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## PRAYERFUL TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A SURVEY OF THEMES

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*Prayer is a primary spiritual discipline for Christians. Nonetheless, few contemporary scholarly discussions have ventured into exploring the role of prayer in college teaching. This paper extends the conversation by reviving three themes in writings about prayer and academics and making application of those themes to teaching and learning today.*

Although conversation about prayer in academic teaching is largely silent today, it was not so among patristic and medieval educators. Medieval epistemologies and pedagogies differ from many of those in vogue today, and it is intellectually precarious to merge views on knowledge, divine revelation, and spiritual formation from across the centuries without acknowledging the diverse contexts of each era in which the views were forged. A breadth of historical thought, however, provides a backdrop against which we can compare the present and from which new thoughts are drawn.

Before proceeding, a word should be said about why so many Catholic writers will be encountered on the topic of prayer in teaching and why Protestants are relatively silent on the subject. Of course Christian writers in the West prior to the Renaissance were generally associated with the Roman Catholic church. Among them, monastics were often involved in educational instruction and were pioneers in daily prayer as well. Thus, monastics and

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Catholic religious tended to reserve a place for prayer in academic endeavors.

Many Protestant universities established in the time of the reformation (c. 1500–c. 1700) reflected the belief of reform writers that God implanted insight and abilities into each human mind. Although subject to the fallen nature of the world, these mental gifts could be exercised regardless of whether the giver of those gifts is acknowledged. The Christian student and scholar needed neither special revelation nor unique methods to uncover truth; each could benefit merely by applying himself or herself to study (Cowan, Ebertz, and Shields, 2000). Thus, in many Protestant higher learning institutions, prayer found a more comfortable home in the cocurriculum in campus chapel and church services and in private prayer than it did in the classroom. Antimystical modernism further marginalized prayer in some Protestant settings, as did fundamentalism's emphasis on objective truth in others.<sup>1</sup> Thus, while a few exceptions exist, such as the Quaker concept of divine light and the Mormon doctrine of continuous revelation, it is largely Catholic monastic writers who preserved prayer in education.

A sampling of sources across two millennia and a variety of educational and religious traditions suggests that prayer in teaching has fulfilled three interlocking functions: intellectual enlightenment, spiritual discipline, and religious instruction and example. Table 1 summarizes these three functions of prayer in education, along with a sampling of educators who champion those views. The subtlety of distinctions among the three functions of prayerful teaching may indicate they are closely related and often inseparable. But if it doesn't oversimplify, one might say that intellectual enlightenment extends content, spiritual discipline transforms method and purpose, and religious instruction and moral example offers testimony and catechistic teaching beyond the discipline being studied. We'll explore each function in turn, beginning with the most ancient.

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<sup>1</sup>A healthy debate exists on the place of reason in Catholic and Reform scholasticism. Some have argued that among Thomistic and Reform theologians, rationalism diminished both the potency of prayer and the authority of scripture. Rehnman (2002) contests the point (at least for Reform theologians), arguing that reason was viewed as "the natural light, the inferior epistemological causality by which human beings learn of God and divine things . . . enlightened by the Holy Spirit though the Word" (p. 262).

**TABLE 1.** A Sampling of Thought on Prayer in Academic Teaching.

Function	Description	Representative authors
Intellectual enlightenment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God is the source of true enlightenment, unlocking understanding and guiding toward higher wisdom</li> <li>• Learning comes through divinely aided reflection on personal thought and experience</li> </ul>	Augustine of Hippo Bonaventure of Bagnoregio Ignatius of Loyola Karl Rahner
Spiritual discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer humbles prideful scholars and emphasizes compassionate and worthwhile knowledge</li> <li>• Prayer boosts the will to study, prioritize, and learn</li> <li>• Prayer buoys the tired and challenged scholar</li> </ul>	Thomas à Kempis Parker Palmer John Coe
Religious instruction and example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer and catechistic teaching witness to spiritual life beyond the discipline being studied</li> </ul>	Authors of the <i>Ratio Studiorum</i> John Baptist de La Salle

### Prayer as Intellectual Enlightenment

That divine wisdom is given by God is a clear message among biblical writers. Although Paul was writing about the Christian gospel, his introduction to the first Corinthian letter contrasts human knowledge with divine wisdom: “Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? . . . For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength” (1 Cor. 1:20, 25). Perhaps speaking as much about the heart as the mind, Matthew records Jesus’ words: “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children” (Mt. 11:25).

James describes wisdom as given by God through prayer and by “deeds done in humility” (Jas. 1:5; 3:13–18). Paul too describes the origins of wisdom as from the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:12): “We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God,

that we may understand what God has freely given us.” These New Testament writers build on a solid teaching in Hebrew historical, prophetic, and wisdom literature that all insight, wisdom, and understanding come from God: “The Lord gives wisdom and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Prov. 2:6).

The deuterocanonical Book of Wisdom advances a similar thought (8:8): “[I]f one yearns for copious learning, she [Wisdom] knows the things of old, and infers those yet to come. She understands the turns of phrases and the solution of riddles; signs and wonders she knows in advance and the outcome of times and ages.” And earlier (Wis. 7:15–22a):

Now God grant I speak suitably and value these endowments at their worth: For he is the guide of Wisdom and the director of the wise. For both we and our words are in his hand, as well as all prudence and knowledge of crafts. For he gave me sound knowledge of existing things, that I might know the organization of the universe and the force of its elements, the beginning and the end and the midpoint of times, the changes in the sun’s course and the variations of the seasons. Cycles of years, positions of the stars, natures of animals, tempers of beasts, powers of the winds and thoughts of men, uses of plants and virtues of roots; such things as are hidden I learned and such as are plain; for Wisdom, the artificer of all, taught me.

Although formal institutions of higher education did not exist in the ancient Jewish world, this teaching inspired patristic and medieval writers who contributed to the development of higher education.

Augustine of Hippo’s (354–430) writing *On Christian Doctrine* (Augustine, 397) was a revered treatise of early medieval pedagogy. Written as a guide for teachers of scripture, Augustine (book 3, chapter 37) instructs that

students of these venerable documents ought to be counselled [sic] not only to make themselves acquainted with the forms of expression ordinarily used in Scripture, to observe them carefully, and to remember them accurately, but also, what is especially and before all things necessary, to pray that they may understand them.

Augustine held a high view of God’s involvement in understanding and wisdom. It is God who gives true understanding and insight. Human intellect and pedagogy are by themselves insufficient to illumine brightly: “the aids of teaching, applied through

the instrumentality of man, are of advantage to the soul only when God works to make them of advantage” (Augustine, 397, book 4, chapter 16). Augustine did not deny the contribution of reason and study to knowledge when paired with faith, but he viewed prayer as an act of inviting God to illuminate what is dim and blurred in human sight (Pedersen, 1997).

Eight centuries after Augustine, educator Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (1221–74) expanded Augustine’s neo-Platonic catalog of sources of knowledge. He describes in his text, *The Mind’s Road to God*, six rungs of understanding, progressing from clay to gold (1988, ch. 1, para. 2 and 6):

By praying thus one is enlightened about the knowledge of the stages in the ascension to God. For since, relative to our life on earth, the world is itself a ladder for ascending to God, we find here certain traces [of His hand], certain images, some corporeal, some spiritual, some temporal, some aeviternal; consequently some outside us, some inside . . .

Therefore, according to the six stages of ascension into God, there are six stages of the soul’s powers by which we mount from the depths to the heights, from the external to the internal, from the temporal to the eternal—to wit, sense, imagination, reason, intellect, intelligence, and the apex of the mind, the illumination of conscience (“Synteresis”). These stages are implanted in us by nature, deformed by sin, reformed by grace, to be purged by justice, exercised by knowledge, perfected by wisdom.

For Bonaventure, prayer was instrumental in ushering in the highest form of knowledge: the “illuminations of conscience.” Without divine illumination, ushered in by prayer, temporal knowledge was not only limited, it was distorted.

In 1541, Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556) further refined the sense in which divine wisdom combined with experience and action to produce true knowledge. For Ignatius, divine enlightenment was not an instant revelation, or the highest stage in a hierarchy of sense-making tools. Rather it was forged as the world of ideas melded with honest introspection and reflection. Kolvenbach (1993, p. 12) explains:

A fundamental dynamic of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius is the continual call to reflect upon the entirety of one’s experience in prayer in order to discern where the Spirit of God is leading. Ignatius urges reflection on human experience as an essential means of validating its authenticity, because without prudent reflection delusion readily becomes possible and without careful reflection the significance of one’s experience may be neglected or trivialised. Only after adequate reflection on experience and interior

appropriation of the meaning and implications of what one studies can one proceed freely and confidently toward choosing appropriate courses of action that foster the integral growth of oneself as a human being.

Down to the modern day, in his book of prayers, Karl Rahner (1904–84), the influential Catholic professor of dogmatic theology at the University of Innsbruck, echoed Ignatius' integration of life and learning in a heartfelt prayer, excerpted here (1960, pp. 28–29, 30, 32):

It is said—and who am I to dispute it, Lord?—that knowing belongs to the highest part of man, to the most properly human of all his actions. And You Yourself are called “*Deus scientiarum Dominus*,” the Lord God of all knowledge. But doesn't such high praise contradict the experience of Your holy writer? “I applied my mind to a new study; what meant wisdom and learning, what meant ignorance and folly? And I found that this too was labor lost; much wisdom, much woe; who adds to learning, adds to the load we bear” (Ecclus. 1:17–18).

It is also said that knowing is the most interior way of grasping and possessing anything. But actually it seems to me that knowing touches only the surface of things, that it fails to penetrate to the heart, to the depths of my being where I am most truly “I.”

Knowledge seems more like a kind of pain-killing drug that I have to take repeatedly against the boredom and desolation of my heart . . . Truly, my God, mere knowing is nothing. All it can give us is the sad realization of its own inadequacy. All it can tell us is that through it we can never fully grasp reality and make it a living part of ourselves.

Only knowledge gained through experience, the fruit of living and suffering, fills the heart with the wisdom of love, instead of crushing it with the disappointment of boredom and final oblivion. It is not the results of our own speculation . . . And all the knowledge we have acquired through study can do no more than give us some little help in meeting the problems of life with an alert and ready mind.

May You alone enlighten me, You alone speak to me. May all that I know apart from You be nothing more than a chance traveling companion on the journey toward You. May it help to mature me, so that I may ever better understand You . . .

Rahner learned to doubt the salvific nature of intellectual endeavor. In this vein, he sounds like the litany of protests one finds in Ecclesiastes as to the vanity of just about everything, including knowledge and the making of books (Eccl: 12:12). Yet, rather than disparaging of intellect, there is an extensive tradition until the seventeenth century of “double-knowledge”—a seeking to know oneself (broadly defined to include all existence) and God (Houston,

2000). Whether through Augustine and Bonaventure's marriage of neo-Platonic reason and Christian faith or Ignatius and Rahner's divinely enriched reflection on life and suffering, the point is the same. God enlightens, and for education to be complete and wise, it must incorporate a prayerful invitation of God's wisdom. This divine illumination suggests the value of prayer and contemplation of scripture and life as a prominent component of learning for the Christian teacher and student.

### Prayer as Spiritual Discipline

The Augustinian view of epistemology permeated medieval teaching, allowing Thomas à Kempis (1379–1471) to continue this chain-prayer of scholars through the ages for divine guidance. But à Kempis's prayer was not just to discern correctly, but also to feel and to act in response to knowing. Thus, à Kempis adds behavioral and attitudinal dimensions to inspired learning (quoted in Davies, 1990, p. 119):

Grant, O Lord,  
to all teachers and students,  
to know what is worth knowing, to love what is worth loving,  
to praise what pleases you most,  
and to dislike whatsoever is evil in your sight.

Grant us with true judgement [sic] to distinguish things that differ,  
and above all to search out and do what is well-pleasing to you,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Although "knowledge contains its own morality" (Palmer, 1983, p. 7) and thus touches on dimensions beyond intellect, prayer as the conduit for divine illumination deals mostly with matters of the mind. A second function of prayer deals more with the heart. It is this application that is reflected in sociologist Parker Palmer's last lines of his book, *To Know As We are Known: A Spirituality of Education* (1983, p. 125):

Once we have been to the depths of prayer, we can begin to know as we are known. Our prideful knowledge, with which we divide and conquer and destroy the world, is humbled. Now it becomes a knowledge that draws us into faithful relationship with all of life. In prayer we find the ultimate space in which to practice obedience to truth, the space created by that Spirit who keeps troth with us all.



Quaker writers before Palmer expressed varying degrees of confidence in human intellect. But the Quaker tradition acknowledges that God is the ultimate teacher, the “Inward Teacher,” as Quaker educator Paul Lacey (1988) writes. The outcome of this teaching is not a gnostic, higher knowledge, but a changed heart, and thus altered educational values, priorities, and methods. In concert with the redemptive emphasis also found in Reform perspectives, Palmer (1983, pp. 8, 9) writes:

The goal of a knowledge arising from love is the reunification and reconstruction of broken selves and worlds. A knowledge born of compassion aims not at exploiting and manipulating creation but at reconciling the world to itself . . . [A] knowledge that springs from love will implicate us in the web of life; it will wrap the knower and the known in compassion, in a bond of awesome responsibility as well as transforming joy; it will call us to involvement, mutuality, accountability.

The spiritual discipline of a prayerful teacher casts academic questions and research agendas in a new light. It suggests that the Christian scholar and teacher is changed in heart, soul, and mind in a daily encounter with God. That subtle molding and shaping which occurs as one submits to the sovereignty of God reorders one’s quest, one’s assessment of what’s important, one’s action, one’s application of learning. One becomes more humble in what one knows and doesn’t know, perhaps more compassionate, more bold, or less judgmental. How else is this humility of heart to occur in the academy if not through a praying teacher?

The goal is not to distort empirical methods or findings, or propagandize learners, or change the lectern into a pulpit. The Judeo-Christian allowance for choice and opposing ideas should be fiercely protected. The point is simply that the prayerful teacher is not insulated from the influence of the Spirit.

Evangelical educator John Coe (2000) takes a different tack on prayerful teaching as a spiritual discipline, one which emphasizes the students’ role. Coe acknowledges the role of divine enlightenment but suggests that prayer aids in cultivating and maintaining personal study habits which lead to the application of knowledge for redemptive purposes. In constructing homework, Coe writes to his students (p. 96):

Since course work or class time itself is a kind of discipline, we will employ the . . . classical spiritual disciplines (prayer, fasting, meditation in the word, awe/silence before God, etc.) to aid us all in being able to stay rightly focused on the course content or training of each class. These “service disciplines” will assist us in appropriately opening ourselves to our course work in Christ.

Thousands of students (and teachers) have prayed for motivation to study and for enhanced performance on assignments, either as scholastic afterthought or as a quick fix for faulty preparation. But Coe’s recommendation is a buttress to a solid architecture of learning. It is an attempt to invoke divine support in one’s efforts to learn and study, and in so doing, it incorporates an element of divine enlightenment. Perhaps students would benefit from a faculty who, like Moses, constantly “hold up their hands” in prayer while students battle to learn and grow (Ex. 17:8–16).

A third manifestation of prayer as spiritual discipline is as a salve for the challenges of collegiate life. John Jerram, a Magdalene College, Cambridge student in the 1790s, recounted in his journal the sentiment of scores of students over the centuries who found refreshment and support in spiritual disciplines (quoted in Searby, 1988, p. 275):

Many and happy were the seasons we spent together in reading the scriptures and in prayer . . . I can truly say . . . that these engagements were not only the happiest, but the most profitable of our college occupations. They greatly tended to relax the weariness of the same routine of reading; they counteracted the chilling effect of abstract studies, and the unchristian tendency of Pagan literature and profane mythology.

Private prayer and a spirit of prayerful reverence have no doubt built up the faith of many engaged in academic pursuits, as they have others (Jude 20). Thus, prayer can serve as a channel for humbling prideful scholars, fashioning compassionate and righteous purposes for study, boosting the will to learn, and buoying the tired and challenged. No serious student from the ancient period hence is without need of these remedies.

### **Prayer as Religious Instruction and Example**

A third—and perhaps the most obvious—function for prayer in the classroom is for religious instruction and moral example.

As did many other teachers and pupils, Bernard of Chartres (d. 1130) and his twelfth-century students ended each day in prayer. What's important to note is Bernard's rationale—to "edify faith and morals." The specific assignment is recorded by John of Salisbury in *Metalogicon* (Thorndyke, 1944):

But since neither school nor any day should be without religion, such material was set before them as would edify faith and morals . . . . So the last part of this *declinatio* [evening homework] . . . preferred the paths of piety and commended the souls of the dead to their Redeemer by devout repetition of the sixth Psalm . . . and the Lord's Prayer.

At the twilight of the medieval period but still reflective of its practice, a group of seasoned and gifted Jesuit teachers and school administrators authored the *Ratio Atque Institutio Studiorum Societatis Jesu* (*The Plan and Methodology of Jesuit Education*) (Farrell, [1599]1970). The *Ratio Studiorum* was written as a teaching manual for the 245 Jesuit schools and four Jesuit universities that existed at the time. The first topic in the "Common Rules of Professors of Higher Faculties" is prayer (p. 25):

It should be the set purpose of the teacher, both in his lectures as opportunity offers and on other occasions, to inspire his students to the love and service of God and to the practice of the virtues which He expects of them, for this is the sole purpose of all their activities . . . . To keep this ideal ever before their minds let one of the students recite a short prayer, composed for this purpose, at the beginning of class. The professor and students should follow attentively and with heads uncovered. At least let the professor, with uncovered head, make the sign of the Cross and then begin his lecture . . . . He should also pray frequently for the spiritual welfare of his students and be an example to them by his dedicated life. And he should sometimes exhort them on religious matters, at least prior to the major feasts and the longer vacations. He should especially urge them to pray to God, to examine their consciences in the evening, to receive the sacraments of penance and the holy eucharist frequently and fervently, to attend Mass daily, to listen to sermons on all feast days, to shun bad habits, to hate sin, and to cultivate the virtues worthy of a Christian man.

Likewise, in the "Rules of the Scholastics of the Society," the authors directly instruct students to be prayerful about their studies, in part reflecting the Augustinian affirmation of divine wisdom, but with an outcome of being Christ-like in behavior more than receiving divine wisdom (p. 95):

The scholastics of our Society should make it their chief endeavor to preserve purity of conscience and a right intention in their studies. They should not seek anything in their studies except the glory of God and the good of souls. In their prayers they should frequently beg for grace to make progress in learning so as at length to fulfill the Society's hope that by their example and learning they will become able workers in the vineyard of Christ our Lord.

Catholic colleges and universities were still referring to the *Ratio Studiorum* as curricular bedrock in the late 19th century (Rudolph, 1977). More recently, Jesuit educators gathered to consider the *Ratio Studiorum*'s continued relevance to 21st-century education (Duminuco, 2000). This foundation is not simply that of a religious rite, but also the committing of the act of learning to God before commencing it. This spirit of committing all things to God and living and acting within his will reaches back to Benedict of Nursia: "First of all, every time you begin a good work, you must pray to him most earnestly to bring it to perfection" (Kardong, 1996, Prol. 4) and before him, to biblical teaching (Ps. 37:4–6; Prov. 16:3).

By the 17th century, although Jesuits had developed a reputation for higher education and the Ursuline and Visitation orders had finishing schools, primary education for the working class and poor remained sorely neglected (Everett, 1996). Among the many French reformers of primary education was John Baptist de La Salle, who, along with the Christian Brothers order he founded, dedicated himself to primary education, mostly for the poor.<sup>2</sup>

La Salle and his brothers wrote extensively about both education and prayer (La Salle, [1720]1996; [1730-31]1994; [1734/1760]2002; [1739]1995). Drawing on Descartes, La Salle's systems of prayer and education were analytical, logical, and detailed. His system included the recitation of many memorized, liturgical prayers throughout the school day, a main purpose of which was to (1996, p. 92)

help the teacher to recollect themselves [sic] and recall the presence of God; it will serve to accustom the students to think of God from time to

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<sup>2</sup>Although La Salle's attention was focused on primary education, he and his brothers are included in this survey because of their extensive thought and writings about the melding of prayer and teaching.

time and to offer God all their actions, and to draw on themselves God's blessings. At the beginning of each lesson, a few short Acts [prayers] will be said to ask of God the grace of studying well and learning well.

Earlier in the same work (p. 54), La Salle mentions that students do not recite daily prayers "in order to learn, but only to show that they do know these, and, as for the prayers and responses of holy Mass, to learn how to say them properly."

La Salle was not promoting the mechanical recitation of prayers, but reflecting, both by the frequency and structure of prayer, the centrality of the catechism in his educational system and the importance of prayer in all aspects of the Christian life. Although he is at a state-supported institution, University of Virginia economics professor Kenneth Elzinga reflects a contemporary expression of prayerful teaching as religious instruction and moral example (2000, p. 4):

Why do I pray for my students? . . . Because Jesus taught His students how to pray—and His disciples often saw Him at prayer and were invited to be with Him when He prayed. I want my students to know that I pray. I want my students to see me broken before them as a man of prayer so that they know it is OK for them to petition God. I also believe in the efficacy of prayer . . . . And I pray because it reminds me that the world in which I live, and the time I have been given, even my office hours, are claimed by my Lord and this is one way that He has staked out this territory as His.

### **Are Classrooms Devoid of Prayer?**

Even as the three themes emerge—prayer as intellectual enlightenment, spiritual discipline, and religious instruction—prayer remains obstinately difficult to pin down in the learning process. If patristic and medieval educators thought prayer was important in the curriculum, why does its presence and pedagogical purpose remain largely submerged from understanding and practice? I believe there are at least four reasons.

First, while curricular debates and philosophies of teaching are common, theologies of teaching and classroom ethnographies are rare. Thus, even when prayer is mentioned in relation to study and the classroom, its specific mechanics are beyond knowing. How is it that prayer influences learning? In what ways

should prayer and study be integrated? An example is Thomas Aquinas' advice to a monastic brother on "How You Should Study" (Donnelly, 2002, p. 20). Thomas entreats brother John to "not give up spending time in prayer," but Aquinas does not expound upon how prayer influences teaching, learning, or the learner, nor could he. There are comparatively few descriptions of teaching delicate enough to pick up the underlying structure of a professor's view and practice of teaching-related prayer, and even with prayer, "how unsearchable [are God's] judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out" (Rom. 11:33b).

A second reason for the lack of knowledge about prayer's role in academic endeavors is that modes of knowing such as rationalism, empiricism, and ecclesiastically determined orthodoxy operate by different epistemological rules than does prayer. Prayer doesn't seem to naturally fit with these approaches to knowledge, in which most educators were trained to think and teach. As Coe (2000, p. 94) writes of his graduate school training: "I knew the importance of prayer, but it was neither the medium nor the message of my education," so for years, he didn't pass it along to his students. This is likely the experience of many.<sup>3</sup>

Third, liturgical and private prayer partially hides the nature and presence of prayer in an academic setting. Christians who do not pray privately may experience prayer only in the liturgy and see prayer as largely disconnected from academic pursuits. Professors and students who do engage in private prayer often restrict any public observation (or even their own awareness) of the nature of prayer in teaching and learning.

Finally, religious and secular pluralism make prayer potentially offensive to students, even in some church-related colleges. As Palmer (1983, p. 10) says: "Vocal prayer in class dictates a consensus that does not exist in our pluralistic society, and any prayer that is so vaguely worded that it sounds agreeable to all is, by my limits, no prayer at all." Real prayer is not just silent, but too often absent in learning and teaching even when prayers are publically uttered.

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<sup>3</sup>Of course several excellent histories recount the working out of religious belief and the intellectual history in American higher education, including Catholic (Gleason, 1996), and evangelical and mainline Protestant accounts (Burtchaell, 1997; Marsden, 1994; Sloan, 1994).

## Conclusion

What is unsettling to traditional (modernist) academic views is the subjective cast put upon knowledge and the intrusion of religious bias on truth and inquiry. But actually the prayerful teacher yearns for the opposite: for wisdom and discipline and perspective beyond oneself. It is the transcendence, even the loss of self, that is the goal of prayerful teaching. As Hodgson (1999, p. 48) writes:

Education is not so much the drawing-forth of what the human subject already knows inwardly, but the drawing out of the human subject from self-centeredness to God-centeredness or reality-centeredness. Christ and the Spirit play central roles in this process.

A survey of writings on prayer in teaching is helpful for detecting prayer's presence, but additional reflection is needed to be intentional about its purpose in contemporary practice (a beginning effort is offered by Lynn, in press). Nevertheless, it is instructive to reflect on the ancient and modern testimonies of prayer's contribution to intellectual enlightenment, spiritual discipline, and religious instruction and example. Perhaps the conversation will begin anew.

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