reader, we include one of Olson’s talks from the August 2006 Bethel faculty retreat, in which he responded to Wheaton president Duane Litfin’s *Conceiving the Christian College*. In this part of the response, Olson takes up Litfin’s notion of the college being “Christ-centered” and emphasizes the shared experience of “conversional piety” rather than any Christological doctrine.

370 She proved by her survival and accomplishments that vital voices who obey a call to speak can sometimes be heard in a local forum and far beyond.

## A Pietist Perspective on Love and Learning in Cultural Anthropology

By Jenell Williams Paris

### Introduction

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Rodney Sawatsky, former president of Messiah College, urges Christian scholars to consider not only faith and learning, but also faith, hope, and love as three dimensions of a full Christian approach to scholarship.<sup>1</sup> He and the other contributors to *Scholarship and Christian Faith: Enlarging the Conversation* promote an irenic approach to exploring intersections of scholarship and Christian identity. This is, in his words, a "broadening of the conversation" beyond the dominant faith-integration approach which focuses on Christian philosophy and presuppositional analysis of the disciplines.<sup>2</sup>

Guided by my tradition, the pietist impulse within evangelicalism, I will explore love as a lens for understanding what Christians do with their scholarship in cultural anthropology. First, I argue that the integrationist model is not very helpful for making sense of the work of Christian anthropologists, because of its emphasis on philosophy and its prioritizing of faith as the element of Christianity that is to be integrated. Second, I show how a pietist perspective that focuses on love better illuminates the work of Christian anthropologists in the areas of basic research, mission, and applied anthropology. This analysis carries implications beyond the field of cultural anthropology, as I encourage a de-centering of the integrationist approach in favor of a broader conversation that includes numerous Christian traditions and diverse ways of understanding what Christian identity may mean

Love provides a fresh lens for understanding what Christian scholars do in cultural anthropology, and offers new perspectives on faith-learning integration more generally. In this essay Jenell Williams Paris first argues that the dominant integrationist model is not very helpful for understanding the work of Christian anthropologists because of its emphasis on philosophy and its emphasis on faith as the element of Christianity that is to be integrated. Second, she shows how a pietist perspective that focuses on love better illuminates the work of Christian anthropologists in the areas of basic research, mission, and applied anthropology. Finally, she explores implications beyond cultural anthropology, encouraging a de-centering of the integrationist approach in favor of a broader conversation that includes numerous Christian traditions and diverse ways of understanding what Christian identity may mean for the scholarly vocation. Ms. Paris is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Bethel University.

### Shortcomings of the Integrationist Model for Cultural Anthropology

The dominant integrationist (or Kuyperian) model of faith integration emphasizes articulating the presuppositions of a Christian worldview and those of a discipline, and then comparing and contrasting these control beliefs. This approach is associated most closely with the Christian Reformed tradition, though its influence extends across Christian higher education.<sup>3</sup> An ultimate aim of this approach is to seek and speak Christian truth in all arenas, from the philosophy of a discipline to its teaching and public application. It involves "the effort to think like a Christian – to think within a specifically Christian framework – across the whole spectrum of modern learning."<sup>4</sup> This worldview approach encourages a systematic approach to faith-integration, usually relying on a biblical metanarrative framework (creation-fall-redemption-consummation or something similar). Its advocates also emphasize the value of teaching, especially inculcating a Christian worldview and a strong sense of vocation in students. In scholarly analyses, however, integrationist approaches focus more on theoretical concerns than on method or application.

When viewed from this perspective, Christians in anthropology seem to be slow to consider the implications of their faith on their science. Eloise Hiebert Meneses, anthropologist at Eastern University, summarizes that "while social sciences such as sociology, psychology, and economics have wrestled much with faith-science integration, anthropology has not."<sup>5</sup> Some use the integrationist approach, but discussions are detached from the discipline's power centers, focused instead on Christian college and seminary classrooms, Christian networks, and Christian publications.<sup>6</sup> Such analyses usually show fundamental differences and hostilities

<sup>1</sup>Rodney Sawatsky, "Prologue: The Virtue of Scholarly Hope," in Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen, eds., *Scholarship and Christian Faith: Enlarging the Conversation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 3-14.

<sup>2</sup>Scholars have explored faith-learning integration from numerous Christian traditions. See, for example, Richard Hughes and William Adrian, eds., *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Survival and Success in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997); Ernest Simmons, *Lutheran Higher Education: An Introduction for Faculty* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1998).

<sup>3</sup>General examples include Arthur Holmes, *Contours of a Worldview* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983); Cornelius Plantinga, *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning, and Living* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002); Albert Wolters, *Creation Regained* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985). From sociology, see, for example, David Fraser and Tony Campolo, *Sociology Through the Eyes of Faith* (San Francisco, CA: Harper San Francisco, 1992); Russell Heddendorf, *Hidden Threads: Social Thought for Christians* (Dallas, Probe Books, 1990).

<sup>4</sup>Mark Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994).

<sup>5</sup>Eloise Hiebert Meneses, "No Other Foundation: Establishing a Christian Anthropology," in *Christian Scholar's Review* 29.3 (2000): 535.

<sup>6</sup>Biola University, for example, sponsored a Network of Christian Anthropologists conference in 2000 that explored anthropological theory in Christian perspective. Similarly, in 2003 Wheaton College sponsored a symposium on Christian perspectives on postmodern theory in anthropology.

between the faith and the discipline, allowing little room for cooperation or creative synergy at the level of philosophy.

Faith-integration approaches in many disciplines have strong grounding in and support from Christian colleges and universities. There is, however, a dearth of anthropology programs in Christian higher education, and this limits scholars' ability to amass resources for books, conferences, and the like.<sup>7</sup> Of the 105 North American institutions in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU), none have a stand-alone anthropology department. Nineteen colleges (18%) house anthropology within blended departments, most commonly including sociology and anthropology, as well as intercultural studies.<sup>8</sup> Others include missions and anthropology, sociology and social work, sociology, or some combination of social sciences. Only three colleges (2.8%) offer anthropology majors, and nine (8.6%) offer intercultural studies majors. Eight others (7.6%) offer anthropology embedded in some other major like sociocultural studies, missions and anthropology, or sociology with an anthropology concentration. In total, only 19% of CCCU schools offer a major that includes any anthropology. This survey also yielded a list of just 35 scholars holding Ph.D.s in anthropology working at Christian colleges and universities.<sup>9</sup> Secular universities and Christian seminaries are two other institutional sites in which Christians may be found, but here also, Christian anthropologists are marginal and few in number. This may help explain why, in comparison with other disciplines, integrationist efforts in anthropology are rare and poorly sustained over time.

Two recent articles regarding the relationship between Christianity and anthropology reveal limitations of the integrationist approach. Meneses offers her vision of a Christian anthropology, and concludes that anthropology and Christianity share little harmony at the level of worldview.<sup>10</sup> She describes secular anthropology as holding an ultimate commitment to humanity as god. Anthropology's penultimate commitments, and those of modern social science more generally, include naturalism (nature constitutes all that exists), evolution (human history has no meaningful *telos*), and humanism (an optimistic and elevated view of human nature and activity). In contrast, a Christian worldview is ultimately oriented toward God, not humanity. As such, it is holistic (the spiritual aspect of human life is not reducible to the natural) and Trinitarian (humans and human history have meaning and purpose as part of a larger narrative). She concludes that there cannot be harmony or synthesis between these two incompatible paradigms. "If one framework is chosen, then the other can be incorporated at a subordinate level, but only by 'chopping it up' and accepting

<sup>7</sup>Jynell Brist surveyed the websites of 104 of the 105 colleges listed at www.cccu.org in September 2004, and called the remaining college whose website was down.

<sup>8</sup>The phrase "intercultural studies" carries numerous meanings. Within Christian higher education, it usually refers to a blend of anthropology and missiology that is intended to prepare Christians for cross-cultural service.

<sup>9</sup>This figure is approximate, because some faculty do not list credentials on-line.

<sup>10</sup>Meneses, *Christian Scholar's Review*, 531-549.

or rejecting portions piecemeal."<sup>11</sup> From this perspective, then, one's commitment to anthropology must be subjugated to one's commitment to Christ.

Meneses' argument seems to show little appreciation for anthropology, describing it as hostile to Christian ideas about the nature of humanity and the world, yet she has worked in the field for years as teacher, scholar, and missionary. Her life commitments show that anthropology is well-suited for understanding missionary work and development, and for teaching responsibility and stewardship to first-world citizens, and that hostile disciplinary presuppositions need not hinder active Christian scholarship. Unfortunately, these rich areas of integration are nearly invisible in Meneses' article because of the integrationist emphasis on philosophy over practice.<sup>12</sup>

Anthropologist Robert Priest, associate professor of mission and intercultural studies and director of the doctoral program in intercultural studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, analyzes the origins and meanings of the missionary position metaphor, including its use as a tool for exclusion of Christians in the discipline.<sup>13</sup> Anthropologists commonly reference Bronislaw Malinowski, an early ethnographer, as having documented the sexual regulation of indigenous people by missionaries. Priest shows instead that Alfred Kinsey, American biologist and sex researcher, misappropriated Malinowski's ethnography and that the "missionary position" is an ethnographic myth, never appearing in Malinowski's writings.

The missionary position is, instead, a core symbol in modernist and post-modernist discourse. In modern discourse, it distinguishes anthropologists as forward-looking and modern, and missionaries as conservative, ethnocentric, and pre-modern. In postmodern discourse, it synthesizes postmodernist objections to modernism. While anthropology has become increasingly open to diverse subject positions (identity of the speaker), the evangelical subject position continues to be maligned, in large part because such discriminations help define the field. Priest argues, in fact, that early anthropologists developed ideas about human nature as a modern replacement for Christian views of humankind, particularly the notion of original sin.<sup>14</sup> In his view, modernist and postmodernist anthropological theories do not merely ignore Christian narratives, but instead incorporate Christian narratives and symbols "in ways which dismantle, subvert, and desanctify Christian metanarratives and justify uses of power that silence and exclude Christian voices."<sup>15</sup>

Thirteen anthropologists provided commentary following Priest's article, articulating common views of Christians held among many anthropologists. Michele

<sup>11</sup>Meneses, 531.

<sup>12</sup>See, for example, Paul Hiebert and Eloise Hiebert Meneses, *Incarnational Ministry: Planting Churches in Band, Tribal, Peasant, and Urban Societies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995).

<sup>13</sup>Robert J. Priest, "Missionary Positions: Christian, Modernist, Postmodernist," *Current Anthropology* 42.1 (2001): 29-68.

<sup>14</sup>Robert J. Priest, "Cultural Anthropology, Sin, and the Missionary," in eds. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge, *God and Culture: Essays in Honor of Carl F.H. Henry*, pp. 85-105 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993).

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 45.

Dominy argued that missionaries deserve disrespect because they are "engaged in an unending, unrelenting effort to foist their hegemonic projection onto the non-Western pagan Other."<sup>16</sup> Neville Hoad suggested that because of missionaries' ethnocentrism and exploitation of cultures, anthropologists have "an ethical and political obligation" to "have a little fun at the expense of the missionary position."<sup>17</sup> Several commentators argued that Christians in the academy are simply embarrassing, the "sibling similar in many ways but blunt and tactless."<sup>18</sup>

In addition to these expressions of anthropological ethnocentrism, commentators raised two points that advance my argument about the limitations of faith-integration. While Tanya Luhrmann resists prejudice and discrimination against religion and religious people in the academy, she notes that there is also some logic behind it.

Having a religious conviction is not like being of a different race, gender or sexual orientation, because faith – at least, devout Christian faith – entails a belief commitment about the fundamental nature of reality...Religious faith...tends to assert that there is a different kind of world, that it cannot be the case that both the atheist and the believer are correct in their understanding of their world.<sup>19</sup>

Similarly, James Clifford argues that while religious views may be heard in the academy, they must conform to institutionalized protocols for professionalism. Thus, religious people cannot make claims about a different sort of reality based upon revelatory knowledge inaccessible to the unconverted. Clifford argues that Priest "does not (yet) offer an academic defense of religious content, an explicit Christian analysis rather than a discussion of the Christian academic predicament."<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, Priest produces knowledge and makes his argument in academically acceptable ways, but says the Christian subject position "gave me a perspective which helped me to see certain realities that were not as likely to be seen from another position but quite capable of being considered and evaluated once they were pointed out."<sup>21</sup> Meneses, on the other hand, makes her argument with explicitly Christian presuppositions. The revelatory knowledge she cites about the nature of humanity and the purpose of history cannot be accessed or critiqued with anthropological epistemologies and methodologies, and as theoretical underpinnings, are not shared with non-Christian scholars. Priest's argument, then, is shared broadly in a flagship journal, but does not rely upon or promote a Christian worldview. Meneses' work is thoroughly Christian in its perspective, and as such, is distributed mostly among Christian scholars.

These examples show that the integrationist project is limited in severe ways when used in cultural anthropology. Both Meneses and Priest describe some of the

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 46, 55.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 44.



basic ideological hostilities and personal prejudices that exist between Christianity and anthropology, or between Christian anthropologists and secular anthropologists. Discussions of atheism, naturalism, evolution, and humanism take place regularly among Christian anthropologists, and have for over a century, honing the faith and the intellect of Christian scholars and anthropology students. Publications, conferences, and the Network of Christian Anthropologists have all been valuable for developing Christian thought and for building faith-sustaining relationships among scholars who work in a field so influenced by atheism and anti-Christian bias. Priest concludes, and I agree, that while Christian anthropologists are dependent upon the discipline, we must also "self-consciously stand in tension with many of the assumptions, paradigms, and values of the discipline."<sup>22</sup>

The discipline itself, however, is untouched by these discussions, and the integrationist project has not been fruitful as an avenue for redemptive change within the discipline. Scholars in other disciplines may consider such pragmatism to be irrelevant or even crass, but it matters greatly to Christian anthropologists. Because of the harmony between anthropology and mission, and because many Christian anthropologists come from activist faith traditions, the redemptive potential of one's career investments are considered important. Christian anthropologists simply have not prioritized the development of theoretical work for a hostile or disinterested audience when arenas for transformative cultural engagement, such as mission, have seemed more open to Christian efforts.

Finally, many faith-integration efforts are more about the integration of Christian philosophy than the integration of faith itself. Scholars work with Christian philosophies, doctrines of creation, fall, and redemption, and other doctrines relevant to specific disciplines or issues. While such doctrines are broadly accepted across Christian traditions and are useful for some purposes, they are, nonetheless, systematic derivatives from the scriptural narrative of God and God's people. They are also thoughts potentially detached from practice. In this way, the practice of faith, that is, living a life yielded to God, is not even a prerequisite for faith-integration scholarship. A concern for praxis is often noted in prefaces or epilogues of faith-integration writings, but is not included as a substantive analysis. A non-Christian committed to understanding Christian philosophy could potentially analyze a subject with use of Christian doctrine, or a Christian committed to systematic theology or philosophy could do "faith integration" with little personal piety or faith. The faith-integration approach is surely valuable for addressing the secularizing socialization of graduate education, developing particular areas of systematic philosophy or theology, and for pedagogy in Christian colleges, universities, and seminaries. It does normally, but does not necessarily, engage the life of faith, however, and it too frequently limits the sphere of inquiry to matters of theory and philosophy. While redemption of disciplinary philosophy may be possible, it is not probable within anthropology, and is perhaps part of the reason why there are so few Kuyperian or Christian Reformed anthropologists. It seems to me that Christians in this field

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 105.

have found urgent and open areas for Christian witness, and have developed those areas rather than pursuing the seemingly closed venue of disciplinary philosophy and theory.

### A Pietist Perspective on Love and Learning in Cultural Anthropology

Rather than transforming or critiquing the discipline by analyzing its presuppositions, Christians have more often approached anthropology with a generous sense of commonality and agreement, developing anthropological insights for application in church, mission, society, and the discipline.<sup>23</sup> This is not apparent by reading faith-integration publications, because their focus on presuppositions highlights antagonisms between the faith and the discipline, and because they emphasize theoretical work over application.

In practice, however, many Christian anthropologists have developed careers that transcend traditional bifurcations between theory and practice: missionaries-turned-scholars, missionaries-and-scholars, professors of missiology, mission trainers, and applied anthropologists. Indeed, an emerging movement in the discipline as a whole encourages an engaged anthropology that would move beyond the traditional prizing of basic research over application. Engaged anthropology makes social change and advocacy part of the scientific process. Nancy Scheper-Hughes, who currently studies and advocates against human organ theft, argues from a humanist perspective that to know about evil is to be responsible for trying to alleviate its effects on people.<sup>24</sup> In my areas of interest, race studies and queer theory, engaged anthropology is not without its pitfalls, as activist-scholars sometimes manipulate data to suit predetermined political ends. Nonetheless, there exists an interesting common ground between Christian and non-Christian scholars in anthropology in their shared concern for the social impact of science.

Other Christians have focused their non-mission-related scholarship on disenfranchised social groups or urgent social issues. This scholarship has contributed to the work of mission, to evangelical theology and church practice, to social change, and to anthropology as a whole, particularly in cultural and linguistic anthropology. Love for sharing the gospel and love for the disenfranchised have been important motivators for Christian anthropologists since the inception of the discipline. A pietist perspective focuses more on the generous, clever, and impactful areas of overlap between Christianity and anthropology, and less on philosophical antagonisms. While rigorous in methodology and theory, pietist approaches tend to be less systematic in terms of analyzing the intersections between Christian "control

<sup>23</sup>I do not attempt a comprehensive history of Christians in anthropology in this article. For such history, see a special issue of *Missiology* titled *Missionaries, Anthropologists, and Human Rights* (April 1996), and Darrell Whiteman, "Anthropology and Mission: The Incarnational Connection", The Third Annual Louis J. Luzbetak, SVD Lecture on Mission and Culture, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, IL, May 5, 2003.

<sup>24</sup>Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "The Primacy of the Ethical," *Current Anthropology* 36. 3 (1995):409-428.

378 beliefs" and disciplinary presuppositions.

I refer to pietism in its broadest sense, as a non-institutional religious energy present across Christian traditions. It perhaps finds fullest institutional expression in America in the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition. Like its formal eighteenth-century German origins, the pietistic impulse may be broadly characterized as heart-focused, in contrast to head-focused approaches to religion that are excessively dogmatic, formalized, and lacking individual feeling and participation with God. In numerous denominations and traditions, the pietist impulse has promoted an individual relationship with God, moral living, outreach to the poor, mission, and participation in small group Bible study and accountability. *Pia Desideria* (1675) is commonly referred to as a first statement of pietism, in which German religious reformer Philipp Jakob Spener wrote that, among other things, Christianity should be a life practice more than a matter of knowledge, that ministers should preach understandable, practical sermons, and that all Christians should live moral lives and practice restraint and charity in their disagreements with unbelievers and with other Christians.<sup>25</sup>

When viewed in pietist perspective, love offers an interesting mode for scholarly integration. For pietists, faith is heart-felt, experiential, and not heavily doctrinal. While doctrine is not unimportant, pietists do not treat it with the reverence or precision of other traditions. John Wesley, a pietist, relied on Hebrews 11 in describing faith as "'the evidence' and conviction 'of things not seen.'"<sup>26</sup> It is a gift of God that is known and confirmed in the heart. Faith involves trusting in God with conviction, despite not having seen all of the things in which we believe. In a pietist view, faith is a way of life, not an ideology or a set of control beliefs.

In this view, faith is quite difficult to integrate with scientific rationalism. In extending the mention of Hebrews 11, the people commended by faith in that chapter are those who made choices with incomplete knowledge, walked into uncertain futures, and did not make full sense of things within their lifetimes. The Scientific Revolution promoted ways of knowing that were more empirical and experimental, and less revelatory and intuitive. In general, the scientific approach encourages control, predictability, measurement, and systematization. If faith is about believing without seeing, science is about seeing before believing. If faith is about living in trust without certain knowledge of the future, science is about predictability, explaining the present and predicting or controlling the future. If faith is about trust, science is about skepticism, privileging rational and sensory information.

In relating faith, love, and reason, Wesley said:

Let reason do all that reason can: employ it as far as it will go. But, at the same time, ac-

<sup>25</sup>James Nelson, "Pietism," BELIEVE Religious Information Source, <http://mb-soft.com/believe>, accessed July 26, 2004; Mark Noll, "Pietism: Advanced Information," BELIEVE Religious Information Source, <http://mb-soft.com/believe>, accessed July 26, 2004; Mark Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

<sup>26</sup>John Wesley, "The Case of Reason Impartially Considered" (sermon 1781), Wesley Center Online, <http://www.wesley.nnu.edu>, accessed July 26, 2004.

## A Pietist Perspective on Love and Learning in Cultural Anthropology

knowledge it as utterly incapable of giving either faith, or hope, or love; and consequently, of producing either real virtue or substantial happiness.<sup>27</sup>

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For Wesley and other intellectual pietists, reason (scientific rationalism may be considered a subset of reason) is useful to a point, for understanding the world God made and in understanding some parts of religion. It is a limited good, however, because of its detachment to virtue.

Love is thus more amendable for pietists working to integrate scholarship with the Christian life because it is more visible and tangible than faith, and because it merges knowledge and practice. Love is faith in action, a demonstrated care for God, self, and neighbor. In Wesley's words again, love is "a calm, generous, disinterested benevolence to every child of man" and "an earnest, steady good-will to our fellow-creatures."<sup>28</sup> Theologian Mildred Bangs Wynkoop explicates this Wesleyan emphasis in saying that Wesley's major contribution to the church "was not new dogma but a real, spiritual vitality infused into traditional, mainline Christianity. This vitality is love, and love is by its very nature dynamic."<sup>29</sup>

Next I will describe how the spiritual practice of love influences the work of Christian anthropologists in three areas: basic research, mission, and applied anthropology. In each of these spheres, many Christian anthropologists develop dual audiences, Christian and secular, for the dissemination of scholarly products.

### Basic Research as Love

Many Christian anthropologists contribute to the body of anthropological knowledge by doing basic research that is focused upon religious subject matter, or oppressed and marginal people. This work may be viewed as truth-telling, valuable in and of itself.<sup>30</sup> It may also be used to edify the church or the research subject's community. Judith Shapiro, an anthropologist who is not a Christian, argues that missionary linguists have contributed excellent basic research to the discipline

because they had the motivation to stay for very long periods of time in 'the field,' far longer than most academic anthropologists and linguists. Because they shared with their successful academic colleagues the intelligence and patience to grapple with a deeply unfamiliar language.<sup>31</sup>

Kenneth Pike was such a Christian anthropologist, contributing to understandings of tone languages, the field of English as a Second Language, tagmemics, and innovating the concepts "emic" and "etic." Pike disseminated his academic and

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City 1972), 22.

<sup>30</sup>George Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (New York: Oxford University Press 1997).

<sup>31</sup>Priest, "Missionary Positions," 57.

devotional insights to multiple audiences including the academy, the church, missionary trainers, and missionaries.<sup>32</sup>

Much basic research in anthropology involves marginal populations including the global poor, indigenous cultures, women, and other "Others." Many anthropologists, Christian and not, are motivated by love and a desire for social justice as they choose areas for study. Humanism as a common denominator offers rich areas for collaboration between Christians and non-Christians in the field, making philosophical antagonisms less important in arenas of engagement. While some Christians study populations with mission application in mind, others study religious subject matter unrelated to mission. Brian Howell (Wheaton College), for example, studies meaning-making among Protestants in the Philippines.<sup>33</sup> Still others study subjects that are neither religious nor related to mission. Laura Montgomery (Westmont College), for example, researched effects of new government agricultural policies and the North American Free Trade Agreement on Mexicali, Mexico. She has also researched religious subjects including short-term mission and gender equity in Christian higher education.<sup>34</sup> My work is similar in covering both religious and non-religious subjects. My research has related to race and ghetto formation, processes of urban neighborhood formation among Christian homosexuals, and successful corporate marketing strategies.<sup>35</sup>

In basic research, processes for producing knowledge are usually entirely secular in methodology and theory. Methodology for fieldwork has established codes of humanistic ethics that are entirely compatible with Christian ethics – in my view, they are a subset of a more inclusive and rigorous Christian ethic.<sup>36</sup> Anthropological theory is less compatible with Christianity, and Christian scholars live with tensions as they develop theoretical niches with secular colleagues. Secular anthropological theory can provide useful understandings of culture and cultural processes, though couched within larger frameworks of relativism, secular humanism, and evolution.

In a rare example, Eloise Hiebert Meneses and John Stapleford created an explicitly Christian theory to analyze three cultural types (egalitarian tribal, feudal peasant, and democratic capitalist) for ways in which each one manifests wealth,

<sup>32</sup>Among Pike's prolific publications are *Linguistic Concepts: An Introduction to Tagmemics* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press 1982); "Christianity and Culture 1: Conscience and Culture," *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation* 31(1979): 8-12; *With Heart and Mind: A Personal Synthesis of Scholarship and Devotion*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1962) [Repub. 1996. Duncanville, TX: Adult Learning Systems].

<sup>33</sup>Brian Howell, "Practical Belief and the Localization of Christianity: Pentecostal and Denominational Christianity in Global/Local Perspective," *Religion* 33 (2003): 233-248.

<sup>34</sup>Laura Montgomery, "Irrigation and Social Reproduction in the Mexicali Valley of Northwest Mexico" in *Culture and Environment: A Fragile Coexistence*, ed. R. Jamieson, University of Calgary Press, 1993.

<sup>35</sup>Jenell Williams Paris, "Faith-Based Queer Space in Washington, D.C.: The Metropolitan Community Church-D.C. and Mount Vernon Square," with Rory Anderson. *Gender, Place and Culture* 8 (2001): 2: 149-168; "We've Seen This Coming': Resident Activists Shaping Neighborhood Redevelopment in Washington, D.C.," *Transforming Anthropology* 10 (2001): 1:28-38.

justice, love, spirituality, and humility.<sup>37</sup> This also makes a valuable contribution to Christian understandings of anthropological theory, but as with other explicitly and/or exclusively Christian points of view in anthropology, it is unlikely to influence mainstream theory in the field. This kind of work will contribute to pedagogy, and to inspiring other faith-integration efforts among Christian scholars.

Understanding the integrative aspects of basic research depends largely upon knowing the motivation and the full body of work of the scholar. Pike, for example, researched language partly to understand language, and partly to better communicate the Gospel cross-culturally. Some Christian scholars are motivated by love and care to research particular subjects. Others, however, do basic research with no application or dual audience and no explicitly Christian motivation. In basic research, the intensity or integrity of Christian integration is not necessarily apparent in the subject matter or in academic publications. The scholar's motivations may be known by considering her/his broader agenda, which may include communicating with multiple audiences and exerting influence in areas including the academy, the church, and society.

### Mission as Love

Synchronicity between anthropology and mission was envisioned by missionaries since the inception of anthropology. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, missionaries contributed first-hand knowledge of cultures to early "armchair" anthropologists, before the twentieth-century emphasis on first-hand fieldwork. Missionaries served as data-gatherers for European and American scholars who used the data to theorize about how societies evolved. Even today, missionaries and anthropologists still frequently help each other with access to populations, language, and other elements of fieldwork.<sup>38</sup>

Some early missionary anthropologists strove to reformulate mission strategy in ways that critically engaged colonial contexts. Many of these missionary anthropologists agreed with their secular colleagues' critiques of mission as colonial appendage. Some saw the tendency of some modern Christian groups toward anti-intellectualism and excessive subjectivity in mission, as evangelism and relief work were done without appropriate cross-cultural skills and knowledge. They turned to anthropology for insights and concepts that would help the missionary endeavor. Early missionary anthropologists sought to reformulate mission strategy to develop indigenous churches rather than colonial ones.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup>Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association, accessed July 27, 2004, <http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm>.

<sup>37</sup>Eloise Hiebert Meneses and John E. Stapleford, "Defeating the Baals: Balanced Christian Living in Different Cultural Systems," *Christian Scholar's Review* 30.1 (2000): 83-106.

<sup>38</sup>Whiteman, "Anthropology and Mission: The Incarnational Connection."

<sup>39</sup>See, for example, Louis Luzbetak, *The Church and Cultures: An Applied Anthropology for the Religious Worker* (Techny, IL: Divine Word Publications, 1963); Donald McGavran, *The Clash Between Christianity and Cultures* (Washington: Canon Press, 1974); Eugene Nida, *Customs and*

A second generation of missionary anthropologists continued this emphasis, developing theories of contextualization. They used secular anthropology concepts such as functional equivalents, cultural cues, contextualization, and developed the field of ethnotheology. Their goal was to improve mission practice, especially in contextualizing the gospel and church planting. Sherwood Lingenfelter, anthropologist and provost of Fuller Theological Seminary, for example, offers missionaries models for doing analysis of the social order of a group, including understandings of property, economy, social exchange, family, community, authority, eating, and conflict. He explains how church planting must be done in culturally relevant ways that incorporate cultural patterns of property ownership, authority, conflict management, and so forth.<sup>40</sup>

Paul Hiebert is another example, devoting his career to both anthropology and missiology. He worked as a missionary in India, and later worked in higher education as professor and dean. He contributed to mission in his own work as a missionary, in teaching, and in writing books such as *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* and *Missiological Implications of Epistemological Shifts: Affirming Truth in a Modern/Postmodern World*. He also wrote a cultural anthropology textbook in Christian perspective.<sup>41</sup>

Anthropology as a tool for mission has been institutionalized in Christian colleges, universities, and seminaries. Anthropology programs that prepare students for mission began at Wheaton College, Bethel University, and Hartford College in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and now exist both as mission preparation and as the study of anthropology itself at some Christian colleges and universities. *Practical Anthropology*, a journal focused on the applications of anthropology for Christian theology and practice, mostly in the area of mission, was founded in 1953. The journal became *Missiology* in 1973 and continues on today as the journal of the American Society of Missiology.<sup>42</sup>

The activity of anthropologists in mission may be understood as an integration of love and learning. These anthropologists love people who do not know Christ, and devote their intellectual and vocational lives to better understanding how to communicate the Gospel and develop churches. They also express love for the field of mission in their efforts to engage critically the process of mission in colonial and post-colonial contexts.

*Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Missions* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954); Alan Tippett, ed., *God, Man, and Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1973).

<sup>40</sup>Sherwood Lingenfelter, *Transforming Culture: A Challenge for Christian Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992). For other examples, see Stephen A. Grunlan and Marvin K. Mayers, eds., *Cultural Anthropology: A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979); Charles Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979).

<sup>41</sup>Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1999); *Cultural Anthropology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1973); *Missiological Implications of Epistemological Shifts: Affirming Truth in a Modern/Postmodern World* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999).

A third arena in which Christian anthropologists express love in the discipline is in applied anthropology. Here, Christians have applied theoretical insights, method, and research findings in both church and society. Though some of the work referenced here would now be labeled "engaged anthropology," most was conceived of at the time as "applied," so I continue use of that term.

In the church, anthropologists have contributed to theology, church life, and teaching Christian adults in colleges and seminaries. In terms of theology, anthropologists have encouraged theologians and laypersons to consider culture when developing theology. Charles Kraft, for example, worked as a missionary, trainer of missionaries, and linguist. He applied anthropological insight to evangelical theology, presaging postmodern evangelical theology today. He argued that western evangelical theology is too heavily philosophical, and too oriented around academic concerns. He felt that an anthropological perspective and method could help theologians understand and better address people's questions in their communities, instead of esoteric issues of interest mostly only to themselves. He argued for the inclusion of non-philosophers and non-academicians in the making of theology, and for a theology that focuses on people (their understandings of God and their relationship with God in various culture) as much as it focuses on God. He also urged a relativism that situates all theological understandings in cultural contexts, with God alone existing outside of culture. Thus, he wrote that, "theologizing has been and is most appropriately done with specific reference to the concerns and needs of the audience addressed, rather than as a quest for a single set of once-for-all formulations of truth."<sup>43</sup> Kraft called this quest "ethnotheology," the need to understand the relationship between God and humans with both theological and cultural understanding.<sup>44</sup>

Many anthropologists make similar contributions today, and I offer just a few examples. Harold Recinos, at the Perkins School of Theology, wrote two books encouraging pastors and church members to use basic anthropology methods to do neighborhood and area surveys before starting outreach programs, and he uses theories of globalization to encourage contextualized urban ministry in the United States.<sup>45</sup> Both Miriam Adeney, anthropologist at Seattle Pacific University,

<sup>42</sup>Collections of articles from *Practical Anthropology* may be found in William Smalley, ed., *Readings in Missionary Anthropology* (Tarrytown, NY: Practical Anthropology 1967); William Smalley, Ed., *Readings in Missionary Anthropology II* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1978).

<sup>43</sup>Charles H. Kraft, "Can Anthropological Insight Assist Evangelical Theology?" *Christian Scholar's Review* 7 (1977): 165-203. Another example of pastoral application of anthropology, see Robert J. Priest, "Cultural Factors in Victorious Living," *Free and Fulfilled: Victorious Christian Living in the Twenty-First Century* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997).

<sup>44</sup>Charles H. Kraft, "Toward a Christian Ethnotheology," in ed. A. R. Tippett, *God, Man and Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973), 109-126.

<sup>45</sup>Harold Recinos, *Hear the Cry!: A Latino Pastor Challenges the Church* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989); *Jesus Weeps: Global Encounters on our Doorstep* (Nashville,

and Laura Montgomery help churches critically analyze and formulate short-term mission programs, considering the paternalistic and neo-colonial aspects of too many mission encounters with the global poor.<sup>46</sup> Adeney encourages Christians to take social inequality seriously by writing and speaking about Christian concern for the oppressed in broader venues such as her post as board member for *Christianity Today*.<sup>47</sup>

Many Christian anthropologists contribute to the church by teaching in Christian colleges, universities, and seminaries. Some, like John Ahrensen, anthropologist at Houghton College, spend part of the year teaching at a U.S. college, and part outside the U.S. with students in cross-cultural academic experiences. Many also teach and consult in churches on subjects of race and ethnicity, mission, and social inequality.

### Conclusion

From a pietist perspective, of the faith-hope-love triad from 1 Corinthians, faith may be particularly difficult to integrate with scholarship. Jesus, for example, discusses faith with metaphors from nature. The birds and lilies express faith in the way they live without worry for the future. Though doctrinal, systematic readings of Scripture seem to be privileged among Christian scholars. Scripture may also be read as a narrative of people living lives of faith. In this view, faith is more way of life and less an ideology or a set of control beliefs. Thus, I think that what is generally referred to as "integration of faith and learning" or "integration of theology and learning" or "integration of Christian philosophy and learning." Though valuable, the doing of philosophy and the speaking of Christian thoughts is not faith itself. Systematized discussions of the world, religious practice, or religious doctrine are important, but they are derivative from faith itself, which is more often described biblically in narrative or figurative terms. Living a life of faith is, in pietist perspective, no different for a scientist than a non-scientist in that it involves trusting God in the uncertainty of human existence.

Love may provide a more powerful and concrete way of understanding ways in which some Christians live out the academic vocation. For example, Paul describes love in 1 Corinthians 13 as profoundly other-centered: patient, kind, not boastful or arrogant or rude. It rejoices in the truth, and bears with other people for the long haul. Jesus, as well as the prophets before him, emphasized the importance of care for the vulnerable and love for God, neighbor, and the self. Love, then, carries important implications for how Christian scholars engage in scholarly dialogue,

TN: Abingdon Press, 1992).

<sup>46</sup>Laura Montgomery, "Short-Term Medical Missions: Enhancing or Eroding Health," *Missiology: An International Review* 21 (1993): 30.

<sup>47</sup>Miriam Adeney, *Daughters of Islam* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002); *God's Foreign Policy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984); *A Time for Risking: Priorities for Women* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1987).

their pedagogy, and their attitude toward subject matter. It highlights applications and teaching, aspects of the scholarly vocation that are too often devalued in the academy and at times neglected in faith-integration treatments. It offers a framework for engaged scholarship, moving beyond conventional divisions between theory and application, and concomitant privileging of theory.

On the other hand, a pietist perspective on love and learning has potential pitfalls. Though there have been many intellectual pietists and a strong institutionalized intellectual movement in the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition, the movement is sometimes mediocre in its intellectual life, at times even anti-intellectual.<sup>48</sup> An undue emphasis on experience and feeling over rationality and intellectual struggle has, at times, resulted in theological imprecision and social outreach efforts that fail for lack of forethought and/or assessment. Michael Emerson and Christian Smith, both Christian sociologists, critique this impulse with respect to evangelical (not specifically pietist) efforts toward racial reconciliation. They argue that the activist impulse combined with an anti-intellectual tradition often dooms well-intentioned efforts to failure.<sup>49</sup>

Pietism offers a valuable perspective, however, for Christians seeking integrity and wholeness in their scholarly lives. This pietist view of anthropology reveals that anthropologists have been integrating their Christian identity with their work in important ways since the discipline's inception, but the dominant faith-integration paradigm renders these efforts nearly invisible. In addition, the evangelical, fundamentalist, and pietist identities of many Christian anthropologists make them less likely to use Kuyperian frameworks to describe and shape what they do. Critical use of numerous faith traditions and broader use of spiritual concepts (love, hope, faith, trust, sin, and others) may expand and enrich our efforts to be faithful Christian scholars.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup>Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*; John E. and Susie C. Stanley, "What Can the Wesleyan/Holiness Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education?," eds. Hughes and Adrian, *Models for Christian Higher Education* (Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1997), 313-326.

<sup>49</sup>Michael Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>50</sup>This paper was first presented at the Faith in the Academy conference at Messiah College in September 2004. It has benefited from feedback from conference participants, as well as from Carla Barnhill, C. Jeanne Serrao, Susie Stanley, Jynell Brist, Neil Lettinga, and two anonymous reviewers.

**Thoughts on the Christ-centered College/University  
(Litfin, *Conceiving the Christian College*, Chapter 4)**

Roger E. Olson

*Bethel University Faculty Retreat  
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Wheaton College president Duane Litfin weighs in on the meaning of being a Christ-centered college or university in *Conceiving the Christian College*. My take on his book is that its main purpose is to explain and justify his own leadership of Wheaton. Much of what he writes arises out of and applies especially to that context. However, much also applies to all Christian institutions of higher education. I find myself agreeing with much of what Litfin writes; none of it is unfamiliar territory. I've been working with this set of questions, issues and answers for twenty-four years in three very different Christian universities. For the most part Litfin's answers are the standard ones for conservative, establishment evangelicals in higher education. However, I also know that many faculty members and even administrators of such institutions have qualms about his approach or at least his emphasis.

Not long before leaving Bethel I was invited to engage in dialogue with the presidents of the thirteen colleges and universities of the Christian College Consortium. That event took place at Bethel. It was a fascinating experience for me. After giving a brief presentation on what I call "reformist" or "postconservative" evangelical theology I just sat and listened and observed as those thirteen presidents engaged in lively discussion and sometimes debate about these very issues. So, my point is, that not everyone in high administrative positions at standard evangelical colleges and universities sees eye-to-eye with Litfin about everything. It's okay to take issue with some of his recommendations. And that I will do.

However, first, I want to reiterate my general agreement with the main thrust of the book and especially Chapter 4 "A Centered Education." There Litfin argues for making sure that every discipline and course in the Christian college or university has as its highest goal leading students to see that in Christ the whole universe of learning holds together. Jesus Christ is the center of all life; his Lordship is the very purpose and goal of our lives individually and communally. Secular colleges and universities and vaguely church-related colleges and universities abound; there is no shortage of them. But the truly Christ-centered and Christ-integrated, academically serious institution of higher learning is rare. And few that have that distinctive hold on to it for very long. Obviously Litfin is determined to hold onto that at Wheaton. I'm not sure any president of Wheaton before him ever lost sight of it. But there does seem to be a natural progression in American higher education from Christ-centered to church-related to secular. No more than Litfin do I want that for Bethel or for Baylor and vigilance against it is crucial. Left to their own devices without vigilant leadership both will inevitably slide down that slippery slope.

After seven years at Baylor, the world's premier Baptist and some would say evangelical university, I see how that happens. It didn't happen, but it could have happened. And that progression was no one's intention. It could have happened due to lack of vigilance. Fortunately, the powers that be were and are aware of the danger and strive to maintain Baylor's Christian identity. But there's another side to the story of Baylor that distinguishes it from Wheaton's story. Baylor almost got grabbed up by fundamentalists. One president and the people around him were so busy trying to rescue it from those jaws that at first they didn't see the opposite ones coming right at them. I don't blame them. In our context fundamentalism is probably the greater of the two dangers (the second danger being liberal theology and secularism). If certain people had their way Baylor freshmen would be learning how Adam and Even fed the dinosaurs. Baylor's leaders snatched the university out of that academic perdition by means of a mighty struggle that involved the state legislature.

But as they were doing that the danger of dualism was growing and threatening to turn Baylor into what Litfin calls an "umbrella" college or university where its Christian heritage would become merely a formality. Actually, I'm not sure that was ever a realistic danger at Baylor. Baylor has always maintained a strong Christian identity in spite of individual faculty members who occasionally attempt to move it in a more secular direction. Here I need to introduce a third category of Christian college/university in addition to Litfin's "systematic" and "umbrella" categories. Robert Benne has called it "atmospheric." Systematic is where the Christian world view and the Lordship of Jesus Christ are woven into the very warp and woof of the institution. Umbrella is where the Christian heritage of the institution is celebrated from time to time but not integrated into the fabric of the academic routines. I think there is a third category into which many Christian colleges/universities fall and that is best described as atmospheric. When I arrived at Baylor in 1999 I perceived that it was a Christian university where Christianity was "in the air," so to speak, but not always or everywhere present and active. Many faculty members wanted Christianity confined to the Religion Department, the seminary, the dorms and aspects of the School of Music. Some of them with whom I spoke told me flat out that for them Christianity made no difference, had no influence or impact, on their scholarship or how they taught their discipline. For them, faith and secular scholarship should exist in water tight compartments along side each other.

In all fairness, I should say that these people always expressed belief that Christianity understood as love and justice should permeate all relationships. But their approach to integrating faith and learning stopped there; for them Christian belief should exercise no influence on their scholarship or the content of the subjects they taught. This is dualism; in some cases it has devolved into the old "two truths" theory or practice of medieval universities. One medieval philosopher argued that a Christian could and perhaps should believe one thing as a scholar and its opposite as a Christian believer. The Catholic church rightly condemned that as heresy. But it has become a common heresy among Protestants in the modern world.

In 1999 Baylor was in the process of deciding how best to renew its Christian identity. Some folks clearly wanted it to adopt Litfin's umbrella model and become nothing more than a university that once was Christian and still calls itself Baptist but by that means only having a loose relationship with the Baptist family of churches. Other folks wanted it to embrace the atmospheric model where Christianity is in the air but makes no difference in how disciplines are taught. Others wanted it to become a large Wheaton College or something like that. Perhaps a hybrid of Wheaton and Notre Dame. The point was that classical, historic and even evangelical Christianity (although the word "evangelical" is problematic among Baptists in Texas) should permeate every nook and cranny of the campus including integration of faith and learning in every course.

Coming from Bethel I thought perhaps I had something to suggest. Because I experienced something at Bethel that did not quite fit any of those paradigms. And I don't see Bethel's historic model of being a Christian university acknowledged or treated seriously in Litfin's book. And I remembered my experiences of teaching for two years at Oral Roberts University which, contrary to many peoples' mistaken impressions, is not fundamentalist. In my opinion, neither ORU nor Bethel fit any three of the models I've mentioned so far. My experience at ORU convinced me that the systematic model could be distorted into something grotesque. While I was there ORU's founder and president publicly announced to the faculty that he would personally go into research laboratories and lay hands on the experiments and pray over them and lay hands on the researchers and pray for them. He would also teach them to do the same. The goal was for God to speed up the scientific method and through "revelation knowledge" point the researchers toward a cure for cancer that would be verified by the scientific method. But without the years of painstaking experimentation. This was only one example of the bizarre approach to being a Christ-centered university that I experienced from top leadership at ORU. (Most of my colleagues were not of that stripe; they resisted that approach.)

So what about my Bethel experience? Teaching here for fifteen years convinced me that Litfin's two categories and even my three or four (adding atmospheric and grotesque) do not cover the field of possible models of Christ-centered higher education. I've told many of my colleagues and others about Bethel's distinctive ethos which is reflected in much of what we do at the seminary where I teach. No single term describes it adequately, but it clearly is a manifestation of Bethel's and the BGC's pietist heritage. Here Christ-centered education begins with the experience of knowing Jesus Christ personally. And that is not just an individual experience; it is a community experience. Jesus Christ and our experience of him called "conversional piety" form the glue that holds everything together. This is expressed in the motto "whole and holy." Christian higher education at its best is about *transformation* more than *information*. Or, to be more specific, it is about *character transformation* more than *information dissemination*. The goal of Bethel education is to facilitate the process in which God makes people whole and holy both individually and communally. Bethel can't do it alone; it is a work of God and Bethel is God's instrument.



What I find missing in Litfin's treatment of Christian higher education is this note of spiritual and personal transformation by means of encounter with the living God through Jesus Christ. This transcends mere moralism as well as integration of faith and learning as an academic exercise. It goes beyond asking and answering "What would Jesus do?" to asking and answering "What does it mean to be a person shaped by inward experience of the living Redeemer and Savior Jesus Christ such that desire to be whole and holy flows automatically from within?" That means the college or university plays a role in facilitating spiritually transforming experience that shapes character in the image of the person of Jesus Christ. I call that transforming experience "conversional piety." To me, that's what crucially makes Bethel a distinctively *evangelical* Christian college as opposed to a merely orthodox Christian college. You see, to pietists dead orthodoxy is heresy; a college or university can be structurally or systematically Christian in Litfin's sense and not really be evangelical. The opposite is also true; a college or university can revel in spiritual experience and contain all kinds of grotesque distortions of authentic Christian faith such as anti-intellectualism, dualism and fanaticism.

My point is that *orthopathy* (right experience) and *orthopraxy* (right conduct) are just as important as *orthodoxy* in determining whether a college or university is authentically Christian in the evangelical sense. I wish Litfin acknowledged that more fully and allowed it to permeate his prescriptions for conceiving the Christian college or university. Instead, his vision seems primarily intellectual or cognitive; a truly Christian college or university is one in which correct Christian doctrine is adhered to and put into effect as the presuppositional foundation or web on which everything else stands or in which everything else holds together.

So, Bethel's distinctive idea of Christian higher education begins with personal, spiritual transformation of community members into whole and holy persons which transcends the merely cognitive dimension. It goes to the dispositions that make up one's character. The key word is *integrity*: everything in such a person's life and in such a community's life together is coherent with the Lordship of Jesus Christ personally appropriated. That forbids duplicity, double standards, revenge, punitive treatment of persons, excessive competition, harassment and apathy. It promotes compassion, honesty, justice, fairness, redemptive treatment of persons, forgiveness, cooperation, respect and dedication. At times during my fifteen years at Bethel we fell short of these ideals, but generally we recognized those shortcomings for what they were and attempted to correct them. To me, this is at the heart of being a Christian college or university. Such a place is always in the process of reforming itself by coming closer to the ideal of complete wholeness and holiness.

I don't think that can be programmed; it has to be intentionally developed through spiritual exercises. At Truett Seminary we attempt it by means of covenant groups; all faculty and all students are involved in these *collegia pietatis* or accountability groups that meet once weekly for guided Bible study, prayer, meditation and sharing. We have no formal, written statement of faith that anyone must sign. We talk openly and frequently about our common faith in God and in Jesus Christ as God's

Son and God incarnate and we never shy away from generous orthodoxy out of fear of fundamentalism. But we do recognize the dangers of one-sided zeal for cognitive Christian correctness (which we call “creedalism”) as well as of unfocused spiritual fanaticism or unfettered theological experimentation. This is much more difficult than simply adopting an authoritative statement of faith and enforcing it which carries with it many dangers. How, for example, does such an authoritative statement of faith undergo critical examination and correction even in light of God’s Word if people are required to sign it without any mental reservations? We trust that transforming experience of God through conversational piety will lead most people in our community into biblically formed right belief. And we speak often together of our shared beliefs that are consistent with our common experience and commitment.

So that is my first prescription for being a truly Christ-centered college or university; much depends on placing experience of Jesus Christ at the center of the campus ethos. Only as people are inwardly changed by the Holy Spirit who is God’s change agent bringing them into character conformity to Jesus Christ can authentic Christian community come about. I’m not talking here about emotional revivals cooked up and manipulated by evangelists; I’m talking about an ethos or culture that inherits and carries forward in a very conscious, deliberate and intentional manner the pietist evangelical ethos of knowing Jesus Christ personally and communally.

To my way of thinking such a transformational, experiential Christ-centered education as I have just been describing manifests in *person-centered* institutional life. In other words, such an institution of higher education, centered around Jesus Christ and his powerful presence to transform character will inevitably lead to what theologian Miroslav Volf calls the ability and desire to adjust one’s stance toward others and the key characteristic of the new stance will be willingness to embrace. In practical terms that means healing of relationships will take priority over concern with structures, policies, rules and regulations. That is what I experienced most of the time at Bethel. The beautiful thing about Bethel’s ethos was, and I trust still is, its person-centeredness. We fell short of our own ideals and ethos from time to time as we sought to navigate a difficult passage into a multicultural and gender-fair style of community life. Sometimes rules and punishment seemed more the order of the day than gentle correction and healing; some well-intentioned folks were too eager and impatient to see change and they were willing to sacrifice relationships and even see colleagues’ careers damaged in order to implement policies and rules adopted from the secular world. I liked it when we Bethelized these policies and processes and applied compassion where ignorance caused some to stumble in the face of new expectations. In general, I think we did that. We adapted procedures to Bethel’s distinctive ethos in order to maintain our person-centeredness.

A Christ-centered college or university, then, is a compassionate community of collaborative learners seeking to live toward each other as Jesus lived toward the sinners among his followers and with the outsiders who joined his band even transitorily. Of a truly Christ-centered college or university the world will say “Look how they love one another.” Many Christian colleges and universities could learn from

Bethel about this dimension of integration of faith and learning. I would like to see a book like Litfin's (on the same subject) written from the Bethel perspective and out of this community's spiritual ethos. Just as important as orthodoxy, in other words, is orthopathy and orthopraxy and that is something I don't find strongly enough explained or asserted in this otherwise fine book.

Having said all of that first I will go on to agree with some emphases in Litfin's chapter 4. The emphasis on transformation over information can lead to a situation where the cognitive aspect of Christianity so underscored and highlighted by Wheaton's president—*orthodoxy*—needs to be reasserted. Christ-centeredness cannot be devoid of intellectual content and always throughout Christian history but especially today there have been and are people who revel in spirituality but allow their Christianity to be compatible with anything and everything or who reject the application of faith to the life of the mind. Litfin provides a helpful corrective to shallow theology and anti-intellectualism; both are corrosive to authentic individual and collective Christian faith. After all, transformation in biblical terms includes transformation of the mind. While evangelical conversional piety does, I believe, impel Christ-followers toward right believing it does not guarantee it. A truly Christian community must invest itself in developing Christian minds and that means theologians. In such a community and especially in one dedicated to education every member should be a theologian and not only those in the biblical and theological studies or religious studies department.

During my fifteen years at Bethel I found this a difficult point to get across to some people who had been burned by overly zealous theologians before me. When I arrived on this campus in 1984 two scholars had recently left the Biblical and Theological Studies Department. One went into the pastorate and the other took a position teaching at another, perhaps more conservative evangelical institution. Both left a bad taste in their Bethel colleagues' mouths about theology and I had to live that down. Apparently, from what I was told, both were prone to pontificating rather than modeling or facilitating theological acumen and knowledge. At Baylor I find some of my colleagues have had similarly bad close encounters with theologians at previous institutions or only know of theologians who believe their duty in life is to enforce theological orthodoxy. Fundamentalism and creedalism are ever-present dangers in our context and vigilance against them can lead to apathy if not hostility toward theology and orthodoxy. But the baby should not be thrown out with the bathwater. Litfin is right even if somewhat one-sided or imbalanced: every faculty member at a Christian college or university should be at least an amateur theologian competent to apply Christian thinking to his or her discipline. That means knowing enough Christian theology to probe the leading practitioners of the discipline's presuppositions critically. In other words, theology should interrogate scholarship.

However, going back to another weakness in Litfin's presentation, faith-learning integration means not only faith interrogating scholarship. Faith-learning integration is a two way street; the indubitable or brute facts of scholarship must not be cordoned off from theology but allowed to challenge and transform theological thinking. Litfin writes out of both sides of his mouth. In this book he chides the Catholic church for its

treatment of Galileo, but I have to wonder how a modern Galileo would fare at Wheaton under Litfin's leadership? Throughout the book he makes clear his belief that statements of faith must be adhered to without mental reservation and that persons who have mental reservations about them should consider leaving the Christian college or university. But that raises a question about a situation that took place at Wheaton some years ago. The Wheaton statement of faith was found to be heterodox; it said that the Son of God was "begotten of the Holy Spirit." Technically, of course, orthodoxy says that the Son was begotten of the Father. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit but not begotten by him. So, dutifully, Wheaton changed the statement of faith to bring it into line with orthodoxy. But who dared to point out this problem with the statement of faith? Surely Litfin thinks that was right, but you wouldn't know it by what he says in this book.

Needed is some mechanism for thinking faculty members to bring critical examination to bear on a Christian college's or university's statements of faith. This should be allowed from two sources: biblical scholarship and the brute facts of nature. Integration of faith and learning assumes that all truth is God's truth and that in Christ all of reality holds together. Therefore, once something is determined to be fact beyond serious dispute it must be integrated with and into a Christian life and world view. Otherwise the result is dualism or even the two truths theory both of which are simply untenable departures from integrity for a Christ-centered community. Leaders of Christian colleges and universities such as Litfin must make room for sincere, honest questioning and challenging of traditional orthodoxy. After all, our ultimate authority is truth itself; whatever is true must be believed and whoever holds truth has authority even if that truth goes against traditional belief.

I don't know that Litfin would disagree, but I don't see this affirmed sufficiently in his book. After all, if Christian college and university faculty members ought never to continue teaching there while holding mental reservations about any item of the institution's statement of faith how can the statement of faith ever be corrected or reformed? And yet that is exactly what happened at Wheaton. How ironic it would be if the person who initiated the process that led to the statement's reform had to leave because he or she sought after and found truth which meant holding mental reservations about some of the statement's affirmations?

A Christ-centered college or university will be a truth-seeking community; it will value truth above tradition without throwing tradition out as irrelevant or doubtful just because it is old. Christ-centered scholarship is truth-seeking scholarship that begins with the presupposition that Jesus Christ is the center of reality for whom and through whom all things were created and in whom all things hold together. He is the unifying principle of reality and the critical principle of thought and action. No scholarly discovery can falsify that. However, not every affirmation of doctrine that surrounds that basic affirmation of Christ's Lordship is sacrosanct; to put them all on the same level is simply ludicrous. Many have been changed over the years and many continue to be scrutinized by fair and faithful Christian scholars who want nothing more than to enhance their witness to Jesus Christ by bringing all thought—including theological

thinking—into conformity with him by correcting false notions that wear the label “Christian.” This, too, is integration of faith and learning.

Of course, we all know of cases where scholars claiming to be Christian and even “evangelical” have used their scholarship to undermine sound Christian belief and teaching. This is evident when a debatable conclusion of science broadly defined is treated as the “assured results” of research and then used to ridicule or destroy Christian beliefs such as miracles. A retired Baylor University professor writes occasional columns for the Waco Tribune-Herald in which he trots out unreconstructed modernist assumptions and conclusions to argue that Christianity must be revised without belief in miracles. Anyone familiar with nineteenth century liberal theology recognizes his outdated sources of influence immediately. It is as if he stepped right out of the Enlightenment into the twenty-first century blissfully unaware of postmodernity. His arguments against the supernatural are specious at best. After all, the question of miracles is a metaphysical and not a scientific question. He treats the matter as if science and the supernatural are locked in mortal combat and one must die. He has not read John Polkinghorne or a number of other contemporary physicists who are also theologians and believers in a supernatural world view.

Litfin is correct that persons who teach at Christian colleges and universities have an obligation to be fair to the Christian heritage of belief; they ought never to destroy students’ faith with arguments that could themselves be defeated with sound philosophical or theological reasoning. Christian professors should display a basic trust toward Christian sources including the Christian heritage of belief. But that does not mean they can never have honest mental reservations toward any item of a statement of faith so long as those mental reservations arise from serious wrestling with the very best of biblical scholarship and the sciences that bear on the subject. There ought to be a way to report such mental reservations without fear of repercussions. In the end, of course, the outcome may not be good for the professor’s career at the college or university, but his or her research and fair and honest arguments ought to be heard respectfully and taken seriously without punitive consequences. Only when Christian college and university faculty members know that this will be the case can academic freedom be meaningfully maintained. But also, when this is not the case colleges’ and universities’ doctrinal statements will be treated as irreformable and incorrigible which is tantamount to treating them as equal with Scripture itself.

All that is to say that even as every faculty member of a Christian college or university should be fully on board its Christ-centered ethos and striving to become theologically aware and astute, so those in charge of theological inquiry and gate keeping should always be open to learning from their colleagues in all the disciplines about how that Christ-centered ethos should work itself out in terms of reflecting the realities of the world. Without input from non-theological scholarship theology all too easily becomes a ghetto and a reflection of tradition but not of reality. This is what Litfin means by “looking along” our subjects or disciplines of research and teaching. However, I think his account of “looking along” is truncated; looking along should mean more than seeking for clues of transcendence in our disciplines’

discoveries. It should also mean looking along our disciplines for clues of how they can inform and help reform traditional Christian perspectives on reality. Similarly, theologians and biblical scholars should look along their disciplines toward the other subjects of research and study—not always only with an eye toward criticism but also always with an eye looking for insight as to how doctrine might be corrected, strengthened, reformed, supported by these other disciplines' discoveries.

For this two way street integration to work dialogue is essential; a healthy Christian academic environment must support and encourage dialogue across the disciplines including theology and biblical studies. I believe a Christ-centered and Christ-serving college or university is one where community members feel safe entering into conversation with each other about constructing a Christian life and world view that draws on and does justice to all the disciplines without prejudice. This will only work, of course, where all the participants are known to be faithful believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The ethos I'm describing will be interrupted if not destroyed by authoritarianism and by cynical skepticism to say nothing of secularism.

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