

29. See Ruth Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin: God and the Exiled Author* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

30. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, translated by Vern W. McGee, edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 170.

## CHAPTER ONE

# More Than the “Integration” of Faith and Learning

*Our discussion begins with an analysis and critique of the most popular contemporary model of Christian scholarship, an approach called “the integration of faith and learning.” This model of Christian scholarship, which has been popular for several decades within evangelical Protestant academic circles, has recently been championed in the larger academy by George Marsden in his book *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (1997). The integration model has many strengths, but it is clearly not the only way of defining the task of Christian scholarship. This chapter describes the integration model at its best and then examines its limitations. We suggest that a more pluralistic approach is needed if all the varied expressions of Christian scholarship are to be acknowledged and respected.*

In the second century, the North African theologian Tertullian famously inquired, “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” He was asking, of course, just what the world of human learning had to do with the world of Christian faith, and his answer was blunt: the two cities had virtually nothing in common. But he was wrong. His own eloquent writing style, borrowed from the academy of his day, reflects the deep connections of faith and learning that existed unacknowledged in his own life. Despite his profound belief that faith and learning were antithetical, Tertullian’s life exemplified something else. He modeled the fact that faith and learning are always intertwined, even in the lives of those who might want to deny that fact.

This book explores those connections, the many ways faith and learning are and have been related to each other in the lives of Chris-

tian scholars. Sometimes the relationship has been one of conflict, but just as often faith and scholarship have blended comfortably together, crossfertilizing, overlapping, complementing, sliding temptingly past, or creatively bordering each other. Our goal is to draw that entire range of relations into the conversation about how to understand the nature and character of Christian scholarship.

The question of how faith and learning should be related—the question of how to make sense of the phrase “Christian scholarship”—has been a perennial topic of discussion in Western culture. The “A” section of the index of any standard history of Christianity points to some of the most important participants in that conversation: Abelard, Anselm, Aquinas, Augustine. But those are all medieval names, scholars who lived in a previous age when Christianity dominated the culture and defined the terms of scholarly debate. What are we to make of the notion of Christian scholarship in our post-Christian age, when Christianity no longer rules the academic roost? What does it mean to call oneself a Christian scholar now? What is the nature of the academic work we do? How do we and how should we define Christian scholarship today?

In that task, we are not starting from scratch. Various models of Christian scholarship already exist, and we begin this book by examining one particular model of Christian scholarship that has had far-reaching influence in recent years. That model goes by the name “the integration of faith and learning.” For the most part, this understanding of Christian scholarship has flourished in colleges and universities located within the more or less “evangelical” zone of American Protestantism, but it is not limited to that domain. In particular, George Marsden and others have recently championed this understanding of Christian scholarship in the mainstream academy.<sup>1</sup> We begin with the integration model because it has largely defined the terms and delineated the boundaries of the current conversation.

The so-called integration model of Christian scholarship emerged in its present form during the second half of the twentieth century, though its roots go deeper and many trace its ultimate source to the nineteenth-century Dutch thinker Abraham Kuyper.<sup>2</sup> This model has many strengths and for that it should be lauded. In particular, the integrationist vision of Christian scholarship has been an important factor in the renaissance of evangelical scholarship since the mid-1970s. It is not, however, the only option available to evangelical Protestants and it certainly doesn’t define the manner in which all Christian scholars ought to approach their work. Our goal is to affirm the many positive contributions of the integration model and also to critique its weaknesses. Having done that, we will move beyond the integration approach to explore the broader world of Christian scholarship which encompasses many different ways of reflecting on faith and learning.

One significant clarification needs to be made before we proceed. A num-

ber of scholars have used the term “integration” in a variety of ways that differ from the “integration of faith and learning” model we will be discussing in this chapter. Most notably the philosopher of science Ian Barbour has used the term to describe his own preferred method for relating science and faith. For Barbour, *integration* refers to the process of weaving the insights of faith and science into new, creative, and scientifically contemporary visions of God and the world.<sup>3</sup> In Barbour’s model of integration almost every dimension of faith is on the table for negotiation; almost anything potentially can be rethought in the light of scientific advance. The evangelical idea of the integration of faith and learning is rather more conservative when it comes to defending historic Christian beliefs and more critical when it comes to evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary scholarship. We note this difference of definition simply to avoid confusion over the term “integration.” Barbour’s view, along with the views of a host of other Protestant and Catholic scholars who may employ the term *integration* from time to time, need to be included in the enlarged conversation about Christian scholarship that we seek to foster. The focus of this chapter, however, is on the notion of integration as it has been promoted by Marsden and other similarly minded Christian scholars.

### Historical Origins of the Integration Model

The integration model of Christian scholarship was developed within the world of evangelical Protestantism in the years following World War II. As Americans went back to school after the war, many evangelical Protestants found themselves in a double bind. On the one hand they wanted desperately to show the world that conservatively oriented Christians could think as well as anybody else. The evangelical movement was just emerging from the shadows of early twentieth-century fundamentalism, and one of its greatest challenges was to shuck off the pejorative image of fundamentalist antiintellectualism. Thus Christian scholars of an evangelical bent felt compelled to demonstrate that they could master the details of their academic disciplines on a par with their secular colleagues. With that in mind, they trekked off to Harvard and Yale and to other prestigious universities to get their degrees and to prove once and for all that evangelicals could think.

But even before they had arrived on those campuses, they knew they were different from their peers. Graduate school students from evangelical churches knew in advance that they would not necessarily agree with all the ideas taught by their university professors. In fact, they often assumed that some of the key thinkers in their disciplines had been deeply mistaken about the nature of human life and the makeup of the universe. They slogged on anyway. They learned the dominant theories to the point where they could sometimes recite them with more finesse and detail than their secular friends. However, they

never fully believed that university learning could be equated with the pursuit of truth. True truth, as some of them liked to say, came only from God. Rather than being in graduate school to learn truth, they were there to prove their intellectual mettle, to refine their thinking skills, and to be duly certified by the guardians of the American (liberal) academy. Having been credentialed in that way, they felt they had earned the right to be heard when they confronted modern learning with the claims of faith.

That way of putting things may imply a starker contrast between Christian truth and the knowledge claims of the academy than was actually the case for many of these budding young scholars. While most believed the modern academy was tainted to some degree with atheistic opinions, they were also convinced truth could be found through the scholarly disciplines. After all, truth belonged to God wherever it was found, even if it sometimes took a good deal of effort to separate the truthfully gold embedded within secular scholarship from the dross of merely human speculation. Thus the task of the Christian scholar was understood to be twofold: (1) to critique the premises of modern learning when and where they directly conflicted with Christian truth, and (2) to discover the ways modern learning at its best might either reinforce or refine the truths of faith. This was and is the foundation of the integration model of Christian scholarship.

This model approaches the larger world of scholarship warily. While it affirms that faith and learning may potentially overlap in a number of positive ways, it recognizes that faith and scholarship may also conflict. Such disagreements arise because knowledge always involves both raw data and interpretation, and interpretation brings the personal worldview of the scholar into play, making the clash of Christian and non-Christian worldviews part and parcel of academic debate. In a certain sense, early proponents of the integration model were ahead of the academic curve on this point. Today it is a commonplace of postmodern insight that who we are affects how we see the world and thus autobiographical self-disclosure needs to be part of most, if not all, scholarship. The integrationist paradigm agrees, but then goes further and stresses that many academicians are not sufficiently self-conscious of the worldviews that shape their work. The hope is that when Christians lay their own value-laden cards on the table and ask others in the academy to do the same, the level of discussion will rise in ways that potentially aid everyone.

That is the ideal. To be honest, however, many Christians are just as unreflective about the ways their faith interacts with their scholarship as anyone else in the academy. A strength of the integration model is that it condemns that kind of unreflective attitude and challenges Christian scholars to be as thoughtful about their faith as they are about their fields of academic specialization. There is a cognitive imbalance in the lives of many scholars who also happen to be Christians: while they have developed detailed and nuanced understandings of their academic disciplines, many have allowed reflection on

faith to languish at a Sunday School level of insight. While not denying the value of simple faith, the integration model insists that Christian scholars need to maintain some kind of rough parity between their disciplinary expertise and their ability to think intelligently about their faith. This does not mean that every Christian scholar must become a trained theologian, but it does mean that theological and biblical studies do need to be consulted from time to time, and most proponents of the integration approach would say a little knowledge of philosophy would help, as well.

### The Integration Model at Its Best

During the last three decades, the two most articulate proponents of this model have been Arthur Holmes, formerly professor of philosophy at Wheaton College, and Nicholas Wolterstorff, formerly professor of philosophy at Calvin College and the Free University of Amsterdam and later at Yale. They each first put their thoughts into print in the mid-1970s, and those original statements still deserve reading today. In many ways, their early explanations of the integration model remain the best statements of the position. Holmes discussed the subject in fairly general terms, emphasizing the teacherly side of things; Wolterstorff was more research oriented, concentrating on the ways academic theories are created and evaluated.

In *The Idea of a Christian College* (1975), Holmes argued that the integration of faith and learning was "concerned not so much with attack and defense as with the positive contributions of human learning to an understanding of the faith and to the development of a Christian worldview; and with the positive contribution of the Christian faith to all the arts and sciences."<sup>4</sup> He argued that the real goal of Christian scholarship was the development of an "integrating worldview" that would allow reality to be seen as a whole in the light of God's creative and redemptive work in the world, in contrast to "the fragmented view of life" that prevailed in the secular academy.<sup>5</sup> Holmes knew the potential for conflict existed. He said that "the Christian revelation claim puts limitations on the scope of scientific knowledge," and he said that Christians had to be alert to those potential tensions if they were going "to think with integrity" as Christians.<sup>6</sup> But the main thrust of his message was constructive. Believing the issue was primarily philosophical, Holmes argued that each of the academic disciplines, and each of the major schools of thought within those disciplines, was built on a distinct set of historical and philosophical foundations. Those underlying assumptions defined the basic blueprint for how knowledge in that discipline or school of thought would be organized and utilized.

Foundational assumptions of this kind are unavoidable, and choices have to be made. For example, it is impossible to be a Platonist and an Aristotelian at the same time. One will either see knowledge primarily as a function of

certain large insights about the nature of the universe applied to particular examples or incidents (Platonism), or one will see knowledge primarily in terms of the slow accumulation of little bits of raw data that can then slowly be fitted together into larger and larger theories of the world (Aristotelianism). Holmes identified these kinds of different approaches to scholarship as divergent worldviews. He also indicated that, as in many other areas of life, the decisions people made about the worldviews they adopted were often unconscious decisions. Most scholars were unaware of their own foundational assumptions about their disciplines. Somewhere along the way they had been nurtured into one way or another of seeing the world that had become second nature to them, but most scholars thought of themselves as simply open-minded searchers for truth. They were utterly unaware of the particularities and/or peculiarities of their own worldviews.<sup>7</sup>

Holmes said Christian scholars could not afford such blissful self-ignorance. It was part of their task as scholars to examine both their own worldviews and the foundational philosophical assumptions of their disciplines. This was part of what Christianity could contribute to the larger human search for truth. Thus every Christian scholar had to be, at least in part, a philosopher. In fact, Holmes suggested that Christian colleges should require students to take, in addition to courses in Bible and theology, one or more courses in philosophy that would provide the skill to examine the similarities and differences of deep worldview perspectives that exist among the academic disciplines and between Christian theology and the disciplines. He argued that this kind of education "would help the next generation of college teachers to do what the present generation has not always been able to accomplish in interpreting scientific and scholarly findings."<sup>8</sup>

Holmes was clear that the work of integration was open-ended. He said it was "but the vision of a possibility, an unfinished symphony barely begun."<sup>9</sup> Holmes was also ahead of his time in asserting that the process of integration did not need to assume a stridently realist epistemological stance. He stressed the softer notion of "perspective," explaining "we start with a confession of faith, with an admixture of beliefs and attitudes and values." In contrast to many of his peers and to the more strident antipostmodern realists of today, Holmes admitted: "We need not proceed deductively from universal and necessary truths, from axioms or scientifically demonstrable propositions. . . . Good and sufficient reasons may be given for what we believe, but ours is still a confessional stance and from the perspective of this confession we look at life." In Holmes's view, it was mere honesty to say "we see things from a Christian point of view."<sup>10</sup> That was the necessary first confession that allowed the task of integration to proceed. He did not believe, however, that scholarship necessarily would leave that initial confession untouched. Quite to the contrary, Holmes said the work of "integration should be seen not as an achievement

or a position but as an intellectual activity that goes on as long as we keep learning anything at all."<sup>11</sup>

Nicholas Wolterstorff's understanding of the integration of faith and learning was similar to that of Holmes but took into account more fully the actual practices of the academy. To a greater degree than Holmes, Wolterstorff recognized that the lived practice of scholarship involved constant argument and debate. Individual disciplines were defined and shaped by the shared questions they sought to address much more than they were held together by any similarities of answers or foundational assumptions. Scholarship was about the competition of theories, and intelligent scholars needed constantly to make choices about which theories they would adopt in order to advance their own scholarly work.

The integration of faith and learning took place in the midst of this ongoing struggle of theories versus theories, and in that world Wolterstorff said Christian scholars faced basically the same problem as everyone else: the need to develop some way of intelligently choosing between competing theories. Wolterstorff's *Reason within the Bounds of Religion* (1976) asserted that three kinds of beliefs were necessarily involved in the process: (1) data beliefs, (2) data-background beliefs, and (3) control beliefs.

*Data beliefs* are minimal, testable assertions about reality with which a theory has to be consistent if it is to be accepted. To illustrate, we might offer the theory that the moon consists of cheese. Either the moon is or is not made of cheese, and the cheese theory of the moon rests on the answer to that simple question of fact. Wolterstorff says *data-background beliefs* have to do with the kinds of evidence one is willing to accept as either supporting or undermining one's data beliefs. Would a light spectrum analysis of moonlight suffice to disprove the cheese theory? Would a look at the moon through a telescope be considered valid evidence? Or would it take an astronaut actually going to the moon and bringing back a noncheese rock to dissuade hard-core believers in the moon-cheese theory? Different scholars might accept different kinds or degrees of evidence depending on their specific data-background beliefs. Finally, Wolterstorff says *control beliefs* are larger or deeper convictions about what might constitute "an acceptable sort of theory"<sup>12</sup> in the first place. These include factors such as placing greater or lesser value on logical consistency, finding certain theories more or less aesthetically appealing, being concerned with the practical or moral consequences of different theories, and examining theories to see if they are compatible with the ideas, values, and practices of one's own religious community. For Wolterstorff, control beliefs do not function as external limitations imposed on one's scholarship from the outside; instead they are part of the scholar's own deep value system that naturally attracts him or her toward certain kinds of theories and away from others.

The thrust of Wolterstorff's argument was twofold. On the one hand his

description of theory choice situated Christian scholarship more than ever in the mainstream of the academy. All scholars, whether persons of faith or not, had to make decisions about what they considered facts worthy of consideration. All scholars, regardless of their religiosity or secularity, had to reflect on why they accepted certain kinds of evidence and rejected others. And all scholars, not just Christians, had control beliefs that deeply affected their choice of one theory over another. Christians were not that different from other thinkers.

But Wolterstorff also had another somewhat different point to make. Because virtually all scholars possessed control beliefs that functioned in a thought-shaping manner similar to religious faith, Christians should feel free to admit their own control beliefs and take them seriously. Wolterstorff suggested that, in the past, Christians following a path of "conformism with respect to science"<sup>13</sup> had often been too quick to rethink their faith in light of changing views within the academy. His own suggestion was that Christians ought to be more confident, even stubborn, in asserting the privileges of faith over against science. The belief-content of the Christian scholar's authentic commitment ought to "function as a control belief over his theory-weighing."<sup>14</sup>

This did not mean that Wolterstorff thought Christian scholars should never change their views in light of scientific advance. In fact, he said there were times when faith should give way to learning; there were times when new scientific developments should cause Christian scholars to revise their views of Christian faith:

The scholar never fully knows in advance where his line of thought will lead him. For the Christian to undertake scholarship is to undertake a course of action that may lead him into the painful process of revising his actual Christian commitment, sorting through his beliefs, and discarding some from a position where they can any longer function as control.<sup>15</sup>

For the most part, however, Wolterstorff thought this kind of reevaluation of religious beliefs should emerge only from new data or new techniques that might alter one's data-background beliefs. When the issue was the clash of control beliefs alone, Christians were more than justified in defending themselves and their views against "theory constraints [that were] alien to Christian convictions."<sup>16</sup>

#### When Integration Takes a Negative Turn

As formulated by Holmes and Wolterstorff, the integration model is a helpful and insightful approach that still has an important role to play within the overall scope of Christian scholarship.<sup>17</sup> However, the integration model has not always been promoted in the positive manner outlined by these two philosophers.

While Holmes and Wolterstorff describe the integration of faith and learning as a two-way street of open-ended inquiry, many Christian scholars who have adopted the model have acted as if the influence should all flow one way. For them the model has basically meant that faith has the right, and indeed the duty, to critique learning but that learning has no authority to critique faith. Scholarship of this kind often ends up being both derivative and pedantic. It is derivative because it waits for the academy at large to produce new ideas and then critiques them on the basis of Christian faith, and it is pedantic in its pose as the long-suffering teacher who must repeatedly instruct the recalcitrant academy in the folly of its ways. In its worst forms, this attitude can blend into what the Christian scholar Merold Westphal has called the sometimes "criminal arrogance of religion" in the realm of scholarship: the haughty illusion that our views of God, the world, and ourselves are both incontestably true and unquestionably God-blessed. Westphal recommends that a harsh hermeneutic of suspicion be applied to all such claims.<sup>18</sup> While faith may provide Christian scholars with certain important clues concerning the deep nature of the universe that others lack, the ways Christians interpret those revelatory clues are as subject to error as the thinking of anyone else. There is no room for epistemological arrogance in Christian scholarship.

Another related weakness of the integration model is that, despite the deep goal of exploring the connections of faith and learning, the integration approach often promotes conflict rather than conversation. According to Holmes and Wolterstorff, critique of the mainstream academy is part of what Christian scholars must necessarily do, but for some Christian scholars critique becomes virtually their only concern. When that happens, the integration model devolves into a win-lose contest over truth. Instead of bringing insights from the two domains together, the task of Christian scholarship is reconceived as one of conquest: an antiseccular crusade for truth.

The temptation for the integration model to degenerate into conflict is so strong that even as superb a scholar as George Marsden can sometimes fall into this trap. For example, at one point in his influential book *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*, he identifies Carl Sagan as the model of how the secular academy really thinks. Repeating Sagan's memorable line that "the cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be," Marsden comments that while "most scholars are not as blunt as Sagan" they all basically share the same attitude.<sup>19</sup> For Marsden, at least in this passage, the contrast is clear. The secular academy, rooted deeply in the soil of scientific materialism, is fundamentally opposed to Christian faith. That way of describing the context of Christian scholarship reinforces the notion that the real job of Christian scholarship is combat rather than conversation—to wage war for the faith through the means of heavily footnoted books and rapier-like essays. At one point, Marsden says the world of scholarship is much like the battle-strewn world of Middle Earth described in J. R. R. Tolkien's popular trilogy *The Lord of the Rings*. He writes:

"Suppose we scholars thought of our understanding of things as equivalent to that of the Hobbits in Tolkien's world. The most important thing to take into account is that we are involved in a great spiritual struggle between forces of darkness and light."<sup>20</sup> In some sense this is merely standard Christian theology—the world is seen as caught in a battle of good versus evil and Christians are called to side with the good—but when applied too quickly to the realm of scholarship, this imagery can have unfortunate results.<sup>21</sup>

Most scholars would see themselves largely as noncombatants in this kind of Tolkienesque war of scholarship. While aware of the existence of good and evil and of the subtle forms those realities can take, scholars, like most other people, usually do their work in a world colored by shades of gray—a world of people and situations that are partly good and partly not so good. Most secular scholars (and most Christian scholars, as well) find it impossible to separate all the complexities of the world into neat categories of moral darkness and light. This does not make such scholars enemies of Christian faith and moral virtue; in fact, many might make fine allies in the task of nourishing the good. But if Christians approach the academy with too much suspicion and with too much expectation that, underneath it all, most scholars are as ideologically atheistic as Marsden thinks Carl Sagan was, we will probably never strike up the friendships that might lead to mutual respect and cooperation. When speaking of Christian scholars, Marsden is almost always willing to give them the benefit of the doubt. Thus he says it is wrong for the academy to toss out the ideas of good-hearted Christian scholars because of the moral failures of Christians from previous generations or even of Christians in our own age. He argues that Christian scholars and their ideas ought to be judged on their own merits and not be unfairly caricatured so that they can be dismissed. Marsden is right, but Christians need to extend the same spirit of generosity and graciousness to their secular peers. Christians need to be welcoming of others if they want to be welcomed themselves.

#### Inherent Limitations of the Integration Model

Even if we set aside the way the integration model of Christian scholarship can sometimes be negatively misconstrued, the integration approach still has limitations. First, this model contains the implicit claim that it is the only valid way to bring faith and learning together; it defines the singular path that all Christian scholars must follow regardless of their own particular understandings of faith or their specific fields of disciplinary expertise. The second limitation is its hyper-philosophical approach to Christian scholarship. In essence, the integration model requires that Christian scholars temporarily become philosophers (instead of being biologists, psychologists, engineers, artists, or

whatever else they are), whenever they want to engage in the specific activity of doing Christian scholarship. Neither claim seems warranted.

In the past, many of the most vocal proponents of the integration model have spoken as if they were simply setting forth what all Christians should be doing in their work as scholars. They acted (and sometimes still act) as if the integration of faith and learning approach was, if not the one and only valid way to do Christian scholarship, clearly the best and brightest way. That simply is not true. There are many valid and insightful ways of construing the goals and purposes of Christian scholarship. The integration model is one particular vision of Christian scholarship, but it is not a neutral, one-size-fits-all paradigm that applies equally to everyone or to every field of scholarly endeavor.

To be precise, the integration model is at its roots a Reformed (i.e., Calvinistic) vision of Christian scholarship. Virtually all the most articulate spokespersons for this approach to Christian scholarship have been Reformed in both their church affiliations and their views of theology. This includes Holmes, Wolterstorff, Marsden, and numerous others. For the most part, these individuals have not touted their Calvinistic predispositions in their writings on Christian scholarship; in fact, they have typically suggested in good faith that they were trying to speak in the most generically Christian language possible. But their works are informed by a decidedly Reformed view of the world nonetheless, and because of that Christians from other traditions may find this model only marginally beneficial in helping them explore their own deepest instincts about how faith and learning should be connected in their academic work.

Reformed theology posits that the world is fallen in the most radical of ways; the created order has gone wrong at its very roots. At the center of this disorder stands unredeemed humanity, defiant and proud in its resistance to God and God's laws. Despite the effects of sin—and those effects are great—the Reformed tradition says that God is still clearly in control of the world and everything in it. At present God is calling out a people, electing them to salvation, so that through them God's grace can be displayed to the world. One of the tasks of this redeemed community is to model in its own life and practices how God intended humanity to live. Another task assigned to the redeemed is that of resubduing the created order, helping the world to reacknowledge God's dominion and submit to God's will. As they pursue this work, the redeemed discover that God is already at work in the world ahead of them, limiting the effects of the Fall and paving the way for the ultimate restoration of all things. Through the gift of common grace God prevents humanity from declining into total moral oblivion, and through the gift of sustaining grace God maintains the orderly processes of the cosmos. The Reformed tradition says that in the end everything will be set back in its rightful place and sinners will be forced to bow before Jesus Christ, the one and only divine ruler of the world.

Within this scenario, it makes sense for Christian faith to serve as a fulcrum of correction for humanity's sinful thought and action. And the integration model does exactly that, stressing the need to bring a distinctively Christian perspective to bear on all merely human efforts to understand the created order. The assumption is that the academic disciplines are, for the most part, expressions of humanity's sinful revolt against God. They are manifestations of human arrogance, symbols of humanity's prideful claim that it can fully understand the world without any reference to God. But Calvinists know there is always room for surprise. Even the most mature Christians still harbor the seeds of sin within them and thus can be mistaken. What is more, God can, through the gift of common grace, sometimes allow the unregenerate to see truths that the righteous have ignored, overlooked, or misconstrued.<sup>22</sup> Because that is the case, Reformed Christian scholars must be ready to be tutored on occasion by both their non-Reformed fellow believers and by their secular academic peers. This will surely be the case with matters of fact and sometimes even with regard to issues of philosophy and faith. Still, the assumption is that on most matters of scholarship Christians will see things more clearly than their non-Christian colleagues.

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. For this the Reformed tradition is to be complimented—truly and honestly complimented—even as we remember that this is but one way of understanding the task of Christian scholarship. The integration model is powerful precisely because its Calvinistic particularity gives it both clarity and a sense of consistency. Scholars from other traditions can gain insights from the integration model, but other Christian scholars—whether of the Catholic, Wesleyan, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Anabaptist, or any other non-Reformed tradition—will probably feel they are speaking a second language of sorts if they try to adopt the integration model in its entirety. Some of the core theological concerns of non-Reformed Christian traditions simply do not translate into integration-speak. Thus there is a need to acknowledge and nurture the development of other models of Christian scholarship that can stand alongside and complement the Reformed, integrationist approach.

In more recent publications, supporters of the integration model have been increasingly forthcoming about the Reformed character of their approach, but most continue to assert that the integrationist position remains the common ideal for all Christians. Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., provides an example. After confessing, in his recently published book *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning, and Living*, that he writes from a Calvinistic perspective, he immediately suggests that his own relatively moderate understanding of Reformed theology is really nothing more than the kind of "mere Christianity" that he thinks all Christians should affirm.<sup>23</sup> Plantinga has tried to tone down the strongest Calvinistic aspects of the integration model and to incor-

porate other views, but his book will undoubtedly still feel rather Reformed to most non-Reformed Christians.<sup>24</sup> It is just not that easy to overcome one's own particularities—and that is not necessarily a bad thing. Our particularities allow us to see parts of the world that others may miss. Thus the Reformed view of Christian faith does provide us—all of us—with a powerful vision of the world's fall and redemption and a compelling model of Christian scholarship based on that theological foundation, even if it is not the only way to see things.

The second limitation of the integration model has to do with its fixation on what might be called the philosophical worldview approach to Christian scholarship. In essence, the integration model can be defined as the philosophical task of comparatively analyzing the ideas and theories (i.e., doctrines and theological systems) of Christian faith in relation to the ideas and theories of the various academic disciplines. The goal is to examine the deep philosophical presuppositions of the disciplines (or of different subfields within the disciplines) in order to see whether and to what degree those philosophical presuppositions may overlap, inform, or conflict with the truths of Christian faith expressed in propositional form. There are two problems here. The first comes from the side of the discipline, the second from the side of faith.

Some disciplines are clearly more philosophically driven than others. Thus sociology unquestionably pays more attention to theory than chemistry, and literary criticism is more self-consciously ideological than engineering. Even in those disciplines where philosophy has a significant role to play, however, the potential for critical or creative interaction with faith can vary greatly. Thus theories of education, psychology, and biology typically carry more religious punch than theories of mathematics or music. The integration paradigm can be very helpful in those disciplines that tend to be more theory conscious, and it can be especially helpful when dealing with disciplines that touch on issues that have been of traditional concern to religious faith—that is, questions of human origins, meaning, and moral values. The integration paradigm often flounders, however, when applied either to disciplines that are more neutrally descriptive or pragmatic in orientation or to disciplines in which issues of human meaning rarely enter the mix.

Even within those disciplines where the integration model has worked fairly well in the past, its power has waned in recent years. For the most part, this is the result of an overall shift in the academy away from grand-scale theorizing about the nature of the world toward the analysis of smaller aspects of the world examined eclectically using a range of different theories, techniques, and approaches. This change in the way scholars see their work is rooted, in turn, in the larger cultural transformation that has taken place in the last fifteen years as we have moved away from the clearcut, bilateral, Cold War thinking of the past to the decentered, multilateral, postmodern orientations of today. Contemporary ways of thought and life are less concerned with the norms of logic favored by the worldview approach and much more con-



cerned with the quirky and often unpredictable ways things actually fit together in their local and global environments. This does not mean that the large-scale philosophical questions of the past have simply faded into oblivion. Christian scholars and others still argue about things like sociobiology, evolution, and the strengths and weaknesses of global capitalism—and because of that the integration model still has an important role to play—but many academic discussions now take place closer to the ground in a zone where the worldview radar of the integration model does not necessarily help us find our way. In the years ahead, Christian scholars will probably need to develop a range of new, less grandiose ways of relating faith and learning that are more attuned to contemporary scholarly practices.

Questions about the sufficiency of the integration model's fixation on philosophy and worldview have also been raised within the Christian community. In particular, many non-Reformed Christians, and even some Reformed Christians, are uncomfortable with the notion that faith supplies the believer with a full-blown Christian worldview. The issue for them is not the fact of revelation but the nature of revelation. Is Christian revelation personal or propositional? Does revelation supply us with a complete vision of the world, or is revelation more piecemeal, offering important clues about the origins, meaning, and purpose of the universe but never spelling things out in fine detail? Do Christians possess extrafactual knowledge about the world, or is the addition of Christian revelation primarily a matter of values and attitude?

Virtually all Christians believe that in the person of Jesus, in the text of the Bible, and in the historical experience of the church God has revealed important truths that would otherwise be largely hidden from view, but Christians differ significantly regarding how easily and thoroughly they think that revelation can be translated into the language of philosophical/systematic discourse. The Eastern Orthodox tradition has a long history of apophatic theology—an approach that stresses the fact that the most important truths about God cannot be put into words.<sup>25</sup> In a rather different way, Anabaptists have also tended to marginalize philosophical theology, asserting that faith is best expressed in actions and not in words. Pietists and mystics of all traditions would similarly be suspicious of any overreliance on words and logic because for them the real nub of faith is to be found in the heartfelt experience of God. The emphases of these theological traditions, if they are taken seriously, will produce visions of Christian scholarship that differ from the dominant model of integration. This is not to denigrate the integrationist model—it is an important perspective and a necessary part of the mix—but one of the main goals of this book is to make space for alternative models to develop.

The following essay by Crystal Downing helps open that space. She sees the vocation of Christian scholarship as a calling of creative reflection about God, the world, and ourselves, and there is no one way to do that. The inspiration that faith gives to scholarship can bend and twist in many different

directions; faith and learning can overlap—be imbricated—with each other in many different ways. Our point is not to declare one model better than all others and then to fend off rival approaches but to encourage an ongoing conversation that has the potential to help all of us deepen our understanding of both the world and Christian faith.

## NOTES

1. See George M. Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
2. See Abraham Kuyper, *Principles of Sacred Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1980).
3. Barbour uses this metaphor in many of his works. Perhaps the fullest discussion of the term is found in his *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997), 98–105.
4. Arthur F. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1975), 46.
5. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, 57.
6. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, 55.
7. Holmes's understanding of the role of underlying worldviews and nonrational factors in the history of science and the other disciplines parallels the view of his contemporary Thomas Kuhn, who described the nonrational messiness of scientific advance in his famous book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).
8. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, 57.
9. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, 58.
10. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, 59.
11. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, 46.
12. Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Reason within the Bounds of Religion* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1976), 67.
13. Wolterstorff, *Reason within the Bounds of Religion*, 82.
14. Wolterstorff, *Reason within the Bounds of Religion*, 94.
15. Wolterstorff, *Reason within the Bounds of Religion*, 96.
16. Wolterstorff, "Theology and Science: Listening to Each Other," in *Religion and Science: History, Method, Dialogue*, edited by W. Mark Richardson and Wesley J. Wildman (New York: Routledge, 1996), 104.
17. The integration model as outlined by people like Holmes and Wolterstorff has spurred a tremendous amount of scholarship over the years. This literature is too vast to even begin to list representative examples. One relatively easy point of reference, however, is a series of "through the eyes of faith" books published by Harper and Row in the late 1980s and early 1990s. For the most part, these volumes exemplify the integration approach, and they have been widely used in evangelical colleges and universities. See David G. Myers and Malcolm A. Jeeves, *Psychology through the Eyes of Faith*, 1987; Roger Lundin and Susan V. Gallagher, *Literature through the Eyes of Faith*, 1989; Ronald Wells, *History through the Eyes of Faith*, 1989; Richard T. Wright, *Biology through the Eyes of Faith*, 1989; Richard Chewning, John W. Eby, and



Shirley J. Roels, *Business through the Eyes of Faith*, 1990; David A. Fraser and Tony Campolo, *Sociology through the Eyes of Faith*, 1992; Harold M. Best, *Music through the Eyes of Faith*, 1993. The psychology and biology texts in this series were revised, updated, and rereleased by HarperSanFrancisco in 2003.

18. Merold Westphal, *Suspicion and Faith: The Religious Uses of Modern Atheism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1993), 5.

19. Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*, 74.

20. Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*, 95. Marsden goes on to say that even though Christian scholars believe they are involved in a great spiritual battle, they must confess that they "understand these forces only imperfectly. Nonetheless as limited creatures we accept that our role is to do what we can to promote the cause of light and to use our talents where they may be helpful. As scholars, we might think of ourselves as something like map-readers on a mission the dimensions of which we cannot fully comprehend. Even so, we can try to do the best job we can of interpreting some technical down-to-earth matters that may contribute, in ways we do not fully understand, to the larger spiritual mission" (95–96). More than fifteen years earlier, Marsden had said much the same thing in his *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870–1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), but the tone then was a bit more apocalyptic. After describing Tolkien's good-versus-evil view of the world, Marsden wrote: "Frail as we are, we do play a role in this history, on the side either of the powers of light or of the powers of darkness. It is crucially important then, that by God's grace, we keep our wits about us and discern the vast difference between the real forces for good and the powers of darkness disguised as angels of light" (239–40).

21. One of the most strident examples of how this kind of warfare thinking has been applied to the world of scholarship can be found in David K. Naugle, *Worldview: The History of a Concept* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002). Presupposing that the world is engrossed in "a conflict of epic proportions" between God and Satan, Naugle argues that "from the perspective of Christian theism . . . nothing could be of greater final importance than the way human beings understand God, themselves, the cosmos, and their place in it." Because of that, he says "it is not surprising that a worldview warfare is at the heart of the conflict between the powers of good and evil" (xii). His position is that most people, including most scholars, are "under the vice grip of the disenchanting worldview of modern naturalism and scientism" (280), and the most important task of Christian scholarship is to help free people from that diabolical bondage. In note 55 on pages 279–80, Naugle, who teaches at Dallas Baptist University, provides a brief list of some of the literature on "spiritual warfare" that has informed his thinking.

22. For a recent and generous Calvinist explanation of how common grace operates in the lives and thinking of non-Christians, see Richard J. Mouw, *He Shines in All That's Fair: Culture and Common Grace* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001).

23. Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning, and Living* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002), xv.

24. A similarly toned-down but still strongly Reformed vision of Christian faith can be found in Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1994). The scandal of the evangelical mind, as Noll describes it, is

the absence of mind—the movement's persistent antiintellectualism. But from what source does that antiintellectualism arise? Noll says three non-Reformed movements within the larger evangelical world are especially to blame: Holiness Christianity, Pentecostalism, and dispensationalism. By contrast, the corrective he proposes is drawn straight out of the Reformed world, as he argues that "the Dutch Reformed tradition has been the single strongest intellectual resource for the renewal of Christian philosophy" and, by extension, of all other evangelical scholarly endeavors (237).

25. On the apophatic dimension of Orthodox faith and its relation to Christian scholarship, see Alexi V. Nesteruk, *Light from the East: Theology, Science, and the Eastern Orthodox Tradition* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003).