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Fuller Theological Seminary

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FULLER

THEOLOGY, NEWS & NOTES

Fuller Theological Seminary

FALL 2013



Have This Mind Among You

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11

> Integrated by Fuller President Mark Labberton





Mark Labberton

About This Issue

Have This Mind Among You

This is a unique issue of *Theology, News & Notes* in many ways. Though I have been chair of the editorial board for some time now, I am—at around the time of the delivery of this magazine—being installed as Fuller’s fifth president. So, this issue is unique to me, in that I am viewing the institution from a new, and unexpected perspective. Even without knowing in advance that my role would change so dramatically, I welcomed the chance to define some of the other changes that you will see at Fuller in the coming years.

As it is my privilege to inform vision for the coming season, the first part of this issue will address the one thing that we are all challenged to share together: the mind of Christ. A fitting foundation for our communal efforts, this challenge of Paul’s—written from a Roman prison to a young church in Philippi—urges Christians to find their unifying center in the mind of Christ. The first article you will find here is the essence of my inaugural address, where I take the chance to express to the community this goal as the foundation of our mission to come: “have this mind among you.”

To further explore that passage, I’ve asked many from the Fuller community to reflect theologically on it, including New Testament scholar Marianne Meye Thompson, theology and ethics scholar Hak Joon Lee, intercultural relations scholar Evelyne Reisacher, systematic theology scholar Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, and human development scholar Justin Barrett. I’ve also asked senior editor and artist in residence Lauralee Farrer to write on how the arts play a role in embracing the mind of Christ together.

In addition to my esteemed colleagues, I’ve asked friends and global leaders from around the world to give brief thoughts on having the mind of Christ. You will find those peppered throughout the first section of the magazine.

The second section of the magazine outlines a sweeping updated curriculum that Fuller is embracing in the upcoming years. Prompted by great changes in graduate-level seminary education as well as myriad cultural factors, we have put ourselves to the task of reimagining Fuller’s curriculum from the core up. As new Academic Dean Scott Cormode elegantly puts it, we “listened to our graduates” as we researched and

strategized the most significant changes in curriculum since the founding of Fuller. As I was a part of the committee considering these changes long before I was being considered to take on the role of president, I count it a great (and unanticipated) honor to be part of elaborating this to the community here. The section outlining these changes is not to be considered distinct from Paul’s challenge to share the same mind, but rather built upon it.

Dr. Cormode introduces that section, followed by New Testament scholar Love Sechrest—who has been the tireless chair of a committee determining the direction of educational curriculum for the future. Dr. Sechrest writes a bridge article between our theological reflections to the thinking behind our practical application. Expert on the contemporary church in culture Ryan Bolger writes on integrating the concerns of the School of Intercultural Studies across the updated curriculum as it affects all schools. New Testament studies scholar David Downs has written on the classes that explore leadership and spiritual practices that will be part of all degrees in the future. James Furrow, chair of the School of Psychology’s Department of Marriage and Family, weighs in on the contributions of the School of Psychology across all curriculum. Dr. Cormode has elaborated on the touchstone class that every incoming master’s student will be required to take—regardless of emphasis—and New Testament scholar Joel Green writes a sidebar on changes in language requirements, as they affect many students.

As I write in the accompanying article—and will say from a podium at my inauguration ceremonies in November—educating Christ’s people for the ministry of expressing God’s love in the world has always been and will continue to be Fuller’s call. This is our first thing. Our community around the world is currently, at a rough calculation, 53,000 strong—including faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, donors, trustees, and friends. For so great a cloud of witnesses to have the same mind would be an amazing force—and an equally amazing miracle. That is the size of vision we hope to embrace in the days to come: one so big that the minds of men and women alone cannot contain it. TNN

The Integrator

Mark Labberton was named president of Fuller as of July 1, 2013, after serving as Lloyd John Ogilvie Associate Professor of Preaching and director of the Lloyd John Ogilvie Institute of Preaching since 2009. He came to Fuller after 16 years as senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, California, and spent over 30 years total in ministry. He is a sought-after speaker for a broad range of audiences such as the National Pastors Convention and the International Justice Mission.

Cover Art



The cover is a detail from *Meditation* in artist Bruce Herman’s series on *Building in Ruins* (oil on linen with gold leaf on wood, 65x40, 2011). Herman

is the Lothlórien Distinguished Chair in Fine Arts at Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts. He studied under Philip Guston, James Weeks, David Aronson, Reed Kay, and Arthur Polonsky. For more, see <http://bruceherman.com>.

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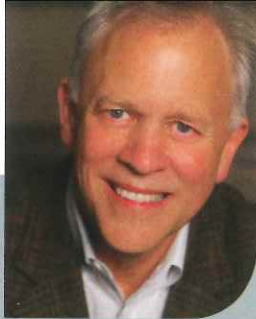
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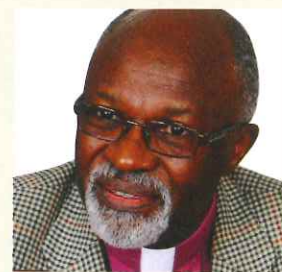
Have This Mind Among You

MARK LABBERTON is the fifth president of Fuller Theological Seminary. Having been in pastoral ministry for over 30 years, Labberton was invited to be director of the Lloyd John Ogilvie Institute of Preaching in 2009, where he has taught and led until accepting the presidency. A sought-after speaker, his books include *The Dangerous Act of Loving Your Neighbor: Seeing Others Through the Eyes of Jesus* (2010) and *The Dangerous Act of Worship: Living God's Call to Justice* (2007). The article below encapsulates thoughts he shared at his inauguration on November 5, 2013.

This is a moment. Certainly for me and for my family, this is a poignant moment of change and anticipation. For Fuller Theological Seminary, it is a moment of transition after

the twenty faithful, engaging, and civilizing years of Richard Mouw's exceptional presidency. This is a moment. Technological and economic tremblers also make this a moment of unprecedented change in higher education. Knowledge for many is no longer accessed through the privileged preserve of the academy but through a portal on a cell phone. This is a moment. Parallel to and distinctive within higher education in general, theological education faces its own academic and pedagogical shifts, played out in relation to the dramas of culture, church, religions, and nations. This reflects that it is also a moment in the life of the church where explosive growth and creativity in some contexts contrasts with precipitous decline, division, and redefinition in others. This is a moment. Meanwhile, all of this occurs within one of the most globally tumultuous moments of history. The suffering caused by tyrants through simple, daily acts of violence and oppression plagues millions. Poverty, war, and disease destroy lives as unique and treasured as yours and mine. Our fragile earth overheats and melts. Nation after nation faces economic and political crises, every responsible institution realizes it must reconsider its identity and mission, and every leader faces demands for urgency, accountability, and wisdom.

Here is what I would like to say today: If God is God, and if God has spoken in Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world, then none of this personal or global reality lies beyond God's arms. And if none of this lies beyond God's arms, then God's people are meant to make that embrace visible and tangible. And if that is the calling of God's people, then educating Christ's people for such ministry in the world is Fuller's call. Now is a moment to acknowledge the world's great need, but, even more



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Everywhere I turn—on the streets of Kampala, in the slums of our city, reading our newspapers, turning on TV news—I see pain, despair, bewilderment, confusion, and other such negative expressions of life in Kampala. The unemployment rate among the youth in Uganda is at a staggering 83 percent! Completion rates at primary level

of schooling have been deteriorating and have now reached 25 percent. Today in the Parliament of Uganda, a bill presented by the government is in its final reading, which, if passed into law, will curtail freedom of assembly, speech, and association. This is the place where I live, together with brothers and sisters in Christ who, like our brothers and sisters in first-century Philippi, Paul enjoins to live here with the mind of Christ.

Paul's admonition challenges us with these questions: What ought we, who share in the life of Christ, think? How ought we approach our life situation? What should preoccupy us, informing our dreams, passions, hopes, fears, and actions here? It must be the will of God. The "mind of Christ" prays, dreams, longs, and works for his kingdom to come and his will to be done, "on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10); indeed, in Kampala—my world—as it is in heaven. His will is "justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17) in Uganda—wherever his people live.

importantly a moment to consider Fuller's vocation in light of God's great love.

In such a time as this, Philippians 2:1–11 offers profound help. Here, at the heart of the letter to this young Philippian church, the Apostle Paul offers a word, in fact a song, for a critical moment, a word about the Word on which on everything else pivots. This is one of Paul's letters and papers written from a Roman prison; it is written to a church just emerging amidst the Greco-Roman context with competing religious, spiritual, economic, and political visions. It is written at a time when there is rivalry and division in the church, when there are competitors for market share and for personal loyalty. The intimidation of the empire was at its height, and the vulnerability of those following Jesus was plain. It was written at a moment. And Paul says this:

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

What instruction comes from a moment so long ago that we could receive as a word pertinent to a moment like ours? The apostle's word to us starts here:

Remember What's First.

The apostle is fully aware of how easily lives of nascent faith can be absorbed with rival forms of power. No voice in the New Testament is more conscious of and articulate about power and its manifestations than Paul's. He knows a world of intimidating distraction. And his exhortation is this: let your mind, heart, soul, and strength be focused on the mind, heart, soul, and strength of God in Jesus Christ. This is the center of reality—God's extravagant, self-giving love.



An imagining of Apostle Paul's inspiration for writing the epistles of Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians during his imprisonment in Rome (c. AD 60).

Paul may seem to be offering an offensive metanarrative, an engulfing theological blanket laid over everything. Rather, he is pointing to what is core to reality. He is saying that in a time of rival theories of authority, and of contests over power, when life and death are at stake, we could miss the key to the human drama. It is not finally what happens on the big stage of politics or economics or culture. It is not about the processing of big data nor about the presence of big names with bigger personalities with big ideas. It is not about a totalizing, homogenizing picture of culture or of experience.

Remember what's first: "have this mind among you." Have the mind among you of the One who is first and is love. Let your perceptions of God, and neighbor, of friend and of enemy be shaped just here at the center. Though we could be, and often are, endlessly distracted and falsely impressed, confused and anxious—absorbed in the past, or anxious about the present, or fretful about the future—let your mind and heart and soul and strength ground you in the One who is love and who is central. Let the One who is first be first.

The work of Christian education, and specifically evangelical, theological education and formation, turns on this pivot. This affirmation is no mere point of doctrine or tradition or habit. It is not a theological parochialism. This is the heart of God's revelation, unveiled in its self-giving beauty for the salvation of you and me, and of the world. We see it



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To have the mind of Christ in this contemporary moment is very risky for a church addicted to power and privilege. The life of Christ demonstrated a mind set on *kenosis*, that is, evacuating His privilege for the sake of a fallen creation in need of redemption. With our twenty-first-century church obsessed with success and victory, often embroiled in various

battles over doctrinal superiority, culture wars, political fights, and nation-state conflicts, I'm convinced there can be no greater task than to seek the mind of Christ!

That task must include training pastors and theologians, who can, in turn, equip disciples and followers of Jesus to live in this moment. They must be able to discern the mind of Christ and the *kenosis* moments, where the power of God to salvation can remain powerfully on public display. That means reclaiming our voice for justice and a love for the poor. It means renewing our commitment to a personal holiness aligned with social holiness. And, at times, it will demand making uncomfortable the followers of Jesus who lust for power and importance, rather than the mind set on *kenosis*. Indeed, it is to embrace the difficult words of Jesus: "whoever seeks to find their life will lose it, but whoever will lose their life for my sake, will find it." This is the mind of Christ.

through a glass darkly, but we see! All else in Christian theological education and formation turns on this. Without it, we would do better to shutter our doors and cease our speech. With it, we embrace nothing less than the enterprise critical to what God in Christ by the Spirit is doing to recreate the world.

At a time when higher education, seminary education, the church, and the world are full of a season of exceptional turmoil and disorder, reconsideration and prioritization, it matters that we remember and trust what we believe is of first importance.

In our time of agonizing budget decisions, and infrastructural realignments, and board quandaries, and failing financial models, and technological pyrotechnics, global uncertainties, ecclesiastical paroxysms, pedagogical perplexities, and religious rivalries, we might have everything in mind except the thing that is the most important thing of all.

The formation of Christian leaders and pastors for the twenty-first century holds challenges and uncertainties, just as does the spiritual formation of all Christians. The hope is not that we can discern the structures and forms of the future, but we can and must discern the One whose heart and mind is making us for the future. Whatever and wherever that future

unfolds, we and our future need the One who holds all things together. For the God who holds the future is the One who has shown us in the past what the future that is today and tomorrow needs most: the God who emptied himself. This is first.

Make What's First Primary.

It is one thing to profess the supremacy of Christ, but it is quite another to live it. What is first is meant to be what's primary; what we profess is what we are to live. It is only evident that we build on rock rather than sand if what is first is what is primary.

To have the mind of Christ is not just to believe something but to do something. It is not Word over and against act, or Word apart from act, but Word as Act and Act as Word. The spiral descent of our Lord's self-emptying love moves from equality with God to surrendering divine prerogatives, to taking on human flesh, to becoming a slave and becoming obedient—even unto death—even death on a cross. That unadorned descent of love is the culminating demonstration of God's glory.

This is how we know we are on track: to have the mind of Christ is to display the love of Christ. To look into the mirror of God's love is to transform into a reflection of God's love. That is, "how can we claim to love our God unless we love our brother and our sister?"

If we make first things first, then what is first redefines what is primary. And what was primary for the first-century world is still primary in the twenty-first-century world: a people who love as we have been loved.

We live in a moment obsessed with the possibilities and hopes of technology. And for good reason. We live in a time overwhelmed with choices and fearful of decisions. And for good reason. We live in a time of global institutional breakdown and redefinition that produces both urgency and anxiety. And for good reason. We live in a time of ecological crisis and fear. And do so for good reason. We live at a time of staggering poverty and crushing violence, day in and day out, visible and invisible.

Paul gathers up the dramas of his imprisonment, the rivals and competitors within the Philippian church, his own mortality, his love and affection for the Philippians themselves, and here explains how all this—and much more besides—should be seen. When we wonder how we are to live, or within what context we are to see and understand ourselves most truly, Paul does not point to Rome or to Athens, to class or to ethnicity, to power or to powerlessness, to prisoner or prison-keeper, but instead he points to the self-giving love of Jesus Christ. The rhetorical shape of the opening verses of Philippians 2 gathers momentum as Paul stokes the confidence and

strength of these disciples facing all the reasons for discouragement. "If there is any love . . .": Paul longs for the Philippians to be love in a world of suffering, division, and scarcity rooted in this reality.

All the troubles of chapter 1 are recast by the vision of love in chapter 2. In a way that is not the least bit blind to division or to discouragement or to suffering or to costly discipleship, Paul builds his vision of hope from the unparalleled abundance of God's love. In the midst of this moment when Fuller Seminary and all other such schools are involved in our own season of remaking ourselves for a new world and a new day, we must remember our primary devotion and calling: to grow in our love for God and for the world God so deeply loves.

We live in a world desperate for tangible evidence of a righteous and just story of love. This is a love that never shrinks before the depth and range of problems. This is a love that enters and identifies with us in all our human weakness and vulnerability. This is a love that creates culture, nurtures life, seeks justice, and loves mercy. This is a love that meets us with personal and transformative sacrifice to save us from ourselves and from all sinful tragedy. This is a love that takes seriously the material world in all its vivid neediness. This is the mind and heart of God poured out in love in Jesus.

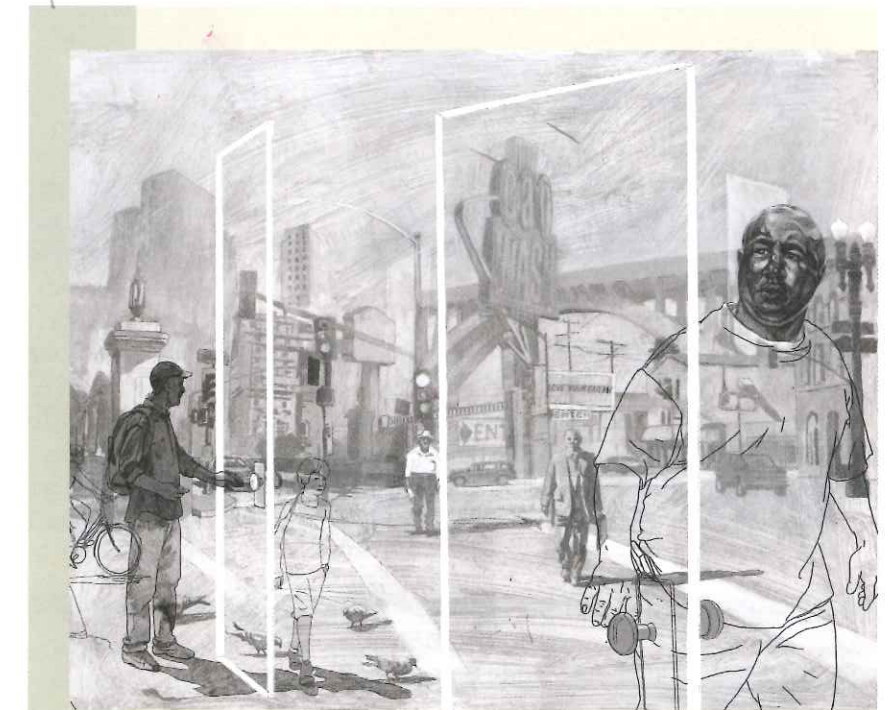
Whatever else an evangelical theological seminary may be, the formation of this must be the trajectory of our spiritual formation. In Fuller's best moments, this has always been our center. When we have most fully lived up to the vision of our founders and the vision of our leaders, it is because we have lived further into what we affirm is the vision and love of our Savior. This is the clarion affirmation of Jesus Christ who is "in all and through all and with all" and whose life, death, and resurrection create and supply all that is necessary for us and for the salvation and recreation of the world.

This is not an act of theological reductionism by which we take all things and reduce them to Christ. Rather, it is the reverse: the affirmation that to see through a glass makes visible what is otherwise invisible: "seeing through a glass darkly" expresses that our sight is conditioned even as it underscores that sight or knowledge of God is actually possible! In other words, the love of Jesus Christ opens the horizon of reality. To be devoted to Christ does not limit our vision, it enlarges it.

Such truth claims as these form the core of a seminary education. Clearly, they are and always have been contested claims. The demise of Christendom only means that the defer-

ential weight given to such affirmations has shifted and that the chief apologetic or defense of the faith that people seek is in love lived more than in merely words offered. It is not whether we can talk or write about them better, but whether the people of God can live and love the faith we profess and preach. The authentication of faith being sought today is the authentic life: the evidence of faith lived, of love demonstrated, of justice enacted.

Skepticism toward the church and the faith arises from many sources, but among them is the frequent absence of simply a "credible witness." This is where the essential work of the seminary should best serve the work of the church: where faith and practice are shown to be inseparable from one an-



The love of Jesus Christ opens a doorway onto the vividness of our humanity, making visible "what is otherwise invisible." It is a love that "takes the world and all its neediness seriously."

other, but also where this link is itself rehearsed and nurtured in the formation of future leaders.

Make What's Primary Pervasive.

This explains why the drama of the cross is to become the drama of our lives. What makes this text so poignant is the inextricable connection for Paul between the love of God for

(Continued on page 31)



Marianne Meye Thompson

The “Mind of Christ” in the Gospels

MARIANNE MEYE THOMPSON, the George Eldon Ladd Professor of New Testament Interpretation, joined Fuller’s School of Theology faculty in 1985. Thompson has been instrumental in developing advanced-level interdisciplinary courses that integrate biblical interpretation with other disciplines of the theological curriculum. She is author of 1–3 John (2011), A Commentary on Colossians and Philemon (*The Two Horizons Commentary*, 2005), The God of the Gospel of John (2001), and The Promise of the Father (2000), and coauthor of *Introducing the New Testament* (2001). Thompson is currently working on a commentary on the Gospel of John.

The Gospels were written to shape communities of faithful followers of Jesus, the living Lord. Crucial to their purpose is the conviction that Jesus—the one who walked the hills of Galilee, taught his people, called disciples, was crucified on a cross in Jerusalem, and now lives—still calls people to follow him today. How do disciples of the twenty-first century discern

“the mind of Christ” in the Gospels and respond faithfully to his call to “Follow me!”?

Starting Points: Love God, Love Neighbor

A good starting point can be found in Jesus’ answer to the question, “What is the greatest commandment in the law?” Jesus responded that the greatest command was to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind.” He added a second commandment, no less important, but still second: love your neighbor as yourself (Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; and compare Luke 10:27; John 13:34–35). These commandments come from the law given by God to Israel (Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18). Love of God and love of neighbor were the heart of the law: every other commandment was dependent on these two (Matt 22:40).

It is typical in discussion of Jesus’ double-love command to put the emphasis on the verb: *love*. But Jesus did not say that



Jesus went to a Pharisee’s house and took his place at the table. A woman who was a sinner stood behind Jesus, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. When Jesus’ host saw this, he judged both Jesus and the woman. Jesus pointed out that the woman’s sins, which were many, had been forgiven—which explained why she showed such great love. Then he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” (Luke 7:36–50 NRSV)



M. Craig Barnes, PhD
President
Princeton Theological Seminary

In his great creedal confession the Apostle Paul depicts the fundamental movement of our salvation. Jesus Christ was exalted in the form of God. But he humbled himself. Then he was lifted up. So for us to have the mind of Christ—certainly to serve his kingdom—is to follow this same journey from exaltation to humility to being lifted up.

This means that those who live in Christ know nothing of playing it safe.

The way exalted leaders play it safe is by running organizations, churches, and seminaries that only talk about the pathos of life but never really follow Jesus into it. They have no names, faces, or stories that break their hearts—and the heart of God. That’s because they do not humble themselves, following Jesus to the

places a Savior is determined to go. Any ministry that is done in the name of Jesus Christ has to constantly strive to give itself away. Then God provides the resurrection and the lifting up. It always comes as a startling surprise, and never as a part of our strategic plans. So leaders plan for the cross and leave the resurrection of ministry to God.

love ought to be supreme: he said that God ought to be. There are many contenders for human allegiance, all warring for the hearts and minds of the people of God. If God does not claim our loyalty, someone or something else will. Jesus himself demonstrated that single-minded commitment to God to which he called his followers when he rebuffed satanic temptation in the wilderness with the words, “Worship the Lord your God and serve only him” (Matt 4:10; Luke 4:8). Later he warned his followers, “No one can serve two masters. . . . You cannot serve God and mammon” (Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13). To have the mind of Christ, to live as Jesus lived, is to give oneself wholeheartedly to God.

The Gospels present Jesus as entrusting his life to God from the very beginning. The Spirit empowered him to announce good news of God’s deliverance, release, and healing (Luke 4:18–21). That same Spirit propelled him into encounter and struggle with the powers of evil and oppression in their various human and demonic forms (Mark 3:27; Matt 12:28; Luke 11:20). Jesus spoke of the compulsion upon him to finish the work he was given (Luke 12:50). Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus reiterates that he came not to do his own will, his own works, or to give his own teaching, but to do the will of

the Father, to accomplish his works, and to speak as he was instructed. To have the mind of Christ is to know that one belongs to God and that one is accountable to God.

It matters greatly, then, how one understands the character, mission, and will of this God. “God” is a generic word; but the God of Jesus is not a generic God. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the God made known in Scripture, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the holy one enthroned on the praises of Israel, who is generous in mercy and compassionate in forgiveness. Jesus’ own mission flows out from God’s mercy and God’s holiness.

Mercy, Holiness, and the Mission of Jesus

The point can be illustrated by the particularly compelling story of a sinful woman who weeps at Jesus’ feet while he is dining in the house of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36–50). She washes Jesus’ feet with her tears, dries them with her hair; kisses them; and anoints them with ointment. The Pharisee is scandalized: doesn’t this teacher know who is touching him? Indeed he does. Jesus does not dispute the characterization of the woman as a sinner (7:47); in fact, he forgives her “many

sins” (7:47–48). But he does challenge Simon’s implicit assumption about how she should be treated. Why do Jesus and Simon regard the woman so differently?

Jesus’ response to the woman flows from his understanding of the mission of God in the world: God is holy and calls sinners to repentance, to reorient their lives around God. For the Pharisees, holiness restricts contact with a woman like this; for Jesus, the holiness of God compels one to such contact—and more. It compels one to love. Holiness is not a static condition: it is a power that cleanses holy space (the temple), that reorients the purposes of holy time (Sabbath and festivals), and that calls people to repentance and obedience to God, the holy one of Israel. With the Holy Spirit upon him, Jesus, the holy one of God (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; John 6:69), extends the boundaries of God’s holiness ever further in the world, expelling unclean spirits (Mark 1:27, 3:11, 5:13, 6:17;

and freely as Jesus does in extending God’s holiness into his world, engaging the forces that demean and defile human life.

But in Jesus’ teaching and actions, the mercy of God figured prominently as well. Jewish teaching spoke of the “two measures” by which God worked in the world: his justice and his mercy (cf. James 2:13). That God is just means that he vindicates the righteous and punishes the sinner. That God is merciful means that while he will vindicate the righteous, he may also have mercy on the sinner. That teaching is hard for the righteous—the older brothers among us, those laborers hired at the beginning of the long day of work. When God’s mercy is extended not to *us* but to *them*, we cry foul. *We* are happy to receive mercy; but *they* should get justice (read: punishment). Simon the Pharisee may have believed that God was a merciful God, but he found it hard to put into practice when he had to consider what that meant for his own treatment of a sinner weeping at Jesus’ feet.

Jesus taught his disciples to be merciful as their heavenly father is (Luke 6:26). Quoting from Hosea, Jesus reminded his hearers that God is a God who desires mercy and not sacrifice (Hos 6:6; Matt 9:13, 12:7). He healed those who called on him to have mercy (e.g., Matt 9:27; 15:22; 17:15; 20:3–31). He told parables showing that mercy received was to result in mercy extended (Matt 18:21–34). Another parable suggested that a toll collector who cast himself on the mercy of God understood more about God than the Pharisee who sought God’s vindication for his scrupulous obedience (Luke 18:10–14). A priest and Levite, who were forbidden by the law to touch a corpse, do not help a man in need; a Samaritan is willing to show the injured man mercy. Jesus told his disciples to go and do likewise (Luke 10:30–37). Mercy, said Jesus, belongs among the “weightier matters of the law” (Matt 23:23). People were not to begrudge God’s generosity to others (Matt 20:15). Expressing God’s mercy, Jesus’ mission was to seek out the lost sheep of the house of Israel, welcome the prodigal to the family table, and reconcile disgruntled family members to each other. To have the mind of Christ is to be merciful, generous, forgiving, open-handed, and open-hearted.

The Story of Another Simon

Luke tells the story of another would-be disciple kneeling at Jesus’ feet, another Simon—Simon Peter, the fisherman. Having toiled all night and caught nothing, Simon is caught off guard when Jesus instructs him to let out his nets for a catch. Reluctantly, Simon does so—and ends up kneeling in a boat full of flopping fish and imploring Jesus, “Depart from

me, Lord, for I am a sinner!” (Luke 5:8). But Jesus doesn’t go. In fact, the holy one of God calls this sinner to follow him, promising him a share in his work of “catching people” (Luke 5:10). The holy God has always been calling and sending sinners (see Isaiah 6:3–8); there is no one else to call, or to send.

In these two Lukan accounts an unnamed woman and the chief of Jesus’ disciples, Simon Peter, recognize themselves as sinners before Jesus. Jesus does not try to talk them out of their own assessments. If anything, he confirms their judgment. But neither does his understanding of their predicament, of who they are, repel him. Instead, Jesus is drawn to, driven toward, reaches out for, those who are sinners. After all, as he said elsewhere, he did not come to call the righteous, but sinners unto repentance (Luke 5:32). And, amazingly, *these sinners seek Jesus out*. They want to be with him. And they seem to want to be with him not in spite of his holiness, but because of it. The woman weeps because she has been forgiven much. Simon follows a man in whose presence he senses his own unworthiness. These people do not shy away from the holy one of God: they are attracted to him. They seemed to know that although they may be unworthy before Jesus, they were never worthless in his sight. To have the mind of Christ is to communicate to others their worth in God’s eyes.

We struggle to be like Jesus, to have the mind of Christ that is characterized by an expansive holiness and a generous mercy and that communicates to others their worth in God’s eyes. The church struggles to take seriously the holiness of God, fearing that anything that smacks of “holiness” can lead too easily to a self-righteous “holier than thou” attitude, to judgmentalism, or perhaps thinking that God’s holiness is an outdated idea that went out with purity laws. But Isaiah, with his vision of the thrice-holy God, took holiness seriously; and Simon Peter, kneeling at Jesus’ feet, took holiness seriously. Jesus took it seriously, teaching his disciples to pray, “hallowed be thy name,” asking God to act so as to demonstrate his holiness, through bringing his kingly rule and ensuring that his will be done. The church struggles to be holy as Jesus is and not as Simon the Pharisee is: seeing God’s holiness as dynamic, welcoming, cleansing, restorative. To have the mind of Christ is to engage the world with this understanding of God’s holiness, to love others because we love a God who is generous in mercy and who seeks to extend his holy presence in the world through his people.



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The African theologian Israel Kamudzandu reflects on the question of how to have the mindset of Christ according to Philippians 2:1–11. There he is able to identify the concept of *ubuntu*, which relates to good living—a Shona indigenous tradition of Africa. “It is a beautiful concept,” remarks Kamudzandu, “that captures the

essence of what it means to be a Shona Christian.” Ubuntu is an organizing principle that informs the Shona mindset where communal life is reconfigured by placing the interest of the community over the individual, promoting the “individual’s obligation to share what he[she] has with the community.” As a Latino/a theologian I have mixed feelings about this noble principle. On the one hand, I resonate with this communal-oriented mindset and sacrificial self-offering. On the other hand, I resist it due to the legacy and agency of oppression perpetuated by the West. In the name of being communal and sacrificing for the sake of a “common good,” minorities, the poor, and the vulnerable “other” have been considered necessary expenses in the economy of the “common good.” In reality, it has not been that “common” and neither has it been that “good.” This oppression has been represented by a space occupied by those in privileged positions due to Western knowledge, race, ethnicity, and gender. My prayer is for Fuller Theological Seminary to move forward under the leadership of our new president and friend, Mark Labberton, as we all adopt the mindset of Christ in the ubuntu way, while at the same time dare to resist the dominant legacies that propel us individually to occupy places of privilege at the expense of the vulnerable other.

It is not difficult to see, then, how the first commandment leads ineluctably and naturally to the second commandment, to love our neighbor. That command isn’t arbitrarily chosen, but expresses the very character and mission of the God who shapes the lives and allegiances of Jesus and his disciples. God is merciful and generous and calls those who are his daughters and sons to be as well, to engage the world on behalf of and with the power of God’s Holy Spirit that reclaims all of life for his purposes.

But perhaps we need to learn not only to be like Jesus, but to be like the sinful woman, and like Simon Peter. After all, we are among those sinners called to repentance. To have the mind of Christ is to hear what Jesus says about us and to us, to hear in his words to the woman his words to us: your sins are many; your sins are forgiven; go in peace. We are the recipients of God’s generous mercy and God’s expansive holiness in Jesus Christ: we are the beneficiaries of “the mind of Christ.” ^{TNN}

Endnote

1. TNIV translates “unclean” as evil.



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Having the mind of Christ: educational institutions that nurture a mindset where academic production becomes a means of individualistic self-preservation, and education is a commodity, are not unusual. In Christian theological education, academic achievement without “the mind of Christ” has little value in terms of being a place where Christian formation takes place and

community is nurtured. Instead of self-preservation, this mindset implies living with scarred egos. These are unavoidable when self-denial is a must, humility is called for, compassion is needed, sacrifice to empower others is invited, and vindication is not readily at hand. But only with scarred egos can a community of theological learning embody the paradox of the one who, living in glory, chose ultimate abasement; who, being the author of life, embraced death; and whose ultimate vindication is still to come.

Luke 6:18),¹ healing the unclean leper (Mark 1:40 parr.; Luke 7:22; 17:12) and (unclean) woman with the flow of blood (Mark 5:25–34 parr.), cleansing the temple so it can be a house of prayer and worship (Mark 11:27 parr.), and risking impurity by touching a corpse to give life (Mark 5:41 parr.; Luke 7:14). Jesus does not confine the holiness of God, the holy power and Spirit of God, but extends it through his word, his touch, and his deeds. To have the mind of Christ is to live as expansively



Hak Joon Lee

Kingdom and Kenosis: The Mind of Christ in Paul's Ethics

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In a popular cultural perception, evangelical Christian ethics is summed up in a single-sentence question: What would Jesus do (WWJD)? This question has the merit of placing Jesus at the center of one's life and ethical inquiry as he or she attempts to imitate Jesus as Savior and Lord. However, in reality, the inquiry of WWJD is not that simple because, without a clear understanding of Jesus' character, our answer may end up being a projection of our own cultural bias and ideology. Therefore, many Christians rightly rely on the four Gospels as their source in pursuing WWJD.

Here is an interesting thought experiment: How did Paul and his contemporary Christians deal with the situations they encountered? While pastoring diverse Christian churches in diaspora, Paul faced many challenging moral issues confounding these churches, from the circumcision of Gentiles to rivalry and factionalism among Christians, from the right to eat idol meat to gender-specific roles and head covering for women. How did Paul respond to these challenging issues, and what was his moral reference point (that is, what was his WWJD), especially when he was not one of Jesus' twelve disciples, and when the synoptic Gospels were not canonized yet? For me, Paul's version of WWJD seems to be, "what is the mind of Christ?"

In his letters, Paul consistently referred to Christ as the au-

thoritative source of the Christian life for both Jews and Gentiles. In Philippians (and similarly 1 Corinthians) in particular, Paul introduced the mind of Christ,¹ with *kenosis* (self-emptying) at its core, as the key reference point of Christian discipleship and ethical discernment. The mind of Christ refers to the moral outlook or mindset of Jesus—what Christ is mindful of and cares for. In short, his disposition and character. To have the mind of Christ is, therefore, to have his mindset in one's thinking, desiring, and doing. It is easy to imagine that to know and have the mind of Christ ourselves is the foundation of our discipleship, because we cannot imitate Jesus without first knowing and sharing his mindset. For Paul, to have the mind of Christ is specifically to be *kenotic* in accommodating the needs of others, especially those who are poor and weak in the community.

This essay first examines a critical role that the mind of Christ (centered on kenosis) played in Philippians, and then explores its moral implication for our own Christian life today: what is the kenosis of Christ, why is it important, and what does it mean to live with this disposition in our current social contexts? I conclude that although having the mindset of self-emptying may appear foolish in our highly individualistic and self-assertive society, it is indispensable to our discipleship because kenosis shows what the mind of Christ is.

The Mind of Christ in Philippians

Philippians 2:5–11 shows the inextricable connection between Christian ethics and the mind of Christ in Paul's thought. Scholars say that one major pastoral concern of Paul's in Philippians was the unity of the church in the face of external opposition (1:28) and internal discord resulting from competition, rivalry, and quarrelling. To Paul, the integrity of the gospel and a long-term effectiveness of ministry depended on the unity of the church; for the unity of the church is not merely a matter of organizational efficiency, but ultimately is concerned with the very nature of the gospel and the identity of the

church as Christ's body.

In order to restore unity to the church, Paul exhorts the Philippians to take an attitude of humility and respect toward each other (2:3), which is not extraordinary advice at all in addressing the problem of discord. However, Paul quickly moves to admonishing the members to have the mind of Christ (2:5). Then he strengthens his exhortation by citing the story of Christ (2:6–11), which some scholars claim to be one of the oldest hymns used in the early Christian community: Jesus, though equal to God, did not claim his rightful divine privilege and power but rather gave it up for the good of humanity even to the point of being crucified on the cross. One may say that, for Paul, the Christ hymn is a narrative commentary on the mind of Christ; in a dramatic and vivid way the hymn shows what led Jesus to make the decisions he did, and how he practiced humility and self-sacrifice in his own life.

At the center of the Christ hymn is the notion of kenosis (self-emptying, self-restriction), an extraordinary moral initiative that Jesus took to reconcile with humanity. For Paul, kenosis is not just one of many virtuous attitudes, but a decisive one that claimed the entire person of Christ including his own life, let alone his power and privilege. The notion of kenosis plays a critical pastoral and ethical role in Philippians. Immediately, it serves as a polite but a firm critique of competition, rivalry, and friction within the church, which was probably motivated by a desire to protect, or, if possible, to expand one's own privilege and power, turf or territory, to speak metaphorically. Kenosis, the surrendering of a space, is the stark opposite of such a turf war. The kenosis of Jesus also has the effect of giving a concrete living example of humility and self-sacrifice that radically alters the ordinary meanings of these words. Humility is more than a mental attitude; it takes action by the conscious replacement of self-serving with serving others and sharing one's entire life to the benefit of others.

Although Paul's message on kenosis was addressed to all Philippian Christians, it targeted particularly those with power and status within the community.² Paul is directly telling them to exemplify servanthood by "giving space" to others as Jesus did rather than holding on to power and privilege. It is Paul's premise that the church as the body of Christ will be built truly in one accord when all members, starting with the leaders, adopt and practice this kenotic mind of Christ. Paul's message obviously co-

heres with Jesus' own teaching at the Last Supper: "You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you" (John 13:13–15).



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The mind of Christ is a countercultural gift, the fruit of a Spirit-kindled transformation.

In a radically individualist culture, it is stunning to contemplate how the Holy Spirit calls and empowers us to have the mind of Christ "among us" (Phil 2:5), where it is experienced more like a shared mentality or outlook than a private intellectual achievement.

In an anti-intellectual age, it is humbling to ponder the Spirit's concern for the renewal of our whole selves, of our thinking as well as our feeling.

In a radically anti-institutional culture, it is crucial to grasp the calling of congregations, seminaries, and other organizations for shaping a shared cruciform way of life.

As a gift of the Spirit, we cannot engineer the mind of Christ among us. But we can pray for it. We can also aspire to receive it, setting our heart's desire not on personal intellectual achievement, but rather on participating in a culture of contagious humility and service, in which we vigorously exercise our minds as an act of love toward each other.

What would a prayer for the mind of Christ look like? One approach might be to turn Paul's pastoral desire for the Philippians (Phil 1:9–11) into a radically communal and deeply expectant prayer:

Triune God,
We long for your Holy Spirit
to grace us—all together,
with love that overflows with knowledge and depth of insight,
so that we—together—can discern what is best,
and be—all together—pure and blameless on the day of Christ,
filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus,
for the praise and glory of God. Amen.

Theological Significance of Kenosis

Why is kenosis so important? Does it really capture the essence of the mind of Christ? If it is so important, why do we not find the same word (*ἐκένωσεν*) or its variations used in reference to Christ in any other places of the Scripture? An-

other complication: is kenosis relevant today? Doesn't the notion promote self-subservience that undermines our moral agency, especially for those who have been historically oppressed and marginalized as feminist and liberation theologians have pointed out?

Kenosis has profound significance in Christian theology. It refers to the very disposition of the triune God who is the communion of the Father, Son, and Spirit. *Perichoresis*, mutual interpenetration among the three trinitarian persons, is possible through the kenosis of each trinitarian person for the others. That is, God exists as communion and love through mutual kenosis. This observation indicates that kenosis is not only soteriological (*opera ad extra*) but also ontological; as love, God has the eternal disposition to make room for others. Daniel Migliore notes, "God is eternally disposed to create, to give and share life with others. The welcome to others that is rooted in the triune life of God spills over, so to speak, in the act of creation."³ For example, creation was a result of the kenosis of the triune God. Out of kenotic love, God graciously allowed all kinds of creatures, humans in particular, to exist alongside God, and grow and thrive in God's love. Therefore, kenosis is not an isolated incident in Jesus' incarnation but a key to the mystery of God as communion and of God's economy.⁴

Interestingly the word "accommodation" clarifies what we attempt to explicate here. To accommodate means (1) "to provide lodging or sufficient space for" and (2) "to fit in with the wishes or needs of." "Accommodation" positively describes how God's kenosis works in redeeming us creatures: Jesus emptied himself to accommodate us into the divine life; through his accommodation, Jesus met our desperate need for healing and wholeness (salvation); he exchanged his goodness, bliss, and wholeness for our sin and brokenness so that we can now be reconciled with God. Athanasius summed up the salvific meaning of kenosis and accommodation in a shocking phrase: the Son of God became a human so that a human might become a god.

What Does the Kenotic Mind of Christ Mean for Us?

In this era of breakneck competition, a win-by-any-means-necessary attitude, growing litigation, self-assertion, and promotion, what does it mean to have the mind of Christ, specifically to be kenotic? Is it sensible at all?

Kenosis may sound counterintuitive (even self-defeating) to many ears because it is antithetical to the grain of our cultural ethos that glorifies material possession, self-assertion, and power. A kenotic attitude may look to contemporary competitive minds like being defeatist or servile. However, one should not take kenosis as a sign of weakness because it is actually a demonstration of inner spiritual strength. Kenosis is the para-

doxical form of power that God uses in saving and bringing *shalom* (*koinonia* of all life) to the world. Kenosis tells that God is powerful enough to give up his own privilege in order to empower others. God's kenotic love is therefore powerful, not powerless or sentimental. Paul preached that this kenotic power of God revealed on the cross is the true wisdom and salvific knowledge for the world (1 Cor 1:20). Because of its subversive nature, the idea of kenosis is very relevant to our common life.

Kenosis offers a critique of a current form of globalization and a common economic system that is driven by competition and profit motive alone; ruthless competitions are producing millions of displaced people, while concentrating inordinate amounts of wealth and power into a few powerful nations and multinational corporations. Many Christians are also dragged into this rat race. However, the message of kenosis teaches us that the way of Christ is to share our wealth and power, and the benefits of knowledge (especially technology) with others. It is the wisdom and witness of Scripture that such voluntary sharing and distribution ultimately serves the well-being of everyone. As Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett's book, *The Spirit Level*, attests,⁵ severe economic inequality undermines social trust and contributes to the breeding of various forms of social ills (obesity, juvenile crime, young pregnancy, even physical and mental illness) that undermine the well-being of every member of a society—both rich and poor.

The attitude of kenosis is urgently needed to address our ecological crisis. As Christ did, we need to restrain our privilege and power as a dominant species and realize the need to share the planet with other creatures for their survival and thriving. Our planet has been brutalized by our reckless consumption and ruthless exploitation, so other species are losing their habitats as the result of human aggression and violence. Kenosis tells us that we cannot be anthropocentric any longer. We should remember that the mind of Christ is the mind of the Creator; God cares for the lilies of the field and the birds of the air (Matt 6:26). Bearing the image of God, humans are called to reflect God's compassion, humility, and care for every life, especially the vulnerable ones. To be kenotic in this context means that we must live within our own means and limits in respect of the boundaries and rights of other species, sharing the space and precious resources with them. It should be noted that the Sabbath was designed for humans to exercise a regular practice of human self-restriction in order to render a relieving space to other species and the planet for their rest and restoration.

The idea of kenosis has a surprising social relevance at a time when numerous marriages and families are breaking down, communities are disintegrated, and relationships are turning into utilitarian contracts. People are hungry for long-term genuine relationships of trust and affection, and a com-

munity of good company. This thirst for belonging and genuine friendship cannot be quenched by money, instant sex, or power alone; it can be satisfied only by genuine love. Genuine love has a kenotic quality—the quality to go out of oneself in good will toward others. Only love with such a quality can nurture trust and friendship, and any society that denies adequate "space" for its members will be self-destructive. Today people are beginning to realize that privacy, tolerance, individualism, or self-assertion alone cannot build a community. Individual bricks alone cannot build a house; we need a mortar that holds bricks together. Likewise, a society is more than an aggregation of individuals. A society made of self-centered individuals will be a miserable, even dangerous, place to live no matter how advanced its technology, how great its accumulated information, or how powerful its military. Society and its institutions cannot be functional without a constant infusion to even a minimal degree of kenotic spirit among their members. To build a community, we need to move beyond individualism and invite others into our hearts through self-emptying.

The message of kenosis reminds us that the church is a community whose ruling ethos (mindset) and organizing logic is different from the world's. The church, as a colony of the kingdom, operates by the logic of love, not power. The church is the place where the rich share with the poor and the powerful empower the powerless. The church is *the accommodating and liberating space*—the space of life and love. As a new human life grows in the space of a mother's womb, all life is to live and thrive in the womb of the church. Therefore, the church should welcome and offer a space for all life, human and nonhuman, as Noah's ark did. By nature, the church of kenosis rejects all forms of domination—economic, racial, military, and religious. As the keepers of our brothers, sisters, and the earth, we should not be afraid to be the voice of the voiceless, especially those who are exploited and left behind in global competition—the poor, unemployed, displaced, along with other creatures.

How Can We Have This Mind?

How can a mortal human have this divine mind? How is kenosis possible for sinful human beings? The mind of Christ becomes ours only through the work of the Spirit. Our kenosis is possible when God's reign takes deep root in our own lives through the Spirit, and when our hearts are filled with thankfulness to God's love and conviction in the final victory of God. Kenosis is not duty. It cannot be coerced, and it should be voluntary as in the case of Jesus. Ironically, kenosis or self-emptying is the fruit of exocentric, overflowing love made possible through Christ. If kenosis is possible, then it should ultimately be a natural overflow of our lives in re-

sponse to God's love.

Kenosis is not a theory but a practice that emulates Christ's own life. Therefore, it takes time for a kenotic pattern to settle and mature in our hearts and minds. To have such a mindset, we need to grow in a network that exposes us to such living examples. Paul beseeched the Christians in Philippi to imitate the examples set by Timothy, Ephapadous, and Paul himself. Inspired by the exemplars around our lives, we may practice kenotic love starting with a small circle of friends, a church cell group, or our next-door neighbors.

Conclusion

Paul's message on the mind of Christ challenges our individualistic, self-centered, and materialistic lifestyle and cultural ethos. To have the mind of Christ is to reorient our life away from the mindset of the world toward caring for others and God's creation. To do so requires the transformation of our attitudes, values, and desires, namely, "the renewal of the mind" (Rom 12:2), including renunciation of our social privileges and powers.

To have the mind of Christ looks foolish to the world, but that is what the gospel is about. Today, to have this pattern of thought requires strong faith and courage because to be kenotic will turn out to be countercultural in many aspects.

Those who have the mind of Christ should even expect inevitable clashes with some prevailing social and cultural forces, just as Jesus and his followers did in their time. We may be ridiculed, humiliated, and even persecuted, but God's power will be more visible through our kenosis because kenosis is the mystery of God and God's power. It is a worthy risk to take because the poor, the future generations, and vulnerable creatures will find their breathing room in the space that we procure through our kenotic ministry in imitating Christ. TNN

ENDNOTES

1. "The mind of Christ" is a paraphrase of the Greek clause "ὁ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ" (lit.: "that was also in Christ Jesus"). In connection to the immediately preceding imperative ("Let the same mind be in you"), the paraphrase is not a stretch.
2. Notably, Paul's greeting in the opening of the letter was specifically addressed to bishops and deacons. Euodia and Syntyche, whom Paul beseeched to "agree in the Lord," are also believed to be female leaders of the church.
3. Daniel Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 101.
4. In fact, one finds a *kenotic* character in every trinitarian person—the *kenosis* of the Spirit in his hiddenness in the divine economy, surrendering his identity to be completely present in every creature in respect for its particularity; the *kenosis* of the Son in the abandonment of his glory and life in incarnation and crucifixion as we saw above; the *kenosis* of the Father in the surrendering of God's only begotten son and the generous outpouring of God's Spirit for humanity.
5. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why the Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009).



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Mission with the Mind of Christ

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Is the book of Philippians a significant read for missiologists? Some Bible interpreters claim that the epistle is not much concerned with mission.¹ But others say the “consciousness of mission . . . pervades Philippians.”² I agree with the latter that Philippians is a treasure trove for missiologists. The church in Philippi faced familiar issues in mission: (1) cross-cultural questions facing a Gentile church planted by a Jewish-background believer from Tarsus in a Greek city colonized by Rome; (2) witness in a multifaith context where the worship of Thracian, Syrian, Greco-Latin, and Egyptian gods and goddesses existed side by side with Jewish and Christian communities;³ and (3) discussions about best practices in mission. One of the text-segments that has received the most scholarly attention is Philippians 2:1–11, with its call to have the mind of Christ. It yields enormous riches to those who engage in ministry with other cultures and faiths.

Sociocultural Considerations

“Incarnational mission”⁴ is perhaps the most elaborate missiological theory drawn from Philippians 2:1–11. Jesus’ incarnation, self-emptying, and self-enslaving have deeply influenced missiologists in their research on crossing cultural barriers with the gospel. Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers, for example, based their advice to missionaries on Philippians 2:6–7, saying, “We must love the

people to whom we minister so much that we are willing to enter their culture as children, to learn how to speak as they speak, play as they play, eat what they eat, sleep where they sleep, study what they study.”⁵ Closely related to incarnational mission, Christian contextualization is another concept that missiologists have developed to ensure that “Jesus Christ, the Word, is authentically experienced in each and every human situation.”⁶ A. Scott Moreau defines it as “the process whereby Christians adapt the forms, content, and praxis of the Christian faith so as to communicate it to the minds and hearts of people with other cultural backgrounds. The goal is to make the Christian faith *as a whole*—not only the message but also the means of living the faith out in the local setting—understandable.”⁷ This self-giving attitude and sensitivity toward other cultures adopted by countless missionaries seem even more important at times of cultural, ethnic, and religious conflicts.

Sometimes, however, missiologists face the danger of over-using theories and stretching them too far. Expressing concerns over certain forms of incarnational ministries, J. Todd Billings writes, “When the gospel is reduced to identifying with others, the uniqueness of Christ’s incarnation becomes an afterthought.”⁸ Lamin Sanneh also underlines that a “context-sensitive approach should be responsive without being naive.”⁹ Both are right because every theory and concept we use in mission needs to be tested on an ongoing basis with biblical tools and with more recent theories from the variety of disciplines that enrich the field of missiology, which is by definition multidisciplinary. The biblical concept of incarnation and *kenosis* (self-emptying) will continue to attract missiologists as evidenced by a recent article by R. Daniel Shaw where he uses new analytical tools from cognitive studies to explore the incarnational model.¹⁰ And, concurrently, theologians of mission like Charles Van Engen will keep reminding us that theology of mission only emanates “in biblically informed and contextually appropriate missional action.”¹¹

A plethora of other concepts regarding the social mandate of mission have been drawn from our passage. They include

promoting social justice and bringing relief. Jonathan J. Bonk contends that “not personal ambition, but the needs of others, should be each Christian’s paramount concern (Phil 2:1–4).”¹² Integral mission and holistic mission, which are contributions of Latin American missiologists to cross-cultural ministries, also combine the proclamation of the gospel with social action.¹³ On another continent, Kosuke Koyama expresses similar thoughts when he writes, “How do you come to the people ‘ill-clad, buffeted and homeless’ unless you share that form too?” (i.e. the form of a servant, Phil 2:7).¹⁴ And in this list one cannot forget the liberation theologians who draw heavily upon the concept of incarnation and *kenosis*. As Alan Neely reports, they ask “what the incarnation of Jesus implied in a world beset with injustice, hatred, poverty, exploitation, premature death, and hopelessness.”¹⁵ They advocate for the poor and the oppressed based on Philippians 2:5–7, “according to which Jesus renounced the glory that was his and spent his energy as a slave.”¹⁶ It is evident that Philippians 2:1–11 deeply relates to those who cross sociocultural barriers with the gospel. As Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen posits, trinitarian doctrine of the Philippian hymn can affect human society and “the way we treat people.” He writes, “Christ gave himself for us in self-sacrificial love—we, in turn, are to seek the interests of others (Phil 2:1–11).”¹⁷

Christ’s Model

Embedded in the text-segment we explore is what seems to be one of the oldest surviving Christological hymns (Phil 2: 6–11).¹⁸ My goal here is not to discuss whether this “hymn” is pre-Pauline or not, or meant to be sung in the Philippi church, but what is relevant for this discussion is that this hymn provides a clear impulse for mission exemplified by Jesus Christ. Mission originates in the triune God. We are familiar with the statement peppering current missional writings: “Mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God. God is a missionary God.”¹⁹ Jesus Christ, fully divine and fully human, took the form of a *doulos* (servant). His *kenosis* is God’s chosen way to reach out to the world. Paul offers to the Philippians a Christ hymn almost like a mnemonic tool that propels them into mission, a “theology-in-action,” as ethnomusicologist Roberta King defines it.²⁰ Yes, hymns and confessions of faith are shaping mission! This is why the Lausanne Movement produced *The Lausanne Covenant*, followed by *The Manila Manifesto* and now *The Cape Town Commitment*.²¹ We cannot engage in mission without theologies that define mission, missional hermeneutics that identify best practices, and liturgies of mission that generate missionary worship.

This Christ hymn also sets the tone for Paul’s relation with other faith traditions. It reflects the DNA of Christian faith.

There is something unique about the way God is revealed in Jesus’ *kenosis*. So many Muslims have told me how they are both attracted to and puzzled by this self-giving characteristic of God in the Bible. Terry Muck reports how Maseo Abe attempted to develop the concept of “humble holiness,” making parallels between the Buddhist no-self concept and the *kenosis* passage: “in the end however, the selfless teachings of the New Testament do not approach the radical nature of the no-self doctrine of Buddhism.”²² The Christ hymn should make us as confident as the Philippians, whom Paul encouraged to be bold in their witness and share the good news with all. Paul did not shy away from preaching the gospel; he even ended up in prison as a result. But as we engage in interfaith witness adopting different approaches,²³ Philippians 2:1–11 also yields resources for attitudes that should undergird our witness to other faiths. Martha Frederiks’s reflection on “*kenosis* as a model for interreligious dialogue”²⁴ is an example of how this passage can be applied. She writes, “*kenosis* as the act of self-emptying does not demand surrender of one’s own identity,”²⁵ and adds, “the model of *kenosis* links up with a world-wide lived reality that Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, African traditional believers etc. perceive each other first of all as fellow human beings, as neighbors, friends, colleagues or relatives with whom they share the same ups and downs of life.”²⁶

The Christ hymn ends with the exaltation of Christ as *Kyrios* (Lord) (Phil 2:9–11). Coupled with Revelation 5:9 and 7:9, this concept of the universal Lordship of Christ has greatly motivated mission initiatives throughout history. The vision of people from every cultural and ethnic background confessing Christ and kneeling down in worship shaped missional concepts such as the “unreached people groups”²⁷ or motivated the translation of the Scriptures into every language. Today, Jesus Christ ruling over the cosmos is also influencing new initiatives in mission related to environmental issues. As we wrestle with complex soteriological issues and notions of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, we must keep in mind the vision of every knee bending and every tongue confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Mission Praxis

Philippians calls us to evaluate our attitudes and behaviors in mission as we follow in the footsteps of Christ. J. Verkuyl reminds us that “if study does not lead to participation, . . . missiology has lost her humble calling.”²⁸ And Orlando Costas adds that missiology “is fundamentally a praxeological phenomenon. It is a critical reflection that takes place in the praxis of mission.”²⁹ What does it mean to live in conformity with Christ? We know that the imitation of Christ has certain limits. There are aspects of Jesus’ self-giving and incarnation

that are unique to him and cannot be imitated. Jesus said to Peter, “Where I go, you cannot follow me now” (John 13:36 RSV). Paul (Phil 2:17; 3:15–17; 4:9), Timothy (Phil 2:19–27), and Epaphroditus (Phil 2:19–30) did not shy away, however, from following Christ, with the awareness that the kenosis passage contains references to the death and resurrection of Christ that no human being can imitate.

Philippians also addresses the quality of relations in mission. It is an interaction between church planter (Paul), co-workers (Timothy, Epaphroditus), fellow missionaries (with, at times, controversial mission strategies, Phil 1:15–17), and

A study of Philippians cannot ignore the notion of suffering for the sake of the gospel. Following Christ does not mean that we will never suffer, and we can certainly not hide this when we invite people to follow Jesus Christ (1 Pet 2:21). It is no accident that most dictionaries of mission have entries on “suffering” and “persecution.” Paul deeply wrestled with this question as do many missionaries who serve in contexts where following Christ can mean imprisonment or death. Even today, many students who attend Fuller come from local and global origins where resistance to the gospel is strong. Suffering for the sake of the gospel is not something new, but

how do we understand it? The problem that many have with the kenosis passage is that it has sometimes led missionaries to be passive in the face of suffering, violence, and victimization. I believe that the study of suffering cannot be disconnected from other themes that occur in this book, such as joy,³² exaltation, honor pertaining to self-giving practice, etc. Scott W. Sunquist draws from Philippians 2 to show how the “kenotic identity of Jesus Christ”³³ calls for a cruciform Christian journey. But he explains, “The cruciform life is not an end in itself. . . . Love is the motive, kenosis is the means, and transformation is the goal.”³⁴

Finally, this passage deals with the question of whether mission should be done from the vantage point of strength or weakness, a matter fraught with debate. We know that the lack of humility has sometimes led to arrogance and expansionism in global mission. Thus, the question of power is of great concern to missiologists, who adopted

theories such as “servant leadership” or “the upside-down kingdom.”³⁵ Referring to the kenotic example of Christ, Barth “argued that Jesus transformed worldly notions of power through his example of leader (power) through the self-emptying love of a servant to others.”³⁶ In African theologies, J. Levison and P. Pope-Levison explain, “Jesus is lord (or chief) because he humbled himself completely in service to the human community and to God, in both life and death (Phil 2:5–8).”³⁷ Thus it is not strange to relate mission with the notion of humility. Kosuke Koyama called the cross of Christ “the utter periphery,” and invited Christians to go like Paul to the periphery “in *imitatio* Christi.”³⁸ The periphery, he adds, is “without honour and prestige,”³⁹ but, “in the utter periphery where Jesus Christ is, a new possibility for all creation is

created,”⁴⁰ because this is where “Jesus Christ established his authority” (Phil 2:8–9).⁴¹

Conclusion

There is enough evidence in this article to support my earlier statement that Philippians has a lot to offer to mission. The scope of this article does not allow me to investigate in detail the theories and concepts here that beg for further elaboration and discussion in the missiological arena. Missiological interpretations of Philippians 2:1–11 should be challenged, we should collect more stories illustrating how believers have the mind of Christ in mission: This is not just an academic exercise. What better place than Fuller to practice having the mind of Christ in mission and to continue this conversation in partnership-friendship with the local and global church? **TNN**

Endnotes

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The mind of Christ: What on earth was Jesus thinking? Only rarely do the Gospel writers give us glimpses into his “mind.” For me the most significant moment of that sort is when John tells us what was actually in the mind of Christ as he stripped off, took a basin, water, and towel, and washed every foot of every disciple (including Judas). John tells us that Jesus, “knowing that he had come from God and was returning to God, got up from the meal . . .” It is easy to read a hidden “in spite of” into that sentence, but on the contrary, John intends a “because.” It was precisely because Jesus was utterly secure in his relationship with his Father, in his own identity, origin, and destiny, that he was the only person in the room free enough to do the slave’s job. The disciples? Too insecure in their status competition to do the servant thing. Insecure people don’t serve others for they don’t have the mind of Christ. The recipe for true humility is paradoxical. Exult in your status as a child of God by God’s grace. Once you have that piece of the mind of Christ, you have nothing to prove, nothing to lose. Nothing can be “beneath your dignity.” Serving others comes not only from imitating Christ, but also from thinking like Christ.

church members, who are called to have the same mind that was in Christ. G. Walter Hansen calls the epistle a “letter of friendship.” He lists ten friendship motives found in the book: “affection, partnership (*koinōnia*), unity of soul and spirit, like-mindedness, yokefellow, giving and receiving, common struggles and joy, absence/presence, virtue friendship and moral paradigm.”³⁰ As I discovered this list, I started dreaming of global and local relations in mission displaying these characteristics. We all know the challenges of global and local mission partnerships and how much effort is needed to strengthen and sustain them.³¹ Is it too much to ask that the concept of friendship be not only used in “friendship-evangelism,” but also to define the relationships between those who engage in mission?



Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen

Discerning the Mind of Christ in a Pluralistic World: Theological Education in a New Environment

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Just a few days before his death, the great Lutheran theologian of the past generation Paul Tillich is reported to have confessed that if he had the opportunity to rewrite his three-volume *Systematic Theology*, he would widely engage world religions in that project. This was due to his brief exposure at the end of his life to forms of Japanese Buddhism as well as influence from his famed Romanian religious studies colleague Mircea Eliade. The recent ecumenical document-in-the-making “Religious Plurality and Christian Self-Understanding” reminds us of the most prominent challenge the Christian church faces in the beginning of the third millennium:

Today Christians in almost all parts of the world live in religiously plural societies. Persistent plurality and its impact on their daily lives are forcing them to seek new and adequate ways of understanding and relating to peoples of other religious traditions. . . . All religious communities are being reshaped by new encounters and relationships. . . . There is greater awareness of the

interdependence of human life, and of the need to collaborate across religious barriers in dealing with the pressing problems of the world. All religious traditions, therefore, are challenged to contribute to the emergence of a global community that would live in mutual respect and peace.¹

It is now obvious to us even in the American context—and the situation is even more urgent in most European settings—that Christian faith can no longer be taken as the religion of the land. According to recent polls, more than one-quarter of Americans have changed their faith allegiance or confess no faith. Both religious diversity and pervasive secularism have transformed American and European cultures in dramatic ways. In the Global South, religious diversity is taken for granted and is a matter of fact in many areas; secularism fares much more poorly there. Consequently, “We do our theology from now on in the midst of many others ‘who are not . . . of this fold.’ Our own faith, if only we are aware of it, is a constantly renewed decision, taken in the knowledge that other faiths are readily available to us.”²

What kind of theological education would best prepare men and women to discern the mind of Christ in this kind of diverse, pluralistic, heterogeneous environment? What are the virtues, attitudes, and practices that would facilitate the vision of those who wish to engage the manifold ministries of Christ in the third millennium? Are there any theological hints about how to best think of the pedagogical task in the ministerial setting?

Paul’s christological hymn in the second chapter of Philippians follows a curious order of discussion. Contrary to the typical post-Enlightenment “from theory to practice” intuition—which, indeed, is here and there evident in the Pauline correspondence, such as in the structure of Romans 1–11 (teaching) and 12–16 (exhortation)—the apostle first lists virtues and practices that embody a Christlike lifestyle

of the faithful: unity, love, compassion, selflessness, humility, and so on. Only thereafter does he lift up Jesus Christ’s *kenosis* and sacrifice as the theological template. Obviously, the mind of Christ (v. 5), standing in the middle of the passage, has to do with both ends, so to speak: teaching and exhortation, belief and lifestyle, theory and practice. Let us imagine a diverse, dynamic, and multifarious vision of theological education in service of a similar ethos of ministry in our pluralistic world.

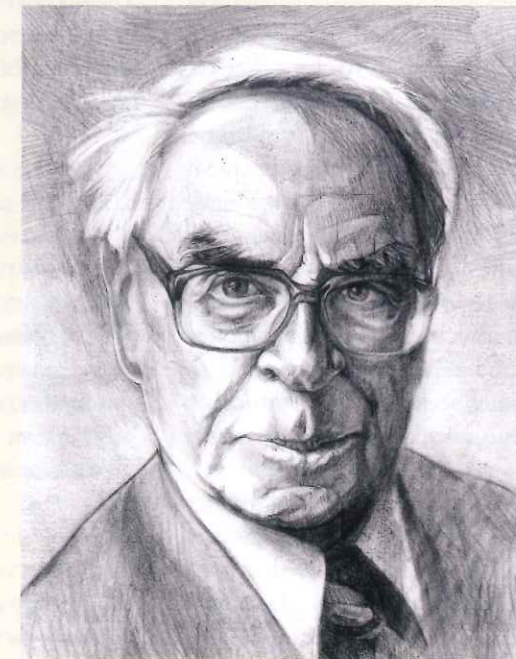
In a highly acclaimed and programmatic work titled *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Debate*,³ David H. Kelsey of Yale University outlines the underlying epistemology and theology of theological education using two cities as paradigms. “Athens” refers to the goals and methods of theological education that are derived from classical Greek philosophical educational methodology, *paideia*. The early church adopted and adapted this model. The primary goal of this form of education is the transformation of the individual. It is about character formation and learning—the ultimate goal of which is the knowledge of God rather than merely knowing about God. Being crafted, as it were, into the daily following of Christ, rather than mere book wisdom, was the goal of Christian adaptation of the “Athens” originally secular pedagogical vision. Personal development and spiritual formation stood at the forefront.

The second pole of Kelsey’s typology, “Berlin,” is based on the Enlightenment epistemology and ideals, which of course remind us of the (German) Enlightenment’s radically different vision. Whereas the classical model of “Athens” accepted the sacred texts as revelation containing the wisdom of God and not simply knowledge about God, in the “Berlin” model, critical reasoning and rational enquiry reign. The ultimate goal of theological training is no longer personal formation based on the study of authoritative texts. Rather, it aims at training people in intellectual affairs.

Are we left with these two models of *paideia*? Are they enough to equip theological students for the pluralistic world? Hardly. Elsewhere I have suggested that two other models could be added to the menu. Former Fuller faculty member Robert Banks’s “Jerusalem” model refers to the missionary impulse of the Christian church in its desire to spread the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). In

an important work titled *Revisiting Theological Education*, Banks argues that if Martin Kähler’s classic dictum “Mission is the Mother of Theology” is true, it means theology should be missional in orientation.

The ultimate goal and context of theological education should thus be missional, which, at the end of the day, fosters and energizes the church’s mission. It is, however, more than what is usually taken as “missiological” education as in the training of foreign missionaries: It is about theological education building the “foundation,” which is the mission of the church in all aspects of the church’s life and work. It is nothing less than “mission beyond the mission” to quote our own community’s motto. This missional orientation is of course in keeping with the current ecclesiological conviction according to which mission is not just one task given to the church among other tasks such as teaching or children’s



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work, but that the church is missional by its very nature, and thus, everything the church does derives from its missional nature.

Yet one further model can be added to complement, enrich, and challenge the theology of theological education. Named “Geneva” after the great center of the Reformation, this approach to theological education cherishes a confessional approach. It seeks to help students know God through the study of the creeds and the confessions, as well as the means of grace. Formation is focused on the living traditions of the

community. “Formation occurs through *in-formation* about the tradition and *en-culturation* within it.”⁴

But, to begin with the last, isn't the confessional model the least relevant of the four in a pluralistic world? Shouldn't one rather downplay any particular confessional standpoint in order to make room for diversity? Not necessarily—unless one wishes to go with what I call the “first-generation pluralism” that presupposes the similarity of all traditions as the condition for dialogue. Aiming at dialogue from that kind of modernist standpoint, however, is a contradiction in terms. Why dialogue when it has been established beforehand that differences and distinctive features do not matter? A dialogue only matters if it not only bears with but also facilitates genuine differences of convictions and unique testimonies. As the German Reformed theologian Jürgen Moltmann aptly puts it, a theologian only “merits dialogue” who is convinced of the truthfulness of a certain belief and deems it worth sharing with others. This has nothing to do with militant defeat of “the other” but rather with the desire to share a gift—a treasure! That kind of confessionally based, truthful dialogue also makes room for the other to *be* other. A powerful metaphor of this kind of encounter is that of “hospitality,” a concept well represented in the biblical canon as well as in various cultures. The above-cited ecumenical document “Religious Plurality and Christian Self-Understanding” reminds us that “in the New Testament, the incarnation of the Word of God is spoken of by St. Paul in terms of hospitality and of a life turned towards the ‘other’” (Phil 2:6–8).⁵ Borrowing from the biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann, we can make the term “other” a verb to remind us of the importance of not seeing the religious other as a counter-object but rather “the risky, demanding, dynamic process of relating to one that is not us.”⁶

Only the minister who is well established in his or her own tradition can learn how best to navigate a religiously plural and diverse environment—particularly when the rootage in tradition takes place in a community of faith that embraces the tradition and also gracefully critiques and revisions it. Personal development, character formation, and Christlike attitudes, cultivated by the patristic Athens model, offer great aid in that lifelong process. It is significant that for the first millennia or so the theologians of the church were bishops, evangelists, pastors, and other church leaders. Their theology emerged from and was shaped by daily practices of the community. To those theologians, the Jerusalem model's missional orientation was taken for granted. Liturgy, worship, prayer life, and sharing in spiritual exercises was missionally oriented, particularly before the Christendom establishment arose, but to various degrees also thereafter.

However, we live in a different kind of world in the post-Enlightenment pluralistic society. There is no harking back to

homogenous culture, shared values, and shared presuppositions. As a result, the Berlin model's robust emphasis on critical thinking, analytic assessment, and questioning of all “foundations”—as unsatisfactory and reductionist as it is in itself when made the sole source of theological training of ministers, as it tends to be in too many “secular” university-based theological faculties—provides a necessary asset to ministerial cultivation. The highest-level theological education for the third millennium has to be mature enough to live in the sometimes painful dynamic tension between affirming tradition and questioning its presuppositions, embracing the biblical authority and challenging our deepest hermeneutical assumptions, as well as retrieving the ancient sources and applying to their study the most recent critical tools. Religious plurality, along with philosophical, cultural, and ethnic diversity, is a highly complex and complicated phenomenon. To penetrate its intricacies in order to discern the mind of Christ takes the best intellectual, spiritual, and theological powers. Theological education for the pluralistic world had better draw its resources from all of these cities—and beyond. Perhaps then our students are ready for a deeply missional dialogue/dialogical mission in this complex world of ours:

Dialogue is a *basic way of life* because Christians share life and contexts with neighbours of other faiths. This implies that they establish dialogical relations so that there is hope of mutual understanding and fruitful co-existence in multi-religious and pluralistic societies. . . . Dialogue is no [*sic*] a substitute for mission or a hidden form of mission. Mission and dialogue are not identical, neither are they so opposed to one another. One can be committed to dialogue and to Christian witness at the same time.⁷ **TNN**

Endnotes

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Thriving through Submission

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In the context of discussing Thomas Aquinas's view of the incarnation, Gerald O'Collins writes that “the incarnation should also be recognized as the highest conceivable development for humanity” (2002, p. 17). If so, we may profitably wonder what features or properties of the incarnation contribute to or constitute “the highest conceivable development for humanity” such that we may strive to approach them and, hence, thrive. I will not attempt a full exploration of Christ's human characteristics that collectively epitomize thriving. Here I only argue that Philippians chapter 2 suggests one characteristic of human thriving that appears to be underappreciated in the psychological literature on thriving and in contemporary American culture: humble submission.

When considering what it is about Jesus Christ that made him the “highest conceivable development for humanity,” it is tempting to think in terms of extraordinary capacities or some genius that he possessed. Was it his wisdom as evinced in his teachings? His power over nature as when he calmed the sea, healed the sick, or raised the dead? Or perhaps his authority over evil spirits? Without necessarily denying those traits as part of our full human potential, Paul's letter to the Philippians encourages us, when trying to conform to Jesus' model, to look to an orientation rather than a capacity.

Paul explicitly teaches that we should imitate Christ's *mind*:

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. (Phil 2:5–7 NKJV)

The aspect of *mind* in question, however, is not his excellent analytical skills or empathetic abilities, but rather his mental attitude of humble submission before the Father. He “did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped” (NRSV) or held in possession, but rather, lowered himself in relation to the Father.

It seems that humbling or submitting before others is what Paul exhorts his readers to do as imitators of Christ. But to whom should they submit? The easy answer is God, and surely we should esteem ourselves as less than God and we should assume a humble posture before God. But such an answer is almost too easy—too easy because a simple, fair-minded appraisal of ourselves and of God will lead us to believe God is greater than we are. To appropriate James 2:19, even the demons believe that God is greater than they are—and tremble.

In addition to humble submission before God, we are called to humble submission toward each other. In support of this claim, I offer theological and biblical considerations. First, as my Fuller colleague Oliver Crisp observed (June 2013, personal communication), Christ's submission of himself to the Father was not a lesser being submitting to a greater being, but one divine person subordinating himself to another divine person. The Father and the Son share the same ontology. To maintain appropriate parallels, being likeminded with Christ is for us to humble ourselves before others of our own ontology: other humans.

Indeed, the initial verses of Philippians chapter 2 support this interpretation: that we are to humbly submit our own desires and priorities to those of other human beings. In this rich passage from Paul's epistle, Paul exhorts the Philippians to avoid selfishness, “esteem others better” than oneself (v. 3 NKJV), and look out “for the interests of others” (v. 4) and not just one's own interests. In this chapter, Christlike humble

submission appears as a key to unity in the church. But in addition to its happy consequence of unifying, submitting to others of one's own sort of being appears to be a marker of thriving as modeled by Jesus Christ.

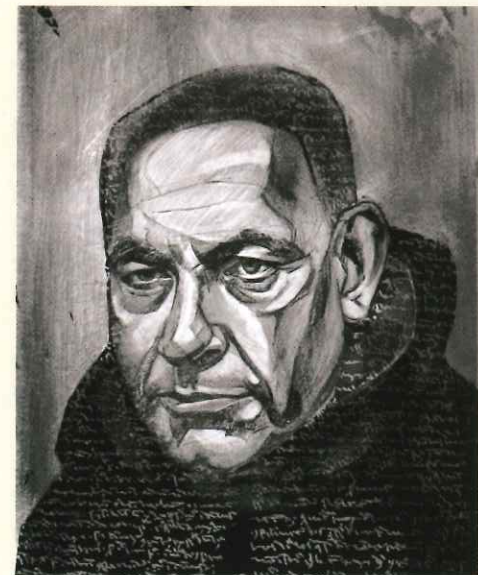
Assuming we are called to submit to one another, much could be said about what exactly this submission constitutes. To whom exactly should we submit, when should we exercise humility of this sort, and what precisely is the attitude to which we are called in these relationships? These questions are the subject of ongoing philosophical and psychological theological inquiry, and I dare not attempt to anticipate any broad conclusions here. What appears evident from biblical evidence is that there are times, places, and ways in which we should submit to parents (Exodus 20), spouses (Ephesians 5), political leaders (Hebrews 13), and each other in the church (Philippians 2).

It seems that the prominent theme of humble submission to others (in addition to God), though widely recurrent in Scripture, is relatively absent in popular or psychological discussions of thriving. For instance, evolutionary social

- **Harm/Care:** It is generally wrong to harm others and good to care for others, particularly of one's primary social group.
- **Fairness/Reciprocity:** Social exchange is governed by certain expectations of reciprocation that should not be violated. Equal contributors deserve equal benefit.
- **Purity/Sanctity:** Some objects, places, and actions can contaminate (positively or negatively) and must be specially treated or regulated. This foundation has particular importance in regulating sexual contact and the handling of sacred objects.
- **In-group/Loyalty:** One should be loyal to one's primary social group and not act against its best interests, particularly betraying those interests to an out-group.
- **Authority/Respect:** One should honor and respect those in authority positions including parents, elders, and leaders. To betray or disobey them is qualitatively different than betraying or disobeying just any other.

For my purposes here, of interest is the fact that the final two foundations involve submission to other humans. At its core, the loyalty foundation generates the intuition that one should "esteem others [as a collective group] better" than oneself. That is, one's own interests or ambitions should never trump one's in-group loyalty; one should never betray one's people for selfish ambition. Similarly, the authority foundation generates the intuition that submission to legitimate authorities is not just a convenience or useful thing to do, but is a moral imperative.

So, assuming Haidt is correct about these foundations, humans have psychological systems that encourage us to submit to others in humility. Of course, these intuitions or impulses are not always strong enough for us to override selfish ambitions and act in accordance with them, and our sociocultural environment may be an enemy of humble submission, too. Indeed, much of Haidt's recent fame comes from his analysis of how Americans, particularly politically "liberal" or "progressive" Americans, deviate from much of the world in terms of moral reasoning. Haidt has argued that large swaths of American society have neglected the development of moral reasoning around the three foundations of purity, loyalty, and authority. Purity is a quaint, irrational sentiment to protect old-fashioned mores and customs. Authority is not to be respected but challenged. Loyalty is regarded as a cover for racism, nationalism, xenophobia, and out-group abuse. Of



THOMAS AQUINAS

(1225–1274) was an Italian Dominican friar and priest, and the foremost medieval scholastic. He was a proponent of naturalism and the father of Thomism. Among his writings were the masterpieces the *Summa theologiae* and the *Summa contra Gentiles*.

psychologist Jonathan Haidt has famously argued that across cultures, moral reasoning is anchored by emotional-cognitive complexes called "moral foundations" that have evolved because of their adaptive utility in regulating social living (Haidt and Graham, 2007). These foundations generate intuitions about what is right or wrong that may or may not be culturally elaborated or codified. There are five primary moral foundations, according to Haidt's research:

the three actively and passively neglected moral foundations, two concern humble submission. For these reasons, those of us raised in much of America feel an immediate discomfort with the idea of submission to others. To God? Okay. To other people? No thanks.

Given this anti-submission milieu, it comes as little surprise that psychological research concerning the development of human thriving does not feature submission in any prominent way. One of the most prominent models of thriving, healthy development in young people is the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets. Of these 40 assets, which include 20 external features of a young person's environment and 20 internal features including values, competencies, and identity traits, none include submission to parents, teachers, or other authority figures, and no form of loyalty is clearly articulated. Under this model, it is possible for a young person to be regarded as "thriving" but not honoring one's parents or teachers beyond simply following the rules of living at home or going to school. Similarly, leading developmental psychologist Richard Lerner's "6 Cs" of thriving (competence, connection, character, caring, confidence, and contribution) does not explicitly list loyalty or submission to authority among the traits of a thriving individual. The 40 Assets and the 6 Cs are both rich models that include a number of important character strengths, virtues, values, and commitments, and both have theoretical space into which submission to others could be inserted. Particularly, both recognize the importance of social connections and that thriving takes place within systems of familial and community relationships, but neither develops the language of humility or submission.

The letter to the Philippians, then, provides impetus for reconsidering what constitutes human thriving in light of Jesus' example. As Jesus Christ is the pinnacle of human development, one way to approach thriving is to conform to Jesus' example. Presumably it was not his bipedalism (too broad) or situation as a first-century Jewish Palestinian male (too inaccessible) that we should aspire to imitate. The exact properties likely are numerous, and some may still require discovery. Nevertheless, Philippians chapter 2 presents one property we should hold, one way in which we should have the mind of Christ: an attitude and orientation of humble submission toward others. We are to submit to God, yes, but also to other individuals and others as a community. And, if evolutionary psychology is on the right track, humans naturally have intuitions that can be cultivated to support and encourage spirits of appropriate submission.

In contemporary psychological literature, "thriving" is

regarded as a developmental concept: a trajectory or a becoming rather than a destination. Previously I have suggested that thriving can be thought of as *the state of growing toward the being we are intended to be* (Barrett, 2013), and sought some guidance for unpacking what "we are intended to be" from our status as created in God's image. Christian theology provides additional resources for specifying the direction of the thriving trajectory, however, including a



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The mind of Christ is that powerful counterargument of the cross against my natural senses that exorcises the enmity that I have for my brother and sister and cures me of my addiction to self-worship. It's because of these things that I have a militant commitment to sacrifice truth on the altar of my needs and be wholly satisfied. But the gospel uncripples our

collective soul and finally allows us to be courageous—dangerously loving, radically generous, boldly creative . . . an unstoppable force for good, firmly rooted in the hope that one day, King Jesus, who emptied himself for me, will reign.

Christological approach to the question. If Jesus' life embodied the fullness of humanness in some critical respects, identifying those respects provides a key to thriving. In light of Philippians, this reasoning leads to a surprising conclusion for much of American culture. Thriving includes appropriate exercise of self-humbling before others: other individuals and sometimes one's community. To thrive—to grow toward what we are intended to be and all of the fruit that comes with that growth trajectory—requires humility and submission. It appears we must thrive through submission. TNN

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Lauralee Farrer

To Have the Mind of Christ? Start by Telling Stories

As president of Burning Heart Productions, **LAURALEE FARRER** was writer-director of the award-winning documentary *Laundry and Tosca*, feature-length documentary *The Fair Trade* (launch film for the *Film Baby*, Ryko, and Warner Brothers series “Powerful Films”), and award-winning feature narrative *Not That Funny*. Author of *Praying the Hours in Ordinary Life* (2010), she is in production on the *Praying the Hours* film series (2013–15). She is lead storyteller and senior editor for Fuller Theological Seminary, and artist in residence for Fuller’s Brehm Center for Worship, Theology, and the Arts.

There is a tale, undoubtedly tall, of Ernest Hemingway wading with drinking buddies at the Algonquin Hotel that he could write a novel in six words. On a cocktail napkin he penned the following and passed it around their boozy circle:

For sale: baby shoes. Never worn.

He won the bet. Whether or not this example of “flash fiction” is apocryphal does not matter here. It is a superb example of the power of a story told in lines shorter than a haiku. Here is another story, in ten words, written by seventeenth-century Japanese poet Mizuta Masahide:

The barn burned down.
Now I can see the moon.

These flashes of story connect us to their unnamed protagonists as instantly as pushing a plug into a wall socket. We feel we know them personally, we feel their pain, we commiserate with people we cannot see, we do not know, and who are, perhaps, imaginary. As a filmmaker, there is no greater satisfaction for me than when an audience member says, “that character in your story? That is *me*.” It means we have contact; an electric current is complete.

A beautiful example of this from the Christian faith is the scripture that Sunday school children love to memorize: *Jesus wept*. The virility of two sacred words, found in St. John’s ac-

count of the gospel (11:35), tells a remarkable story of the God who suffers because his creation suffers. Jesus grieved with his friends, even though he knew that he could alleviate their pain (and did). Embedded here, in these two words, is an insight into the mystery of the mind of Christ, and they tell of a God like no other—whose love is so invested, so one-with, that our heartbreaks are his. No wonder he wishes us to share with us his reconciling narrative. He means for us to commit as wholly as he has: love, we are told, in the commandments that are empowered by the resurrection, with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind.

Think of story as a conduit for love, as wiring is to electricity. If every human being is made in the image of God, then stories can connect us in a place more elemental than culture, gender, ethnicity, religious conviction, or age. They open a channel for love to flow to the Lord your God and to your neighbor and back again to yourself, completing the connection between all three.

Going Deep So that We May Go Wide

In the pages surrounding this article, scholars whom I admire greatly have given ample insight to Fuller’s new president Mark Labberton’s urging to “have the same mind.” At a graduate institution of learning, this is a bold challenge. Nevertheless, having the same mind, as Fuller scholars unpack it, is defined by the love of Christ, which extends to believers and to those outside the faith equally.

Fuller is known as a convening place of civil dialogue—a legacy from Richard J. Mouw, who served the institution as president for twenty years. It is a happily inherited task, to moderate civility between dialoguers who bring passion and, sometimes, contention to our table. (And it’s not necessary to look outside our walls to find such dialogues either.) This convening is an intercessory act. Fuller, in the form of her many community members, stands in the gap between sides to keep the circuit of human contact from becoming disconnected. To achieve that, the current must run through the conduit of ourselves, and so, comes at a cost. You have to be grounded to do

that without frying, but that’s what a graduate institution for learning is best at—going deep so that we can go wide.

How, otherwise, could Fuller sponsor conversations between Muslims and Christians, Jews and Christians, Mormons and Christians? LGBTIA Christians and Christians defending traditional marriage? Christians who are artists and Christians who consider the arts to be the devil’s playground? Catholics and Pentecostals and Presbyterians and Mennonites, Anglicans and Episcopalians, Jews—both Messianic and Orthodox—covenantals, egalitarians, inerranters, new earthers and Darwinians, African Americans, Koreans (both South and North), Hispanics, residents and citizens, green carders, Finnish speakers, a capellers and rockabilliers, hymnallers and contemporary Christian musicians. Take a deep breath: there are worlds of difference encompassed in the *et ceteras* implied above.

There is broad diversity in Fuller’s community. Those who study in her classrooms, who teach and preach and listen and argue, who administrate and who staff, who donate and trustee are the ones with whom, to make Paul’s joy complete, we are urged nearly 2,000 years after his pointed letter, to share the same mind, to be of one accord, and to love. For those of us at the physical campus in Pasadena, California, that “accord” is called upon very specifically every Wednesday at 10 a.m. in chapel, when we worship together in languages and musical styles both ancient and millennial. *Et cetera*.

The defense in this magazine for the Christlikeness of “having the same mind” is eloquent. Fuller scholars answer well, both in their knowledge and with their persons, the question of “whether.” What follows is two cents on the question of “how.”

Stories Create Readiness

Of late, storytelling as solution is on everyone’s lips, from fundraisers to politicians, from TEDtalks to pulpits. Watch an episode (or ten) of a show on fashion or food, and before long you will see a designer or a chef, hovering over a table of fabrics or of locally grown herbs, trying to ascertain “the story.” Why is story important? Why does the ability to think at a macro level about micro greens make one chef an artist instead of just a good cook? Should Christians give consideration to what appears to be the latest fad?

The prologue by editor Ernest Bates in his *The Bible: De-*

signed to Be Read as Living Literature (1936) eloquently points out that art (or for this purpose, story) is the raw material from which archeologists and historians reconstruct the past. Whether it’s pictographs on a cave wall, papyrus texts hidden in earthenware pots, or stories that survive for centuries by word of mouth, story through art is even the physical evidence of humanity that outlasts all others. Customs and mores, families and dynasties, laws and political movements emerge and disappear. Contadoras, Indian dancers, Wayang shadow puppets, scapegoats, African tribal elders dressed as evil spirits, music videos—every culture tells its stories, enacts its plays, sings its songs, cultivates its legends, poems, and metaphors. Story endures.



Masahide’s ten-word poem tells the story of illumination through tragedy.

Max De Pree, in *Leadership Is an Art* (2004), was ahead of the curve on story as it shapes and defines culture:

Every family, every college, every corporation, every institution needs tribal storytellers. The penalty for failing to listen is to lose one’s history, one’s historical context, one’s binding values. . . . without the continuity brought by custom, any group of people will begin to forget who they are. (p. 82)

De Pree brilliantly describes why it's important for story to flourish even in the least likely of atmospheres—the contemporary business institution. He suggests that storytelling is the means by which institutions can be renewed, by which they may avoid the terminal end of dehumanization and flourish in revitalization:

Institutions foster bureaucracy, the most superficial and fatuous of all relationships. Bureaucracy can level our gifts and our competence. Tribal storytellers, the tribes' elders, must insistently work at the process of corporate renewal. They must preserve and revitalize the values of the tribe. They nourish a scrutiny of corporate values that eradicates bureaucracy and sustains the individual. Constant renewal also readies us for the inevitable crises of corporate life. . . . Renewal is the concern of everyone, but it is the special province of the tribal storyteller. (pp. 91–92)

Giving prominence to story at Fuller is the direct result of influences in our history that run deep: De Pree's 40 years of leadership on the Board of Trustees, of William and Dee Brehm's visionary leadership in starting the Brehm Center for Worship, Theology, and the Arts, and, in our deepest DNA, all the way back to Charles E. Fuller's *Old Fashioned Revival Hour*. We are storytellers from our beginnings. No wonder story is the spark that illuminates our way forward.

Jesus defined storytelling as crucial to the educational mandate that Fuller bears because it prepares the ground for

discipleship:

The disciples came up to Jesus and asked, "Why do you tell stories?" Jesus replied, "You've been given insight into God's kingdom. You know how it works. Not everybody has this gift, this insight; it hasn't been given to them. Whenever someone has a ready heart for this, the insights and understandings flow freely. But if there is no readiness, any trace of receptivity soon disappears.

"That's why I tell stories: to create readiness, to nudge the people toward receptive insight. In their present state they can stare till doomsday and not see it, listen till they're blue in the face and not get it. . . . But you have God-blessed eyes—eyes that see! And God-blessed ears—ears that hear! A lot of people, prophets and humble believers among them, would have given anything to see what you are seeing, to hear what you are hearing, but never had the chance."

—Matthew 13:10–21, *The Message*

Stories allow you to say what cannot otherwise be said and, conversely, allow similar things to be heard. God himself chose poets, philosophers, dramatists, musicians, and prophets to tell the Holy Scriptures—storytellers who articulated divine mysteries beyond the scope of reason. Maybe it's possible to know God without story; nevertheless, story is the form God chose. Story is a way to pull life from the void, it is a word that creates.



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This is certainly not my mind! Ironically, this entire passage evokes determined rationalizations about why Paul cannot mean what he says here. By beckoning me to turn my life toward others in self-forgetful caring, he ignores my needs as well as my limitations. As for celebrating Christ's incarnation as a model of true humanity, I often choose to be more "realistic": Whenever possible, I shun the tenuousness of my life and of those I love, often driven by fearful awareness that our bodies remain subject to disease, sorrow, and myriad unspeakable evils.

Yet Paul is all too aware that my mind and indeed our collective imagination have become shackled, stunted by the avoidance of vulnerability so encouraged by our culture. How then can we

ever be free from the anxiety, self-conceit, violence, and competitiveness that dull the sensibilities of those defiant—or comprehending—of our embodiment?

Instead of reasoned argument, Paul turns our attention in poetic wonder to Christ's willing free-fall into flesh and reminds us that we, too, only find new life by trusting God's surprising, resolute resurrection of broken bodies. Thus joined in Christ, we become freed by God's fidelity to mere mortals to creatively love even our enemies with a self-denial that never denies our fragility.

The Distance Between Two Opposing Points

Recently, Fuller provost and Senior Vice President Doug McConnell recounted a non-fiction story (because all the best stories are true, whether they happened or not) about one of Fuller's current students. Born in Burma years ago, she remembers the night that government authorities burst into her home and arrested her father for the illegal activity of being a Christian pastor. For two years after that her family searched for him until, having located him in a concentration camp, she finally laid eyes on him again. All she wanted was to reach her little-girl hand through the two sets of chain-link that separated them and touch his finger. But they could not reach. Then, people on both sides gathered and leaned in on the fences. A simple act. Together, they bent the distance between the girl and her father enough to allow them to touch.

This is what story does, too—shortens the distance between those on opposite sides of two fences—in spite of a well-guarded perimeter between, patrolled by arrogance and injustice and hatred, rage and intolerance, and greed and evil. Story makes it so that the two sides can make contact, and the spark of love can jump.

I am in my fifth decade as an artist, and my own fiercely held opinions about the artist's life have cycled round and back again more than once. In this, Fuller could sponsor a dialogue between me and me. I once held a staunch view that the true artist considers nothing but the story's verisimilitude (I used words like "true artist" and "verisimilitude" back then). Let the audience squirm if it did not understand or approve! I cycled over to a more utilitarian view when I was trying to make a living as a filmmaker, and thought my previous view naïve, knowing that all savvy filmmakers are able to answer the question, "who is your audience?" I've swung back and forth and beyond those and other views many times in the last decades. Now I am looking down the tunnel of my last decades of storytelling, should God extend life, and I no longer think either of those things.

There was never an edict more perfect for—or countercultural to—today's artist than Paul's command to the Philippians (my paraphrase): *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard the audience as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests,*



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When Paul wrote his great words in Philippians 2:1–10, he wanted to set the "mind of Christ" leadership model before the leaders of the Philippian church. He probably had in mind the two leading, disagreeing sisters, Euodia and Syntyche, with whom he pleaded to "agree with each other in the Lord" (Phil 4:2–3).

I could not be happier or more comfortable about the future of Fuller Theological Seminary, especially

when the new president has chosen to make "the mind of Christ" the starting point of his leadership. What does the "mind of Christ" mean? How would it affect the life of Fuller?

- I. "The mind of Christ" creates a healthy, collegial spirit among leaders as they share the same love, the same spirit, and the same purpose, and as they keep themselves away from selfish ambition and competition (v. 3).
- II. "The mind of Christ" changes the attitude of leaders toward the ones they serve. Thus, instead of looking to their own interests, leaders should look to the interests of those whom they serve (vv. 3–4).
- III. "The mind of Christ" glorifies and pleases God since it is about fulfilling his will in complete obedience and submission (vv. 6–8).
- IV. "The mind of Christ" certainly leads the one who adopts it to receive honor and exaltation from God's hand (vv. 9–10).

but to the interests of your viewers (2:3).

Love, compassion, sympathy, joy, encouragement, humility: these are not words that describe the tortured artist I once identified with. Yet Paul is urging, in tones reminiscent of his first epistle to the Corinthians, that love is not rude, or proud, or impatient or unkind or easily angered. That love remembers gently that not everyone has been given the gift of insight into God's kingdom, and that story is the way we might create readiness, that the blind might be given sight and the deaf might hear. Making films in this way is more akin to working at Union Rescue Mission than at Disney Animation Studios.

A few years ago when a feature documentary of mine was screening at the Ashland Independent Film Festival, I was on a panel with about eight other documentary filmmakers in front of a packed audience. We answered a lot of questions, the last of which was to provide the one word or phrase that was at the heart of each filmmaker's work. That answer for me is "God," but I didn't want to appear to be mocking people who may no longer have a reference for that word. So, I prayed. The Scripture "God is love" came to me, and it struck me more as a name than a characteristic. So that's the name I

used. “You must have Love,” I answered, to see the story, to sustain you through making the film. Then you put Love into the film and you send it across the divide between you and the audience. If it works, the audience sees Love coming, and is stirred, receives Love from you, a stranger. We wave and smile. We ignore the film—which is just a vehicle anyway—and seize the moment together until it fades.

Unknown to me, in the audience at that panel was the festival’s lifetime achievement award winner and a father of documentary film, Albert Maysles. That night when he was giv-

which we have been invited. Later in Matthew’s passage where Jesus explains why he tells stories, the chapter ends with this report:

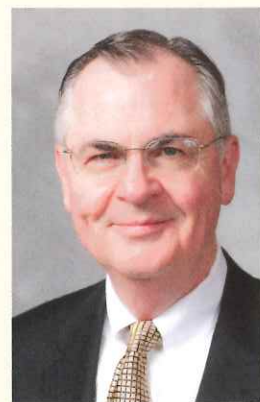
All Jesus did that day was tell stories—a long storytelling afternoon. His storytelling fulfilled the prophecy: I will open my mouth and tell stories; I will bring out into the open things hidden since the world’s first day.

—Matthew 13:34–35, *The Message*

The mystery, the mystery, the mystery! Film director Jane Campion said in a recent interview that she thinks inspiration is waiting for us to sit down at the keyboard long enough to receive the mystery that the Spirit is waiting to drop on us. Even more intriguing, in his book *The Jesus Way*, Eugene Peterson says that what God did in Genesis, he did not finish in Genesis, but he is still doing now. That God still hovers over the face of our waters, still creating the garden. Paraphrasing Isaiah, he says, “Did you think creation was over and done with when the mountains were carved, the rivers set flowing, and the Lebanon cedars planted? Did you think that salvation is only a date in the history books and some stories you heard from your grandparents? The Creator is still creating, here in Babylon! The savior is still saving!” (p. 165) That means a river of new stories, never ending.

Telling stories, to recap, is about corporate refreshment, about new creation, about mysteries old as the world’s first day. In addition to transitioning to a new presidential season, Fuller is imagining a new era in seminary education. We are surrounded by change; the continents are shifting. Things will be said that have not been revealed yet. The things that we thought were beyond us, the things we could not conceive of, the things steeped in mystery are the things that can only be revealed in those new places.

To borrow Rainer Maria Rilke’s imagery, now is the time to go to the depths of God where theologians, “like a thousand divers,” plunge until they are forced to return to the surface, only to dive again. What if gatherings of the community—whether dialogues, or inaugurations, or chapels, or study groups, or lunchtimes, or Fuller classes—were viewed not as a set of tedious hoops to clear or hours to kill, but occasions to dive into the mystery of God? To surface and dive and surface and dive and surface, sputtering and coughing to catch our breath—so that we might dive again? Countless stories would be pulled from the deep and brought to the surface to be shared, more stories than there are people to share them, every theme confessing, again as Paul urged, “that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” TNN



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If we are to begin to know the mind of Christ among us, we must learn to discern the difference between the mind of Christ and the spirit of this age. In addition to knowledge of sacred matters, we must become wise interpreters of the currents and fashions of modern culture.

As a historian, I am struck how often the church unknowingly has endorsed

cultural trends as the next expression of the mind of Christ. One can see this, over time, among orthodox as well as progressive Christians. Too often believers seem unaware of what is actually shaping the convictions they espouse. It often takes years, even centuries, for others to identify the real springs of these convictions.

I pray that, in discerning the mind of Christ for our own day, we will not become unknowingly captive to what C. S. Lewis called “the great cataract of nonsense that pours from the press and the microphone” of our own, or any, age.

ing an acceptance speech, Maysles threw away his notes and said the core of his 60 years of work had been articulated at a panel earlier that day. He said the heart of it all is love.

Things Hidden Since the First Day

Paul also tells us in Labberton’s chosen text that Jesus, though he was fully God, “did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.” This bold reminder not to forget the mystery is the strongest argument in favor of storytelling yet. Not to forget that God is above us, his thoughts and his ways beyond our understanding—in that reality is the abundant life into

LABBERTON

(Continued from page 7)

the world and the love that the people of God are meant to embody as a consequence. To be loved is to love. To be loved generously, extravagantly, self-sacrificially, wholly, personally is to receive the very gift that we are then meant to give away in kind. This is the theme for all our improvisations, the fugue upon which all our other harmonies are to sound; these are the notes that set off all the overtones that are to resound in the life of the world.

The resounding chord that has sounded through Christ is to establish the overtones of God’s people. It is a simple paradigm really, an elegant simplicity. It is an unadorned, straightforward, tangible reality. This is meant to be the thick, tangible reality of the church in the world. Ah, but we know in common and profound ways just how different and mangled and stuck such soundings can become.

Time to shake off the church’s slumber that abdicates love in the name of security, safety, homogeneity, stability, homeland security. The church, meant to be light, has opted for bushels of rationalization, policy, committees, and votes. So the crisis of the church in many ways is every bit as much a crisis of our own making as it is a crisis laid upon it from outside. We are the ones who have made the thick part thin by making the thin parts thick. So people suffering in the world, neighbors near and far, enemies real and imagined, people like us and not like us do not easily find the thick evidence of people who follow an enemy-loving God, who give themselves to ordinary acts of exceptionally genuine, self-giving love. What is often found instead is only thin evidence of a God of love and mercy and justice because often as God’s people, we have opted to offer only that. We represent a magnanimous God with our stingy hearts.

One way that this disjunction has become palpably apparent in recent months has been in the response of millions of people to the gestures of humility and simplicity, of love and grace that Pope Francis has shown. Why does it so obviously and immediately matter that Francis chooses, in apparently authentic acts, to lay down power and its trappings? Why does it seem so compelling—even to cynics and pundits? Because people live with an insatiable hunger for the real thing.

A seminary that takes all this seriously has to ask itself what work it is doing that enables the formation of pastors that, in turn, shapes communities of faith that become the evidence of God’s love—love that pierces cynicism. Or, to put it differently, trustworthy light, not just an advertisement for light. Or salt that intensifies thirst, not just slakes it.

Philippians 2 looks back at God’s love laid bare in the sacrificial love of Jesus, then turns to the future that is opened by the pronouncement of Jesus’ lordship, that is, by the affirma-

tion that the power that reigns in this kingdom is the power that gives life through loving sacrifice. In that order, faith will be evident in love.

So here is our wake-up call: Reformed and evangelical *sola gratia* that affirms our salvation comes in, by, through, and with Christ alone, is never meant to be a dividing line by which faith is separated from action and prioritized over and against action. Busyness we can sometimes specialize in, but integrated faithful action that lays down our lives in love—even for enemies—this is not the kind of discipleship seminars or churches typically encourage.

Philippians 2 calls us not only to faith that acts, but to faith that acts beyond self-interest. This is where the realism and idealism debates within the life of the church move us to hold up the most outlandish hope—that we can be set free to live beyond ourselves—and the most outlandish challenge: that we can be set free to live beyond ourselves. This is the place where we are to move visibly beyond the bounds of what Jesus said “even the Gentiles do,” to do what is meant to be the peculiar vocation of those who follow the One we call Lord. So where is the evidence of that love?

We could face this moment in seminary life thinking that the great crisis is about tuition, fees, funding, technology, or denominational decline, or culture wars, or global or economic tensions, or religious hostilities. All of those things matter. But according to Philippians 2, what matters is whether our love mirrors the One we claim to follow. That is what is first. Make what’s first primary. Make what’s primary pervasive.

Of course, it is little wonder we think more about tuition and fees and technology, and all the rest. The plainness of the call to self-sacrificing love naturally leads us to want to think of almost anything else. We can and must work on all kinds of other crises, issues, conundrums of this moment in seminary education. But what should be central is that we live and proclaim the Good News. This means the seminary academy has a crucial role to play in educating Christ’s church to walk in places of deep pain, to face and listen to and love enemies, to seek justice, to seek the prisoner, to heal the lame, to pay attention to the forgotten, to remember Sabbath, to live with freedom and joy.

At a moment when it might feel like the time to run toward doctrine, or toward institutional models, or toward constitutional reform, or towards other forms of power, the text of Philippians 2:1–11 takes us deeper. It holds the sum of Christian seminary education by naming the greatest and deepest of mysteries, and lifts before us the greatest and deepest of callings:

Remember what’s first.

Make what’s first primary.

Make what’s primary pervasive. TNN

"The next few pages will explain Fuller's plans for preparing generations of women and men to exercise their callings for the sake of the world."

SPECIAL SECTION: FULLER'S UPDATED CURRICULUM FOR THE FUTURE

Better Christians Better Leaders

The Fuller faculty recently approved the largest curricular change in the school's history. Pending accreditor approval, we are planning to offer a new version of the Master of Divinity (MDiv) starting in Fall 2014 and new versions of other master's degrees in Fall 2015. In the following pages, our faculty describe the changes that were created by a team of professors under the exemplary leadership of Dr. Love Sechrest. The purpose of this introduction is to explain the rationale for the changes—in short, we did it because we listened to our graduates.

Students coming to Fuller want to become better Christians and better leaders. We built the updated curriculum around the discipleship practices it takes to become better Christians and the leadership practices it takes to lead as Christians (this goes beyond "leading Christians" because many of our graduates lead outside the church). There are three discipleship practices: worship and prayer practices (reflecting our stance toward God); community practices (reflecting our stance toward one another); and mission practices (reflecting our stance toward the world). Every Christian aims to grow in these practices.

There are four leadership practices: interpretative practices (especially interpreting Scripture); theological practices (especially understanding theology and how theology interprets life); ministry practices (how to minister in God's name no matter where God plants you—not just as a pastor); and contextualization practices (how to connect your learning to specific cultures and contexts—including race, class, gender, and ethnicity). These three discipleship practices and four leadership practices interlock like threads of a fabric. We wove the curriculum out of these practices because our students tell us they want to be better Christians and better leaders.

Students come to Fuller because they want to answer the call of God. But they often do not arrive knowing how to

define that calling. So, we have built into the curriculum a required first course (called the Touchstone Course) that will help students understand the meaning of vocation, help them seek out their own vocation, investigate their gifts and deficits pertaining to that vocation, and help them make an educational plan to prepare them for that vocation.

Our graduates also asked us to be more explicit about integrative learning. They told us that they were happy with any particular course, but that they often had a hard time after graduating with integrating all the learning across the courses and using that learning in specific circumstances. So we created four required courses that emphasize integrative learning. The Touchstone course and one course on each of the discipleship practices will focus on integrating the curriculum.

And, finally, we listened to our students when they told us about accumulating too much debt. Supports that allowed students in the past to pay for their education have collapsed in recent years. Student debt is soaring—it has risen 50 percent among MDiv students in just three years. So we are easing the financial burden on students by reducing the number of units we require. We cannot saddle our graduates with so much debt that they cannot afford to exercise their vocations.

Why, then, did we change the curriculum? Because we listened to our graduates. We have focused on practices that make for better Christians and better leaders. We have highlighted vocation and built integrative courses. And we have eased the financial burden so that graduates can pursue those vocations.

The next few pages will explain more in depth how we are preparing generations of women and men to exercise their callings for the sake of the world.

—Scott Cormode
Academic Dean



Love L. Sechrest

Educating the Church for the World: New Models for Theological Education at Fuller

LOVE L. SECHREST, associate professor of New Testament, previously taught courses in New Testament at Duke Divinity School and courses in Christian leadership at the Graduate School at Trinity International University. A former aerospace industry executive, Sechrest is cochair of the African American Biblical Hermeneutics section in the Society of Biblical Literature, and gives presentations on race, ethnicity, and Christian thought in a variety of academic, business, and church contexts. She is the author of *A Former Jew: Paul and the Dialectics of Race* (2009). She chairs the Educational Models Task Force at Fuller.

A Reformation Moment

Predictions about upheavals in higher education are now frequently the stuff of headline news. While most focus on threats to campus-based education posed by online degrees, other forecasts warn about the collateral damage from an imminent student-debt-bubble-inspired economic crash. Challenges to the landscape of theological education from these sources loom even larger. How can theological educators shape students for Christian service in the absence of face-to-face contact? What happens to spiritual formation in the Internet age? Even more sobering are the financial considerations: How will students be able to serve freely if they are saddled with crushing student debt?

If one attends only to these challenges, one might think that the future of theological education is dismal indeed. Yet there was another time in the history of the church in which technological disruption drove massive changes to the way that churches organized the education and formation of leaders, laity, and congregational life. The Protestant Reformation was partially powered by the printing press inasmuch as it enabled the widespread distribution of Luther's translation of the Bible into the vernacular. The technological innovation and the social reconfigurations that emerged in its wake were unutterably painful and disruptive in the life of the church, but it is undeniable that these changes were also ulti-

mately good. These innovations resulted in greater literacy across society and profound advances in the formation of the laity, as ordinary Christians were now able to access the Word of God directly. Just as the church responded to the challenges and opportunities inherent in the printing press, so now must leaders in theological education capitalize on the opportunities being unveiled in this new period of church history. This new moment demands a model for formation that moves away from the credential as the *telos* of theological education and moves toward education as the theological grounding for missional life in any context.

Revising the Curriculum

In the Fall of 2012, Fuller provost Doug McConnell convened a team of faculty leaders from all three schools to develop a new model for theological education at Fuller. He appointed Mari Clements and Jim Furrow from the School of Psychology; Dean Scott Sunquist and Ryan Bolger from the School of Intercultural Studies; and David Downs, Daniel Kirk, Mark Labberton, and John Thompson from the School of Theology. Joining them were Joel Green from the Center for Advanced Theological Studies (CATS), and Scott Cormode and me from the Faculty Senate. Our mandate included a review of the pedagogies, course delivery methods, and curriculum for all Fuller master's degrees. Our process included a systematic review of the forces that are driving a reimagining of theological education in this new historical moment, as we considered changes in higher education, changes in culture, and changes in the churches.

In our research phase, we found that Clayton Christensen's work characterizing the effects of the Internet as a disruptive innovation challenged and inspired us, and helped us understand the implications of this innovative disruption for the world of theological education.¹ Christensen's work helped us to see the disruptive effects of the Internet as well as its latent missional possibilities. As a disruptive innova-

tion, the Internet increases *access* to education, making it more likely that students can *customize* their educational experiences so that their education is more directly applicable or *usable* with reference to achieving their career goals. We resolved that a curriculum for the twenty-first century would need to reflect these three key features.

First, *accessibility* is disruptive inasmuch as it lowers the institutional barriers to entry in education, as institutions no longer have to make the same kinds of investments in terms of faculty, libraries, and campus resources that Fuller has made historically. On the other hand, accessibility now makes possible a missional reach for an educational institu-

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tion that has never before been possible. At Fuller, we are beginning to explore models for delivering theological education for all Christians in parts of the globe that have never before been reachable. Second, students in the age of the Internet will be increasingly interested in a modularity that will allow them to *customize* their education, much the way that they customize applications (apps) on their iPhones and iPads, forsaking a one-size-fits-all schema of traditional approaches. Missionally, we believe that modularity can help us better tailor the seminary experience to student vocation and call. Third, with reference to *usability*, Christensen advises today’s educators to focus on helping students enhance their preparedness for the vicissitudes of the workplace. As educators at Fuller, we heard this as a reinforcement of our own convictions that a seminary education must always have the church in mind. In light of this, we decided to attend more closely to the growing perception among some of our

graduates and friends that theological education has become too insulated from the complex pressures of ministry in the increasingly diverse and globalized societies of the twenty-first century.

Responding to changes in the culture, we determined that the seminary would have to develop a curriculum sensitive to the rising problem of student debt and the way that debt hinders freedom in ministry. This debt is the only kind of household debt that continued to rise through the Great Recession, and has now become the consumer’s second largest balance after mortgage debt, approaching 1 trillion dollars nationwide in the fourth quarter of 2012.² The number of student borrowers increased 70 percent between 2004 and 2012, while balances likewise rose 70 percent over that period.³ Here at Fuller, student indebtedness is connected to the high cost of living in Southern California and is thus linked to extended graduation rates. Data shows that only 17 percent of Fuller Master of Divinity (MDiv) students finish their degree in three years and over 60 percent take four to six years to graduate. Perhaps the key problem underlying these statistics is the length of the Fuller MDiv degree. In a list of 28 comparable schools, we are tied for first place among seminaries in terms of number of units required for degrees.

The Updated Curriculum: “Educating the Church for the World”

The updated curriculum transforms theological education in North America for our new day, by reframing seminary education as a preparation for Christians and Christian leaders for lifelong learning. This new situation requires that we move from a model where we are primarily a credentialing institution toward a framework in which we see ourselves as offering theological grounding for living a missional life in a variety of contexts.

We seek to equip students for ministry without saddling them with crippling student debt. The new master’s degrees are about 17 percent shorter than the existing programs. We plan to reduce the MDiv from 144 units over three years to 120 units over three years, moving from being among schools with the longest degree to being among those schools like Princeton that offer shorter three-year degrees. Likewise, the MA in Theology (MAT), MA in Theology and Ministry (MATM), and the MA in Intercultural Studies (MAICS) will be reduced from 96 units over two years to 80 units over two years. New, more efficient “stackable” curriculum uses core courses in the MDiv curriculum as the basic courses for other Fuller master’s degrees and facilitates transfers from a certificate to an MA, and from an MA to the MDiv or vice versa, as a student learns more about his or her gifts and calling.

The updated curriculum emphasizes Christian formation of our students for the life and mission of the church. All Fuller master’s degrees and certificates will cultivate a theologically reflective practice of Christian discipleship, innovatively making explicit the connections between theological education and Christian life. The curriculum begins by helping students understand themselves in a new touchstone course that focuses on formation. Students will develop an understanding of spiritual formation in terms of their biography, their spiritual heritage, and the spiritual disciplines. The course also facilitates vocational discernment, psychological assessment of personal strengths and development needs, and cultivation of a theology of work and money. Students will leave that course with a customized educational plan that will align their Fuller education with their emerging sense of identity and calling. Next, helping students understand their places as followers of Christ, all Fuller students will take three multidisciplinary courses focused on the discipleship practices of worship, community, and mission. In these courses, modules from faculty across all three Fuller schools will help students connect cutting-edge scholarship in Christian doctrine and biblical interpretation with insights from psychology and the Christian ministry and missional disciplines using the latest pedagogies for adult learners.

The updated curriculum emphasizes usefulness by framing theological formation in terms of the basic disciplines of Christian life and ministry. Fuller’s four leadership practices of interpreting, theologizing, leading, and contextualizing house the traditional disciplines of theological education (i.e., Bible, theology, ministry, and mission) and remain the mainstays of a Fuller education. Together with the three discipleship practices of worship, community, and mission, these seven Christian activities define Fuller’s unique approach to theological education. The habits of integrated theological reflection cultivated in the worship, community, and mission courses will have a formative effect on students. After taking those courses, they will be constantly engaging the material in the traditional leadership courses that make up of the bulk of the curriculum in light of the methods they learned in the new discipleship courses.

The updated curriculum emphasizes flexibility and customization around student call and vocation. The new MDiv combines academic rigor with personal flexibility so that student choice influences about 50 percent of the degree. For example, the MDiv will include two options for the study of biblical languages. Students may choose a three-course option that introduces a new ministry-focused, Bible software-based approach to interpretation, or they may choose the five-course traditional approach to the study of biblical languages. In addition to four degree electives, MDiv stu-

dents also have ten limited electives: three in Bible, two in Theology, and five in Contextualizing. The MA in Theology (MAT) offers students maximum flexibility in designing an academically rigorous program of study through eight unlimited degree electives that will allow them to develop depth in a particular area of study. The updated curriculum also makes it possible for students to take courses in any of Fuller’s three schools: Theology (SOT), Intercultural Studies (SIS), or Psychology (SOP).⁴

The updated curriculum forms students to participate in God’s mission in the world as central to the church’s life, through a twin emphasis on both theology and mission. Unlike many programs that prioritize one over the other, the new collaboration between SIS and SOT offers students access to expertise from scholars in both theology and missiology to prepare them for missional ministry in the globalized world of the twenty-first century. Fuller students will study rapidly changing global issues and cutting-edge approaches to mission and evangelism, world religions, philosophy, culture, aesthetics, ethics, and human diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender. In other words, Fuller students will have an education that encourages them both to understand God and to participate in God’s mission.

In short, Fuller’s response to technological disruption and changes in the landscape of theological education attempts to blend the old with the new. We are steadfast in our resolve to deliver theological education in the Fuller tradition—education that is committed to the gospel, the worldwide evangelical movement, and in the best intellectual tradition of the church. Yet we need to apply this heritage to a new reformation moment that requires us to be accessible and affordable to any Christian. We need to be modular and flexible so that we are forming students in ways that comport with their gifts and callings. We need to provide an education that is usable and connected to the life of discipleship so that it empowers every student to participate in the global mission of God. In this curriculum, we are seeking to educate the church for the world. TNN

Endnotes

1. This discussion in this section is indebted to Clayton M. Christensen and Henry J. Eyring, *The Innovative University: Changing the DNA of Higher Education from the Inside Out* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011); see also Clayton M. Christensen, *The Innovator’s Dilemma* (New York: HarperCollins; Harvard Business Essentials, 2003).
2. Federal Reserve Bank of New York, “Household Debt and Credit Report,” 2012 Q4, <http://www.newyorkfed.org/householdcredit/2012-Q4/index.html> (accessed July 3, 2013).
3. Donghoon Lee, “Household Debt and Credit: Student Debt,” Federal Reserve Bank of New York, <http://www.newyorkfed.org/newsevents/mediaadvisory/2013/Lee022813.pdf> (accessed July 3, 2013).
4. Master’s students in SOT and SIS can take any nonclinical psychology course in SOP.



Ryan Bolger

Integrating the Concerns of the School of Intercultural Studies Throughout the Updated Curriculum

RYAN BOLGER joined the Fuller faculty in 2002 and is associate professor of church in contemporary culture in Fuller's School of Intercultural Studies. With his research focusing on the emerging and missional church movements, he teaches classes on contemporary culture, including postmodern and new media cultures, exploring the implications of these cultures for Christian witness.

What a privilege it was to serve with my colleagues from the School of Psychology (SOP) and the School of Theology (SOT) on the educational task force this last year. Our task was daunting: we were challenged to create an updated curriculum that addresses our changed context, and we were to design a flexible, accessible, and modular program that works for the four master's degrees across the two schools.

In our meetings, the School of Intercultural Studies (SIS) was welcomed into the Bible, theology, and ministry working groups, and SOT was welcomed into the contextualization working group. A driving question for our contextualization group, hosted by SIS, was, what must our students understand about the world in order to serve in God's mission? We identified all the courses that addressed our global context: Ethics, Philosophy, Globalization, Children at Risk, World Religions, Theology and Culture, Race/Ethnic Diversity, Evangelism, and Missional Churches. Such a configuration of professors and courses was a first at Fuller, and it created synergy across the two schools. All of us wanted to equip students to serve God's mission in the world, through all the various disciplines we represented. The conversations were challenging, because these issues really matter and they were worth bringing all of our energies to bear on the future curricula. In the end, we felt confident that the cultural training we designed would serve all Fuller students well.

Some of the driving questions on the task force were, what are our commonalities across the two schools? And what must remain as our distinctives? So many of the reasons why we

would need two different schools fifty-eight years ago now serve as compelling arguments for why we need to work together today. Rather than choosing electives in one school versus another, students must have access to philosophy and anthropology, church and mission, ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue, evangelism and service, ethics and development, church renewal and church planting, theory and praxis. They need it all to serve the mission of a global and multicultural church, and we divide their course options to their detriment and to our own.

Students require the insights from the two schools in regard to the core courses as well. All students need equally strong doses of Bible, History/Theology, Ministry, and Mission courses, and each student needs to know how to lead the church in its worship, discipleship, and mission practices. Moreover, our students need all these courses taught from a global, multicultural, holistic, and praxis-oriented perspective, and we cannot achieve these goals from one school alone. We must work together to train all students.

Each school retains its distinctives, however. SIS will continue to train those who plan to cross cultures and who will work in apostolic ways, initiating and leading new ministries outside traditional congregational structures. SOT will continue to train pastors of the church who will lead congregations in their day-to-day service to God's mission in the world. In addition, both schools will continue to train those students who see themselves as neither pastors or missionaries—those prophets and evangelists who serve in alternative spaces: homes, coffee shops, workplaces, or through media of various kinds.

In the end, SIS was unanimous in its support of the degree changes. Excited about new synergy with the other schools, yet celebrating the difference that makes us the School of Intercultural Studies. With renewed energy, we are confident that the updated curriculum moves us forward in training the next generation of workers to serve God's mission in the world. TNN



David J. Downs

Updated Curriculum: The Practice Courses

DAVID J. DOWNS joined the Fuller faculty in 2007 and is associate professor of New Testament studies. His research has focused on Pauline theology and on economic issues in the New Testament and early Christian literature. Downs and his wife, Jen, a doctor of infectious diseases and a clinical medical researcher, spend several months a year living in Mwanza, Tanzania.

Among the innovations in Fuller's newly revised degree programs in both the School of Theology and the School of Intercultural Studies is the development of what we have called "the Practice Courses." Three courses—provisionally titled "Practices of Worship and Prayer," "Practices of Christian Community," and "Practices of Mission"—will be required in the MAT, MATM, MAICS, and MDiv degrees. They will be also open to students in other degree programs and to those pursuing certificates. The introduction of these Practice Courses represents an important and exciting new aspect of the curriculum.

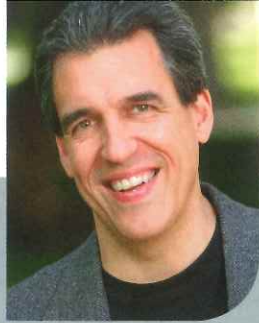
The idea for these courses emerged from reflection on two data points. First, graduates of Fuller Seminary have consistently reported that, while they value the knowledge that they acquired in seminary, they sometimes find it difficult to translate that knowledge into the practice of Christian faith or the work of ministry. Second, our graduates have regularly described their seminary experience in terms of disciplinary fragmentation. That is, classes in various academic disciplines often appear disconnected from one another, and the difficult burden for putting together the seemingly disparate pieces of seminary education falls squarely on the shoulders of our students.

In light of these two data points, we identified two questions that the Practice Courses are intended to answer. First, how can we envision our curriculum so that it is more useful for the practice of Christian faith and ministry? Second, how can we encourage students to integrate biblical, historical, theological, ethical, cross-cultural, missional, and psychological perspectives on Christian practice?

In considering the question of usefulness, we were challenged and encouraged by theological literature in the past twenty years that has pressed the relationship between Christian practices and pedagogical formation.¹ We are enthusiastic that the updated curriculum will continue in the tradition of providing excellent theological education by intentionally addressing matters of practice and formation. We hope that the Practice Courses will provide students resources for and models of embodied theological practice that will sustain them well beyond their coursework at Fuller. All of these courses will be organized according to a "praxis-theory-praxis" model of learning. That is, students and instructors will enter the course having already engaged in the practices around which the course is oriented, and some level of engagement will continue throughout the quarter. Students will then have opportunities to analyze and reflect upon their own practices and those of other traditions and cultures, critical theoretical reflection that engenders reshaped praxis and promotes habits of learning rooted in theology and action. As a sign of our commitment to a curriculum that is useful for the practice of Christian faith and ministry, we have approved a new Program Learning Outcome: "SOT/SIS graduates will have demonstrated capacities to cultivate a theologically reflective practice of Christian discipleship."

In considering the question of integration, we quickly realized that the struggle our students often face in putting the pieces together stems in part from the fact that we, as a faculty, do not generally model in our own teaching, research, and lives the kind of integration we expect our curriculum to produce. The Practice Courses attempt to address this problem in at least two ways. First, the Practice Courses will be interdisciplinary. They will be designed, resourced, taught, and overseen by faculty members from SOT, SIS, and SOP. Faculty members who teach these courses will, of necessity, regularly teach outside their own areas of academic specialization, thus modeling for students the kind of interdisciplinarity that we believe will reduce curricular fragmentation. Second, with at

(Continued on page 41)



James L. Furrow

School of Psychology Role in the Updated Curriculum

JAMES FURROW joined Fuller's faculty in 1995 and serves as Evelyn and Frank Freed Professor of Marital and Family Therapy and chair of the School of Psychology at Fuller's Department of Marriage and Family. With a background in marriage and family therapy, Furrow's research interests focus on couples therapy, interpersonal relationships, and positive youth development. Furrow has published articles in *Developmental Psychology*, *the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, *the Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, and *the Journal of Men's Studies*, among others. He is coauthor of *Becoming an Emotionally Focused Couple Therapist: The Workbook*, which is regarded as a primary training resource in the use of this empirically supported approach to couples therapy, and is codeveloper of the EFTzone, a training program in the EFT approach.

Changing an academic curriculum is often the work of insiders. Scholars steeped in their discipline tracking closely the evolving developments of their fields and designing curriculum accordingly. Recent changes in several of Fuller's core degrees, while tended with a similar focus and diligence, have also created new opportunities for the seminary's three schools to work together at focal areas of significant impact. As Fuller faces changing currents in theological education, School of Psychology faculty are embracing invitations to contribute to the seminary's urgent response. Two examples illustrate how SOP faculty are engaging their training and research to support the development of the changing master's and Master of Divinity curriculum.

Psychology faculty joined their School of Theology colleagues in the development of a touchstone course for students entering Master of Arts and Master of Divinity programs. The touchstone course explores critical issues of personal and professional formation for students preparing for ministry. Informed by their expertise in psychological assessment, a team of clinical psychology faculty including Mari Clements, Anne Nolty, Seong Park, and Steve Simpson are developing a personal assessment component that will help students highlight areas of personal strength and growth and their implications for future ministry practice.

These assessment exercises are designed to enhance a student's personal formation during their time at Fuller. Additional psychological testing and assessment resources are planned for students who may benefit from a more intensive level of support and focused resources. The course's focus on assessment and formation will leverage the expertise and skill of our psychology program to enhance student readiness for the emotional and relational demands of ministry.

School of Psychology faculty are also contributing their expertise to the development of seminarywide practice courses focused on worship, mission, and community. SOP faculty member Alexis Abernethy has been actively involved in collaborating with the Brehm Center for Worship, Theology, and the Arts. Her research and psychological insight into worship and spiritual formation illustrate the unique resources made possible through interdisciplinary collaboration. Dr. Abernethy sees her contributions to the worship practice course as an illustration of Fuller responding to a unique opportunity made possible by the demands of change. In her words, "There have been critical moments at Fuller when I have felt a deep commitment to three-school participation and leadership. It has been invaluable to see how a response to fiscal concerns and enrollment trends might provide an opportunity for creative and innovative course design. I have found the dialogue helped to sharpen and broaden my perspective on worship, providing insight for exercises and assignments that might deepen students' learning and formation."

Creating opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and course development impacts both the curriculum and the faculty involved. The process of developing these practice courses promotes unique opportunities to exchange perspectives from different fields of study and to explore innovative pedagogical approaches. Consequently these interdisciplinary efforts are proving essential in deepening both practical and scholarly contributions of our faculty to these essential aspects of Christian life, strengthening Fuller together from the inside out. **TNN**



Scott Cormode

Updated Curriculum: The Touchstone Course

SCOTT CORMODE is academic dean, responsible for implementing the updated curriculum described in these pages. He is also the Hugh De Pree Professor of Leadership Development—a chair established to develop leadership training programs within Fuller's School of Theology and Fuller's De Pree Leadership Center. Cormode founded the Academy of Religious Leadership for professors who teach leadership in seminaries, and, in 2001, created the *Journal of Religious Leadership*, for which he also acts as editor. He is also an ordained Presbyterian minister.

The first taste of a meal should make you hungry for more. We want theological education to be that way too. So we have created a course that every master's student will take in her first quarter. The course will introduce her to the flavors of the school and prepare her palate for the meal ahead.

When academics talk about education, they want a metaphor that is sturdier than the tastes of a meal. So they talk about constructing an education like it is a building. The Bible uses the same kind of metaphor when it talks about Jesus as the cornerstone and about how the stone that the builders rejected has now become the head of the corner. In like manner, we academics refer to an education using terms like a touchstone course. The touchstone is the foundation—literally, the stone that touches the ground. It is the stone on which everything else stands. If the touchstone is wrong (or if it is erratically laid), then the whole education is misaligned.

In the updated curriculum, every master's student will begin her course of study by taking what we have called simply the Touchstone Course. Structurally, the course goals are to engage the student in spiritual formation, theological reflection, and character formation. In other words, we want to start the student off by becoming closer to God, by understanding her world in spiritual terms, and by becoming a better person. Those are the larger goals. But how does a student spend her time in such a course? We have been prototyping the course for a few years now and here is what we do.

At the center of the course is the basic question that poets and philosophers in the West have chewed on for five hundred

years. It is the question of the human condition. The way I describe it to students is this: "What keeps people awake at night? That's your preaching and teaching agenda." At night, when a working mother falls into bed bone-tired, she does not go right to sleep. Instead, all the big questions that drive her life—the ones that she was too busy to think about during the rush of the day—come flooding into her mind. Issues about health, money, family, work, and justice. Those are the issues that drive a person's life. And if the gospel we bear does not envelope those issues, we are just making noise. And if the education that we construct for our students cannot bear the weight of those issues, then it will collapse in an embarrassed heap.

How then do we encounter the human condition? Through stories—stories of real human lives, and the stories that cement our culture. A century ago, when students wanted to experience the human condition, they may have read Shakespeare or Dickens. To access the most resonant stories in our culture, we may begin with a movie from Pixar studios. At the heart of every Pixar movie is a question of the human condition. For example, the first ten minutes of the movie *Up* detail in wordless pathos a couple's story. They meet, they marry, they live, they love, and eventually one of them dies—leaving the other alone. We use this sequence to teach students to look for the basic questions at the heart of the human condition: questions of longing and loss. The human aspirations and disappointments about the things that matter most in life—that is what drives our lives and what gives shape to this course.

How then do students learn to address the human condition? By weaving a response with stories. Specifically, I give them my definition of vision. A vision is a shared story of future hope. And our job as Christian leaders—whether a leader is standing in a pulpit or walking through a neighborhood in Nairobi, whether he is a youth minister or a businessman—our job is to listen to people's stories, especially their stories of longing and loss. And then I take your story and my story and weave it together with the biblical story to

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Joel B. Green

Updated Curriculum: What about Greek and Hebrew?

JOEL B. GREEN has been associate dean for Fuller's Center for Advanced Theological Studies since 2008 and professor of New Testament interpretation at Fuller since 2007. Prior to that, he served for ten years at Asbury Theological Seminary as professor of New Testament interpretation, as dean of the School of Theology, and as provost. A prolific author, he has written or edited more than 35 books, including several award-winning titles.

In my first two years of high school, a cadre of friends and I would climb into one of those yellow school buses on Saturdays in the spring and travel around West Texas to compete with other schools in a range of academic subjects. Three or four of us specialized in the slide rule—a linear mechanical device we used to make lightning-fast judgments on all sorts of increasingly complex mathematical problems. In our junior and senior years of high school, those mathematical marvels had been retired. The world of arithmetical computation was

“Should the way we prepare students for working with Scripture change on account of the increasing availability of tools that do so much of the heavy lifting for us?”

revolutionized when Radio Shack introduced a cheap version of a new contraption, the pocket calculator. And I remember debates among students, parents, and teachers about whether calculators would ever be allowed in the classroom. By the time my own kids were in high school, of course, the debate was no longer whether students could use calculators but why parents had to put up the cash for a graphing calculator, which was now not only allowed but required.

I think about those days sometimes—not so much in nostalgic remembrance of moving that slide this way, the

cursor that way, to solve an elaborate problem in trigonometry. Instead, I think about the analogy to working with biblical languages. What difference should it make to the way we prepare Christian leaders for working with biblical texts that we now have shelves full of commentaries that work with Greek and Hebrew, numerous lexical aids on which to draw, and Bible software on our computers? What difference does it make that I can access many of those tools from web-supported devices that I can wear on my belt and carry into an adult education class or into the local coffee shop? In the last couple of decades, the world of biblical study has been revolutionized. Should we continue to use slide rules? Will we allow graphing calculators? Should the way we prepare students for working with Scripture change on account of the increasing availability of tools that do so much of the heavy lifting for us?

When entering the office of a pastor or teacher, I invariably survey the books. And I find myself looking for the placement of this pastor's Greek New Testament, her copy of the Greek-English lexicon, and maybe even the companion Hebrew Bible and Hebrew-English lexicon. Most of the time, those books are present and accounted for, but they are across the room from her desk, and are older editions, versions of those texts current when she was in seminary. It is hard not to conclude that work in the original languages, required in seminary, has not been her constant companion since graduation. Can we prepare students for working with Scripture in the original languages in ways that actually make a difference long-term? Might the increased availability of language-based tools assist us in this work?

It is true, of course, that some of our students and graduates want and need advanced expertise in the biblical languages. Fuller Seminary has been and wants continually to be a school whose graduates contribute to biblical and theological scholarship at the highest level. Advanced work with the biblical languages for such people is simply a prerequisite, and Fuller Seminary will continue to provide language instruction that serves the church in this way.

It is also true that not all of our students are called to contribute to biblical and theological scholarship at the highest

level. What capacity for working with Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible is needed for the community worker in San Jose, California, or the pastor in San José, Costa Rica? For such Christian leaders, we are mapping an alternative route, one that accounts for the technological advances that are changing our lives in so many ways. Rather than asking them to devote long hours to flipping endless vocabulary cards and memorizing verb charts, we show them how they might immediately access that information and then how to use that information as they

work through a biblical text. The bottom line is that basic information about a term is readily available—number, case, and the like; what is needed, then, is instruction and practice around what to do, what exegetical judgments to make, once this information is in hand. Those students and graduates will be able to work easily with original language tools like Bible-study software, lexicons, and resources like the Word Biblical Commentary. And, we trust, they will continue to do so throughout their ministries. **TNN**

DOWNNS

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least one of these courses taken early in a student's curriculum, with one preferably taken in the middle, and with one taken near the end of a student's program, these Practice Courses will introduce students to ways of thinking about the various subfields in an interdisciplinary way at the beginning of their educational experience at Fuller. This integration will filter throughout the curriculum not merely in the other Practice Courses but, importantly, in the questions and learning expectations that students bring to other courses in other fields.

When it came time to identify the specific content of these Practice Courses, a basic structure readily presented itself: they would be orientated around practices of attending to God (“Practices of Worship and Prayer”), practices of attending to the community of God's people (“Practices of Christian Community”), and practices of attending to the world (“Practices of Mission”). It would be wrong, however, to think of these orientations as simply “upward, inward, and outward,” since they are deeply interrelated to one another. Authentic Christian community, for example, is never merely “inward,”

since it is sustained by prayer and worship and empowered for missional engagement with God's world. The trick in designing these courses, in fact, will be to make sure that they are similar enough to one another to be marked as courses on Christian practices but not so similar that they overlap to an unhelpful degree.

Much work remains to be done in order to begin offering these Practice Courses by the Fall Quarter of 2014. Interdisciplinary teams of faculty members from SOT, SIS, and SOP collaborated together this past May and June in order to craft draft course outlines for all three courses. The work of course design will continue well into the next academic year. But the Fuller Seminary faculty is excited about the work ahead because these Practice Courses are a bold and compelling feature of an updated curriculum that will position Fuller Theological Seminary to continue as a global leader in theological education in the twenty-first century. **TNN**

Endnotes

1. See, e.g., David I. Smith and James K. A. Smith, *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011); Dorothy C. Bass, ed., *Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010).

CORMODE

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create a shared story of future hope. And that is what drives the course. Each week's work is built around a case study where a person tells her or his story. And all the readings and lectures that week are designed to help the student weave a response. And by the end of the course, the student has a portfolio of responses to the questions that matter most in people's lives.

But that is not the only thing a student takes from the class. Education should prepare a student for her vocation. And each student builds in the class a specific plan of courses to take that allow her to prepare for her particular vocation. But

to do that she needs to know what her calling is. So we have built into the course a range of psychological testing and guided reflection that invites the student to understand herself well enough to plan a course of study that prepares her for her specific calling.

As you can see, there are many layers to this course, just as there are many stories in a building. The Touchstone Course creates a foundation for a student's education. It points her to the human condition. It teaches her to weave a biblical response to the basic questions of that dilemma. And it enables her to make a course plan that prepares her for a vocation that addresses the deepest needs of the human condition. But this course is only the first taste. When it ends, we hope the student is hungry for a meal. **TNN**

FULLER NEWS & NOTES

A selection of speeches by Fuller faculty and guests you may have missed. Expanded coverage and more at www.fuller.edu/tnn.

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The full text of the last chapel sermon given by Dr. Mouw as president of Fuller. Watch the video at <http://vimeo.com/67254451>.

45 CHAPEL LECTURE ON CREATION CARE: Matthew Sleeth

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The Just Peacemaking Initiative hosted a mini-conference on creation care this spring with Matthew Sleeth, MD. To listen to the chapel address, visit <http://vimeo.com/65317766>, or for Sleeth's public lecture, visit <http://vimeo.com/50694582>.

48 FACULTY PANEL DELVES INTO RACE, JUSTICE, AND PRIVILEGE

"Living with Unjust Legacies: Race, Justice, and Privilege"

Sponsored by the Hispanic Center, African American Church Studies Program, and Africana Student Association, this panel included Joy Moore, associate director of the African American Church Studies Program; Juan Martinez, associate provost for Diversity and International Programs; Mark Lau Branson, Homer L. Goddard Associate Professor of the Ministry of the Laity; Hak Joon Lee, professor of Theology and Ethics; and Love Sechrest, associate professor of New Testament.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE



COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS: Panel of Clinical and Community Leaders

"Facing the Crisis: Mental Illness and Gun Violence"

Hosted by Fuller and the National Alliance on Mental Illness. www.travisinstitute.org/facingthecrisis

INTEGRATION SYMPOSIUM: New York University's Marie Hoffman

"Speak to Me that I May Hear"

Looking at witnessing as a starting point for psychotherapy. <http://vimeo.com/59918190>

REEL SPIRITUALITY PIXAR FILM STUDY GUIDES: Kutter Callaway

Discussion aids from pastor/filmmaker Kutter Callaway allow audiences to explore these engaging, beloved stories more deeply. www.brehmcenter.com/initiatives/reelspirituality/film/study-guides

MISSION WEEK ADDRESS: School of Intercultural Studies Dean Scott Sunquist

"Earth Be Still"

Sunquist speaks of showing God's love to the world. <http://vimeo.com/63777597>

Richard J. Mouw

Here I Raise My Ebenezer:

Hitherto the Lord Hath Helped Us



RICHARD J. MOUW has returned to teaching in the position of Professor of Faith and Public Life after 20 years as president of Fuller Theological Seminary (1993–2013). A philosopher, scholar, and author, prior to his two decades as president he served as provost and senior vice president for four years, and as professor of Christian philosophy and ethics beginning in 1985.

I LOVE THAT PASSAGE from the New Revised Standard Version, but for my text for Samuel 7:12 I have to read from the King James Version:

"Then Samuel took a stone, and he set it between Mizpah and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

I love that King James Version for a couple of reasons. One is the reference in the hymn that I requested we sing at the end of the service—it's a family favorite. We sang it at our son- and daughter-in-law's wedding, we sang it at the baptisms of our grandchildren, our two grandsons were taught it, their mother sang it to them every night just before they went to sleep. In fact, one of the memorable moments for me was when William was about four years old and my son Dirk and I were driving and William was in the back seat. He loved to listen to music, and Dirk and I were talking and he kept interrupting, saying, "I want music! I want music!" Finally Dirk said, "William, Grandpa and I are trying to talk, but if you want music you make your own music." And with a defiant look on his face, his face went red, and he sang, "Here I raise my Ebenezer! Hitherto by thy help I've come!"

But I want to sing and I want to think of this today in a humbler mood. I also like the "hitherto" word. The word "hither" is used in that hymn, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." I'm in a hitherto mood these days, and I was when I first became president—which is why I chose this text for my first chapel talk as president. I'm not going to dwell on my own "hitherto-ness" today, because this great text is really telling a great story for all of us.

Israel was experiencing a revival of true worship. They had

repented of their worship of false gods. And now they were gathered at Mizpah to worship, but pretty nervous about the fact that the Philistines saw this as an opportunity to attack and they felt that a victory over Israel on this occasion would be a kind of slam dunk. They asked the prophet Samuel to engage in some ceremonial actions to protect Israel. As the Philistines approached, they were thrown into a great confusion because, it says, "The Lord spoke, he thundered with a loud voice." The Philistines were so panicked by the loud voice they heard that they fled, and the Israelites chased them and eroded them. After that victory of the Israelites over the Philistines, they once again gathered for worship, and it was at this service that Samuel raised up a stone and called it "Ebenezer": the stone of hope. When we sang that hymn at our first chapel service of my presidency, we sang a stupid version that somebody rewrote to get rid of the word Ebenezer, and Fred Davison and Ed Willmington know that must never happen again at Fuller Seminary! When we sing it later we're going to use that very word, "Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by thy help I've come." The stone of hope: Ebenezer. We can imagine the Philistines who *did* escape went back to their rulers and might have given another interpretation to the one that the text gives us, "The Lord thundered with a loud voice and the Philistines fled." It's very likely they said something like, "You know there was a storm brewing and there was a clap of thunder and we just panicked and we ran." Samuel has a very different interpretation. He says, "It was the Lord."

It often happens that key events are given very different interpretations. One of my favorite examples comes from Charles Dickens's *The Christmas Carol* when Scrooge, who incidentally is named Ebenezer Scrooge, is going home and sees the ghost of Marley on the door of his home. He acts like it isn't a big thing, and Marley says, "You don't believe in my existence?" Scrooge says, "No. You may be an undigested bit of beef, or a blot of mustard, or a crumb of cheese, or a fragment of under-done potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!" It's always possible to think up alternative interpretations of significant events, and that happens especially with the events that figure prominently in the redemptive history that is outlined for us in the Scriptures.

There's a wonderful little book written by Dutch theologian Cornelis Van Peursen—really some radio talks he gave—back

in 1969. I talked about this a few times during my presidency and I want to talk about it again today. The title is called *Him Again*. It begins by talking about the fact that the Lord called Abraham in Ur of Chaldees (he was named Abram at the time) and told him to go and seek a place that would be his inheritance. Abram obeyed, and the memory of that was passed down to future generations: Abram's encounter with the living God.

So, many years later, Jacob is at Bethel and he falls asleep with his head on a rock and he has a dream. The dream seems to be speaking something significant to him, and it's quite possible that someone would say to Jacob, "That was no big deal; it was just a dream, and if there's anything unusual or supernatural about it there are a lot of local nature gods there that were probably toying with your mind." But Jacob, with the eyes and ears of faith, says, "Surely the Lord is in this place; it's *him* again, the God who spoke to Abraham."

Later, when Israel is at the Red Sea, the Lord parts the sea and delivers them from the armies of Pharaoh and captivity in the land of Egypt. It's really quite possible that someone said to them, "That really was just a coincidence, an east wind came along." But the people of Israel, with the eyes and ears of faith, said, "No, no, no, it's *him* again."

Then they come to Sinai and there seems to be a devout, marvelous presence there, and Moses seems to be getting important messages from somewhere. People might say, "They're playing with your minds again, there are volcano deities in that place." And the people of faith, with the eyes and ears of faith, say, "No, no, no, it's *him* again."

Then a man appeared in Galilee teaching some significant things and performing what would look for all the world like miracles, and there were those in those days who said, "This is just a charlatan!" And others said, "No, he's one of the magic workers that regularly come along." Yet others said, "No, this may be Elijah returning from the dead." But those who had the eyes and ears of faith said, "No, no, no, it's *him* again."

Later Saul of Tarsus fell down while traveling to Damascus and he claimed to hear a voice calling him by name. He was blinded by what he saw, what he thought was a supernatural light, and he went from being a persecutor of the church to one of the great apostles of the church. Undoubtedly people at the time said, "Saul, you just had a complex oral and visual illusion." Paul said, "No, no, no, it's *him* again."

That's the kind of thing that happens in mystery novels. To go back to some real classics, in Agatha Christie's *Miss Marple*, there's a series of murders in the village, and the local constable looks at the fourth of those murders and says there is no connection between this one and the previous murders—there just happened to have been several unrelated homicides within a single month. There's no connection to these unrelated homicides. But Miss Marple, noticing something hanging on the wall and remembering something the butler said, points out:

"No, no, no, it's him again."

Our growth in Christ, and certainly our education here at Fuller Theological Seminary, means learning to read the clues in the manner of Miss Marple, and even more importantly in the manner of God's people in God's redemptive story. There are people who will say "I respect your beliefs, I admire your moral fervor, but as I see it religion is wish fulfillment, it's the projection of your deepest desires onto some imaginary supernatural plane." We say, because we have the eyes and ears of faith, "I see how you could think that, but it's *him* again." People say, "This seminary of yours has some nice people and some excellent scholarship, and it must be the diversity that attracts all of these students and an increasing awareness of globalization." With the ears and eyes of faith we respond, "All those things are very important, but there's something more important at Fuller Theological Seminary—it's *him* again."

Today, at the end of this academic year, this last chapel—and for some of us our last chapel experience at Fuller—it is important for us to say, "Hitherto has the Lord brought us, to raise our Ebenezers. By grace we have come thus far." I said earlier that the great redemptive events of history narrated to us in Scripture, the great events of the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, are subject to diverse interpretations, especially in the days of Dan Brown novels. The last time the unbelieving world saw Jesus of Nazareth he was, as far as they could see, hanging dead and defeated on a Roman cross. When they heard him cry out, "It is finished," they would have taken that dying sigh as an expression of despair and defeat. But for those of us who encounter that scene with the eyes and ears of faith we say, "No, no, no, it's *him* again." God was, in Christ, reconciling the world to himself—that's no defeated would-be Messiah, but it's the same one who spoke to Abram of old.

There will come a day, the Apostle John tells us in the opening verses in the book of Revelation, when someone will appear in the clouds and every eye will see him. On that occasion there will be no other alternative than the one we know we will say on that occasion, "It's *him* again." I hope that's your confession of faith today at the end of this academic year. Many of you face uncertainties, difficulties, trials, and challenges, but I hope you experience a reassuring presence. I hope you hear a voice whispering, "Fear not. I am with you." And sensing that presence and hearing that whisper, I hope you will be able to say with a confidence in the deep places of your being, "It's *him* again. Here I raise my Ebenezer. Hitherto has the Lord brought me." Sisters and brothers in the Lord, we are prone to wander, many of us feel that deeply, but we are debtors daily to God's grace that seals our hearts with the presence of the throne above, and seals our hearts for service through his kingdom. So as we go, may the blessings of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be and abide with each of us both now and evermore. Ebenezer! Amen. TNN

Matthew Sleeth

God at Work in the World

Honoring a Gospel That Is "Written in the Trees"



MATTHEW SLEETH, a medical doctor, is an author, speaker, and advocate of creation care. A former emergency room physician, he speaks often in churches, schools, and to the media about the biblical mandate to care for the Earth. Through his nonprofit organization, *Blessed Earth*, Sleeth released a 12-part creation care DVD series called *Serving God, Saving the Planet*. He is introduced here by Assistant Professor of New Testament Studies G. "Tommy" Givens.

GIVENS: Most of us are part of a theological as well as cultural tradition that is basically oblivious to the way that our life is sustained by soil and how our lives and bodies are related to the making of food practices that cultivate the earth over time with care. As a result, we've mostly treated natural resources of the earth as miners do. We go in, take it all away, and leave nothing behind for people who come after us. So it's my pleasure, as well as, I suppose, my sense of thankfulness that we have someone like Matthew Sleeth to speak to us today. Matthew has put together an organization called *Blessed Earth* that is committed to addressing some of these mining-like tendencies in our way of life, especially in the church. Matthew has an interesting story himself: he was once an emergency room doctor and it was his observation of systemic illness that afflicted patients coming in that made him want to address bigger problems of our health and culture. He is the author of several books that you will be able to see on the table when you leave. You should know that *Blessed Earth*, and Matthew in particular, have been part of putting together the Seminary Stewardship Alliance, and Fuller is one of a number of seminaries committed to each other to work accountably towards more sustainable practices in terms of infrastructure as well as what we're teaching. That is also something Matthew has had a hand in. Matthew is a regular preacher at the Washington National Cathedral, he has spoken and continues to speak in hundreds and hundreds of churches across the country. One of the things I think you will detect from him as you listen to him later this morning is that he has refused to give up on the church—especially on any of the evangelical movement—and that has meant refusing some of the political boundaries that keep Christians from working together on matters of creation care. So it is our pleasure to have Matthew

here to preach to us this morning. I trust he will bring a word that will challenge us all.

SLEETH: Why do I do what I do, and what brings me here? Because my background is not yours—I didn't go to seminary. As a matter of fact, my background with religion, as my daughter would say, is "a little sketchy." I grew up going to church because that's what I was made to do, I was thrown out of the Sunday school class, made to attend the men's group until they threw me out of that: I didn't have a great experience necessarily. I didn't have a great experience in school; I'm just going to freak you all out: I graduated third from the bottom of my high school class in an industrial program, with a 1.3 grade point average if you round up, can anyone beat that here? Is this building confidence in my intellectual abilities? Probably not.

I became a carpenter. I built houses and did remodeling work, because that's what you do if you graduate third from the bottom of your class in an industrial program. I was working on a home one day in a rather wealthy suburb, these folks were Jewish, and I was putting a gigantic bay window in with a crew. These folks had three daughters and one son. When their 18-year-old daughter and I saw each other their worst nightmare began to unfold. That's my wife, Nancy. Nancy and I decided to get married. We were very young; she was eighteen when I met her and we married a year and a half later. Her parents were horrified. I wasn't from their faith, that's what horrified them the most, as well as the fact I had graduated third from the bottom of my class. That sort of thing. We both were left with a really bitter taste in our mouth about religion and how it played itself out.

If you cannot be born Jewish and you are marrying into a Jewish family what's the next best thing to do? Go to medical school. I wanted to go to college, but nobody would let me in. I had an uncle who, through sheer nepotism, let me into West Virginia University. They made me a state resident, and so I went to a poison Ivy League school. I got into medical school after two and a half years of undergraduate school. I got into multiple medical schools, without an undergraduate degree. This is all to illustrate what happens if you are highly motivated and you marry my wife. I'm not sure this is reproducible. I

went through medical school, went through residency. Turns out I have a gift for trauma and emergency medicine. My wife and I had two children; I have a son and a daughter, who is two years younger.

We moved to the coast of Maine and set about what is really the predominate theology of our culture, which is to get ahead. So we built a perfect house, I rose in my work, became a chief of staff, head of our emergency department. We had absolutely no faith whatsoever. We did, however, have a lot of holidays. My kids, when the snow fell in December, and the fiddler on the roof slid down the chimney and saw his shadow, knew they were going to get a lot of gifts. That's just the kind of world we lived in.

Things changed for me—and I began to consider God, and what happens, why are we here—when I took my wife and children on vacation. We went and we stayed in Maine in February. Has anyone ever been to Maine? Has anyone ever been in February? Don't go until September or August—we went and stayed on an island on the Gulf of Mexico. The island had no roads or lights or street lights; it was beautiful. My kids ran around all day. I wanted them to be tired, so that Mrs. Sleeth and I could have a little one-on-one time, if you know what I mean. The kids' dinnertime came and bedtime came and the kids would not go to sleep, they were just wired like little tops. The frustration level grew in me to the point where eventually I gave them Dimetapp. It worked. Trust me, I'm a doctor. My kids went to sleep, my wife and I were out on this balcony. It's a turning point in my life. The breeze was blowing across the Gulf of Mexico, jet black, no street lights to ruin the effect of the stars, the Milky Way was out, the wind was blowing, the palm trees were rustling, the kids were drugged and in bed. My wife turned to me and said, "What do you think the biggest problem in the world is?" I thought for a moment. I know in retrospect that was the Lord speaking to me through my wife. I thought for a second and then said, "The world is dying." There are many things wrong with the world: there are 60,000 nuclear warheads ready to go off; something like 130 declared, official wars in the U.S. right now; there's great inequity of wealth, billions of people who will go to bed tonight hungry and without their dinner. But I said, "the world is dying." I said that not as a scientist but simply as someone who has been alive for half a century at that point. There are no elms on Elm Street, there are no chestnuts on Chestnut Street, there are no Caribou in Caribou, Maine. The Blue Point, which is the most numerous fish that's ever been harvested from the Great Lakes, went extinct after I graduated from high school. We are not talking spotted owls or small species, we're talking major die-off. I haven't met anyone in the last ten years of doing what I'm doing, regardless of their politics, education, or socioeconomic group, who believes we can continue these trends and business as usual for

100 years and that's going to turn out okay. I haven't met that person yet. So that's what I told my wife, "the world is dying." My wife then asked me a follow-up question, "What are you going to do about it?" I gave her Dimetapp then. I came back and went about my work of being an ER doctor, and it's good work. I love it; one could say it's biblical work.

Bad things began to happen in our life. One is that my wife's only brother drowned in front of my children. I had a patient who stalked me for quite some time, named a grunge band after me. Then he did something very scary, when he was stalking me an hour away from the hospital where I was moonlighting. I asked the police to check and when they did, they found his mother in a closet—she'd been there two weeks, killed. And that's just the stuff I talk about in public.

A lot of bad things began to happen. I began to wake up to the problem of evil in the world, and I began to connect that with the world that's dying, because the world that's dying is way bigger than one person dead in a closet or one person drowning. It's so big, it's so bad, it's hard to get your head around. And I went through a crisis because I was a rational humanist scientific thinker and that mindset has no way to deal with evil. There is no evil in the back of a physics book. There's none in the back of a statistics book.

So I went on a journey. I started reading and trying to find out and talk to people. I read the *Koran*, I read the *Book of Mormon*, the *Doctrine of Covenants*, the *Pearl of Great Price*, all kinds of things trying to find an answer to a world that is dying. I found many beautiful truths in my readings but I didn't find *the Truth*. *The Truth* came to me when I was working in the hospital, on a Sunday, and I walked down into a patient waiting room, and on the table there were magazines strewn everywhere: *People* magazine, *National Geographic*, *Women's Day*, that sort of thing. And there was a book, an orange book. I picked it up, I knew what it was right away: it was a Bible. I thought to myself, "I've never read this and we don't have one at our home." And we had a lot of books at our home. My wife is an English professor by trade and we are voracious readers, books grew like cancer in our house. So I looked at this Bible and I thought, "I don't have one at home; maybe I should read it." So I stole it. I took it home, I read the Gospels, I found the answer. What do we do about evil, what do we do about a world that is dying, the answer for me was Christ. I was particularly struck by Matthew 7. That's the "Judge not lest you be judged, whatever manner you use to judge someone else will be used to judge you" passage. It goes on to say, "Fool hypocrite, you want to get a speck of sawdust out of your neighbor's eye but meanwhile there's a two-by-four parked in your own eye." It was a carpentry joke written by a carpenter. I had been a carpenter. I got the joke. And it says get the two-by-four out of your own eye.

I went and did footprinting, because a lot of people talk

about being good to the planet but we don't actually know where we fit into that scheme of things. So I found out how much trash we make, how much energy we use, etc. Eventually I went to my wife and said, "we have to change our lifestyle." I suggested that I quit my job, follow this God that I believed in, sell our house and a lot of what we owned, and do you know what my wife said to me? I can't tell you. The good news is, not only did she go along with that harebrained scheme, but we moved to a house exactly the size of our garage—height, width, depth, everything. (Sound like a sacrifice? Ever seen a doctor's garage?)

The other really great thing was that I gave that same Bible to my son, along with *Mere Christianity*, and he became a follower of Christ. My wife became a follower of Christ. My daughter did—we're all on the same page now. We moved to that small house, we started going to a church, it was a wonderful church, it was a Baptist church. They had a wonderful prison ministry that took me to Central America where I practiced medicine for the first time without all the gizmos I had been used to. To say that it was conservative was to miss the point: they would not belong to the Southern Baptist Convention because they thought once you got on that slippery slope of liberalism the next thing you would have is world government. I was talking about planting trees near the church and one of the pastors said to me, "You know Matthew, you have the theology of a tree hugger," and that was not a compliment in this church. I thought about it and it hurt me. So many things in my life had changed, I had lost a lot of friends, they thought I was nuts, the books I read changed, the art I looked at I saw differently, so many things changed. I wondered if this green thing—that I feel this aching in my heart that there's a planet dying—is just something left over from my secular life.

The good news is that I ultimately don't have to pay attention to that pastor because I have a greater authority and that's the Bible, the Scripture. So what I did was to say, "Let me ask it the question." I read from Genesis to Revelation, underlining with an orange pencil everything where God said to care for creation, where God revealed himself through creation, where God tasked us with caring for it, etc. Why I didn't use a green pencil escapes me. (This, by the way, turned into *Harper's Green Bible*, which I worked on.) What I found was that my pastor was not really prepared to give me good direction on this whole tree-hugging business.

I am going to do something with you. (I only have a minute today, but I can do this with water, I can do it with animals, I can do it with soil.) How many of you have had a sermon on trees in the Bible? Not many. I frankly don't know how you can read the Bible without one, I don't know how you can interpret it. Because it's a symbol, if there's a tree, a bush, or vine on the page, it's symbolism. It's like our modern world with movies.

We use music to illustrate certain things and it just becomes a universal norm that everyone knows what the music stands for. So if you hear, "duh duh duh duh," what does that mean? Don't go in the water! Don't go in the basement if you hear any music like that! It's the same thing with the tree: how long does it take a tree to show up in the Bible? First page.

It's the first aesthetic designed because it's pleasing to God's eyes. The Bible tells history different than we'd want it or how we'd make movies. I don't know whether Abraham was tall or short, but I know the species of trees that he was sitting under when the angels came up. I don't know whether Deborah french-braided her hair or not when she held court, but I know the species of tree that she sat under. I have an idea of what Jonah looked like when he had his hissy fit, but I don't really know what he looked like. But *do* I know the species of tree that he was under when God taught him a lesson? How does the first Psalm begin? What is a righteous person like? A tree. A tree, a vine, a stick, a bush, is mentioned more times in the Bible than any living thing other than a human. It runs through there so thick you can't believe it. We read Revelation here, we saw what heaven looks like. What's God looking at in heaven? A tree. That tree of life is described as being so big that the roots go from one end of the river of life to the other. That's a big tree taking the whole output of the river—I think is what it's trying to tell us. Ancient rabbis said it would take 500 years to climb the tree. How did they know that? I don't know! But that's the image of heaven.

For a Christian, the big news is Jesus, right? Jesus is born and spends his first night surrounded by animals—that's why I like to do this with animals too—but he spends them there and his earthly stepfather works with what? I've heard stone, but that doesn't make any sense to the story. He works with trees! He's a carpenter! And he grows up, and this pattern is going to repeat itself. There's only one of Jesus' disciples who gives him any lip and gets away with it right from the get-go. Who is it? Bartholomew? Nathaniel? But we know he's under a tree! And that's where Christ hears his prayer. So this pattern continues. And Christ dies on what? A tree. Romans had all kinds of ways of killing you, we just study one because it's the most central to our history, but they had lots of ways of killing. Christ dies on a tree. We're told in the Old Testament, what is that tree? It is the tree of life, which Adam chainsawed down. And he dies on that tree and three days later Mary goes to the tomb, she turns and Christ is there. But she does not recognize him as such, what does she see him as? The gardener. This is not a mistake. My favorite painting by Rembrandt is of Christ as a gardener. He's got a big straw gardening hat, he has a shovel in his right hand—a digging tool in his right hand!—his feet are sunken in the grass, no mistake because he's come back as the new Adam!

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Faculty Panel Delves into Race, Justice, and Privilege

A crowd gathered in Payton 101 on Fuller's Pasadena Campus on April 4, 2013, to hear five of Fuller's professors speak on "Living with Unjust Legacies: Race, Privilege, and Justice." In what was the beginning of what they hope will be a series of conversations on race and justice at Fuller, the evening was sponsored by the Hispanic Center, African American Church Studies Program, and Africana Student Association. This first session was led by a panel moderated by Dr. Joy Moore.

JOY J. MOORE joined Fuller Theological Seminary as associate dean for African American Church Studies and assistant professor of preaching. Previously, she was at Duke University Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina, where she was associate dean for church relations and associate dean of Black church studies. Her research interests focus on contemporary culture and community formation.



WHILE WE'VE come together this evening to talk about unjust legacies, and we've come together to talk about the difficult conversation of race, privilege, and justice, I want to remind you that we don't come here as experts talking at you. We come together as brothers and sisters in Christ. Our gathering together is the expectation that we come knowing that if we can name sin by the power of the Holy Spirit, and we can

talk honestly about who we are and where we are, that together we can make a difference in the world. That's the task of the church.

Some people would like to say we live in a post-racial society. Well, you can't talk about being post-racial unless you first understand why we even call ourselves "racialized" in the first place. So, a bit of our conversation tonight will be difficult to hear. And I will tell you on behalf of the panelists, if it steps in your backyard or it steps on your toes, we're all Christian brothers and sisters here. Do not shoot the messenger. Our expectation is to learn together, to grow together, to walk together, so that when we leave this place we might be a glimpse of God's glory by being a counter-cultural community that is multiethnic, multicultural, but most of all, claims to be unashamedly and unapologetically Christian.

Our panelists are not merely talking about this in front of you. They're living it in their lives. So, with open hearts to the Spirit of God speaking among us, let us embrace their words that we might be transformed to transform the world.

JUAN MARTÍNEZ is associate provost for Diversity and International Programs and associate professor of Hispanic studies and pastoral leadership at Fuller. Dr. Martínez also serves as director of Fuller's Center for the Study of Hispanic Church and Community.



IF YOU GO TO the National Palace in Guatemala City, Guatemala, now called the Palace of Cultures, there are a whole lot of large murals that purport to tell the story of Guatemala in the official version. At the very center of all of these murals is a Spanish soldier in full gear and a scantily clad indigenous woman together. That's the official version of how Guatemala comes to be formed. In the background, you'll see a priest giving catechism, you'll see an indigenous person teaching the Spaniards how to plant corn, and, if you look really carefully, you'll actually see a battle way, way in the background.

Every culture, every society, has people who are privileged and people who are not, and those in privilege get to tell the story. They get to decide how we tell the story. The part you don't hear is when the National Palace was built by General Ubico, 3,900 indigenous people died in the process of building it. Basically they were slaves, and since there were plenty of slaves to become labor, if they died, you would replace them quickly. That part of the story doesn't get told: who actually built the building and under what circumstances.

Privilege is what's assumed by those who are in power. It's like water for fish. It's the things that you don't actually think about because that's just the way things are. In every society, it's different. It will look different in Guatemala and in Mexico than it will in the United States or Korea. But in European-influenced societies, the mass migration of Europeans to the world five centuries ago created a particular version of that, and a version that we live with today. Now the reality is that most people would never ask the question; that's just the way things are. Of course, if you're challenged on why things are that way, you can give all kinds of very rational explanations. Through most of the nineteenth-century American scientists could explain to you—and there are still some that will use these kinds of explanations

indirectly—why people of African descent are inferior to people of European descent. They could prove it scientifically. We have religious explanations. We are the people of God; we are the city on the hill; we are whatever. We can give all kinds of interesting reasons. I was just reading an article written by one of the new atheists explaining why Muslims are inferior to Europeans, so it doesn't even have to be religious. We have all kinds of ways of explaining why the world is the way it is.

One of the American myths is that we're all individuals and we all make it on our own, and that's why it's so hard to even have this conversation because I can't even acknowledge that as a group, as a socioeconomic class, as people that have certain common characteristics, some benefit and some do not. Because after all, it's all individual. So why is it that I finished fourth in my class in high school here in California, and counselors never told me about going to college. Everybody else in the top twenty or thirty—it was a small high school—who happened to have a slightly different skin hue and a different last name were told about college. Coincidence? Probably not. If I had asked, they would have told me (because I had heard it told about others) that at the end of the day, all Mexican kids are going to work in the fields anyway, why waste our time. So, that's the way the world is. I want us to think about privilege as the thing that we have and we don't think about, and that frames reality.

MARK LAU BRANSON is the Homer L. Goddard Professor of the Ministry of the Laity and has taught at Fuller since 2000. His most recent book is *Churches, Cultures, and Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities*, coauthored with Juan Martínez.



WE'RE ALL shaped inside stories. As we work with the theme of the evening, there are legacies that we live with. There are stories that are there before we get there. The Christian story was there before we got there. Our ethnic heritage, our family inheritance, these are stories that we are brought into, sometimes by birth, sometimes by migration in different ways, and occasionally by choice.

We're going to be in that narrative and we can't get out of that narrative. So how do we live in a world where that narrative is so powerfully dominant? What are the ways

that I counter it? What are the ways as a group of people that we counter it?

We, in fact, voluntarily participate in it by way of numerous personal habits, practices, feelings, and thinking. So, it's the same regarding the race narrative. The race narrative of the Americas was here before any of us got here. It was formed initially as an economic system—it's simply easier to keep people enslaved if they are easily identified, and that's the basis of what was going on earlier.

At times in class, I'll say race doesn't exist. Race is socially crafted. This is a social narrative that's made up. But that can too easily get misunderstood because obviously race is incredibly powerful—so how do we understand that narrative and what do we do with it? It doesn't work to ignore it. It doesn't work for me to say, I've got one Latino colleague and we wrote a book together. It doesn't even work to say I'm ordained in a Black church, so this is not a narrative that matters to me. It's still a narrative that has shaped the very privileges that I have lived with myself. I am married to an Asian American woman, who was born one year after they left China, so basically she was raised in an immigrant family. This helped me to start understanding that while our parents were both working class and basically the same economically, because I was inside a white narrative, we knew all the resources on how to make that work. She couldn't get music lessons, because her parents didn't know there were music instruments in the school. And on and on and on.

So the way privilege is funded—and I use that word broadly—it is about money, but privilege is also funded by relationships, it's funded by institutional habits (even those that are denied in official policies), it's funded simply by who knows whom when it's time for a job. Look at the current data on unemployment. It's not accidental. It's inside a narrative. And that narrative is still there even though all of us in this room don't buy that narrative as being good, right, just, or Christian.

When I was the dean of an African American Bible college, one of the ways that I woke up to the dynamics of this was when I found good textbooks and curriculum from African American publishers, and I just thought this was great stuff. But then I would get pushback from some of the African American adult students saying, "We don't want that. We want what the white students read. Because, Mark, we gotta make it inside their world." Now there are all kinds of things wrong with that conversation, but this was the dean waking up to the fact that there are different facets to what an education is for.

Everybody here has ways to be influential in your church, in your life, in your world. Everybody in this room has a chance to change this narrative.

HAK JOON LEE joined the faculty at Fuller Seminary in 2011 as professor of theology and ethics. He came to Fuller with 17 years of teaching experience at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, Drew University, and New York Theological Seminary.



I WILL BEGIN with my own narrative. When people find out I published two books on Martin Luther King, usually they assume that one of the books was the writing from my dissertation, which is not the case. Actually, I wrote my dissertation on Puritan Covenantal Ethics. This resonates with what Mark Branson told us. I, as a person of color, must first be in the main-

stream. That's the way you find your place in the game. So, you prove yourself first, then you secure your position there, then you move to the next step of your career, which can be the study of your own racial and ethnic history and ministry.

Second, the institution where I started my first teaching happened to be the oldest seminary and also it was a Reformed seminary, which fit well with my dissertation. But, at the same time, I found the majority of the student body were people of color, mostly African American. So, I had to serve their needs as well. There are reasons why I got to publish two books on Martin Luther King: one is responding to students' needs. Secondly, I can simply say it was divine revelation, which greatly enriched my teaching and spirituality. It was only two years ago that I published my first book in Korean. The point I'm trying to make is that to be a regular professor in an American institution, striving to have equal treatment and not be treated in any implicit sense as second-class, is a challenging toll. You have to prove yourself. So in my teaching, I happen to be, in a way, a multiple player. I can teach mainstream American ethics, I can teach African American ethics, and I am also able to teach the Korean side as well. I did it with joy and excitement, because I love to do theological engagement, but I'm sharing this because it reflects the story of my struggle for survival. In a way, many biblical figures had to also adjust to their own context. I'm not sharing this as a complaint, but it turned out to be such a rich blessing, because, in a sense, it helped me to understand what my calling is. A calling not just as in a partial or tangential way of understanding another community's history or ethics, but actually deeply engaging in their narratives and their deep thought forms and ideals, and thinking about what my community is and where my ethics and spiritual calling stand.

I believe that there is no cultural, post-racial society without undergoing interracial relationship, interracial engagement first. "Post-racial" can be such an easy way of forgetting the pains and untold story of the past history, and moving on to the next step. But, actually, to be genuinely post-racial we have to first go through the process of learning each others' history, including the pain and suffering of the other group. I think in many cases evangelicals are dropping the ball in this area, and I'd also like to name that as usually the privilege of those who have power—you don't have to learn other people's history or narrative for your own survival or thriving, but other groups have to learn all your history to be part of that game. That's exactly the bankruptcy of this idea of a post-racial society. I think it could play out in many different ways. For example, in the Los Angeles area, if you start a new church, will you as a pastor know and understand the history of other groups so you can genuinely build up mutual understanding and *koinonia* or will you simply wait for others to join your narrative? That's where all this conversation of multiculturalism stays today. Multiculturalism without intercultural engagement may end up in the Balkanization of our culture or an ongoing hegemony of a dominant group, which goes against our core ecclesiology. We are called to form one body of Christ, not the segregated body of different groups. How do we form one body without mutually learning others' history, others' pain?

I understand that building the body of Christ through inter-cultural learning is such a challenge for all of us, because many of us are busy. We barely manage work, family, study, and ministry. There is a pressure even in our seminary education that we don't know the history of other groups. . . . (continued online)

LOVE L. SECREST, associate professor of New Testament, joined Fuller's School of Theology faculty in 2006, after having taught courses in New Testament at Duke Divinity School and courses in Christian Leadership at the Graduate School at Trinity International University.



EVERY TIME I teach my race class, I learn a set of stories that I never knew before. I added a session on Asian Americans fairly recently, about three years ago, and I remember the first time we had Asian week, I had this amazing group of Asian students, where within five minutes of their group presentation, I just exhaled. The

first thing they did was play a game, "Guess the Ethnicity." Everybody in the room was frozen like, "We don't want to do that!" So, we played the game and everybody got it wrong, and then they said, "We got it wrong too when we played it amongst ourselves." This immediately started unwiring all of these stereotypes that we can know who you belong to by how you look. That was actually the first thing I learned when I started teaching my race class. People would come up to me and tell me their ethnic heritage and I'd think, wow, I would never have guessed that. It's because you can't tell by looking. As Mark just put it, race or even ethnicity is a construct. It actually has and still plays a useful role in society by helping us as a survival tactic. It's a framework for identifying friends and enemies really quickly. Because it works as a kind of survival technique, it shapes what you see.

Have you ever read a book on a new topic and it takes you forever to read it? I remember when I was in grad school and I read my first book on theological ethics, it took forever to get through, because there were whole new categories. Every word had a definition that I didn't know. I know you know that feeling. The second book you read, though, got easier, because you were constructing a framework. And then the third book, you're skimming it and then you're done. Ethnicity and race work that same way. They are to help us quickly assess who a friend or enemy is. But the problem is: imagine a sieve that has really big holes. Data that is true, if it doesn't get caught on your grid, falls through the cracks and you can't see it. So some information about the other, you can't see. You literally can't see. That's what's behind what happens when people say, "You know, black people don't do xyz," and then they look up at me, and they say, "Oh, I don't mean you." Because I don't fit their sieve. They say, "I don't see you as black," because I don't fit their scheme of what that is. That's kind of how perceptual lenses work, and it's one of the reasons why it's important to have conversations about privilege and what whiteness is. If you don't

have a framework for understanding the nature of this thing, you can't see it.

It is so uncomfortable for us to talk about race that the most typical response among the Christian community is to just avoid talking about it. Some of you have had this experience of being in a grocery store or somewhere and there will be a white woman and her child, and the child will say, "Mommy, look at her hair!" And probably that poor mother feels horrible, because from her perspective it's rude to point at someone's hair or someone's other kind of feature that is unusual. But is it? Which is better? To treat it as rude to notice my difference? I don't know about that. So, I think it is actually symptomatic of this desire to get past, to be in a post-racial society. We can't do that without forgetting our history, and history continues to affect who we are.

I think it is important to talk about privilege because of how difficult it is to talk about it in popular culture. I think it's important to talk about racism. I think it still exists. In the desire to be a post-racial society, so many want to deny that it is. It is only visible to the extent that we can talk about privilege. That really is the case, because in the popular imagination, when we say "racism" the images that come to mind are images of lynchings, fire hoses, and police brutality, and so on. . . . [So] we have this image of: "That's what a racist is, and I'm not a racist because I'm a Christian. I'm a good person." To be called a racist is a powerful and hurtful thing and I am not trying to hurt anybody, but I want to work with a better definition of what a racist is. . . . Whatever popular image you have of what a racist is. . . . [b]y and large, we've made that kind of thing socially unacceptable. . . . But, to talk about *privilege* helps us to expose the fact that there's this thing called institutional racism. . . . (continued online)


Entire panel available online at www.fuller.edu/TNN.

SLEETH

(Continued from page 47)

And the First Adam was given this instruction in Genesis 2:15: to tend and protect, to take care of the garden.

So what I'll leave you with, and I wish I had more time—invite me back, I can go on forever—is that right now the world is hungry for answers to this world-dying problem. I would like to urge you further that you are not meant to be environmental scientists. Nor are you meant to make people in the pews environmental scientists or distract them from their focus on Christ. You are meant to make them better Christians, and

that means making them better Christians where they are, whether better teachers, or manufacturers, or whatever. This is the trick for the church. I find more and more as I've traveled that there are people coming into the faith this way: I have someone who just started working for me recently, his father is the chief climatologist of New Jersey. He didn't grow up with any faith, but people are more and more putting this gospel-written-in-trees together. From a very practical standpoint, unless you can articulate this, you aren't going to be able to invite these people into salvation. That is the end of my sermon. I wish I had more time, but if you want the rest of the story just pick up a book on the way out. Thank you for having me. 

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Faces of Fuller **MIGNON R. JACOBS**

Mignon Jacobs grew up in the Caribbean, one of nine children who were all avid readers. “We read for hours,” she says, remembering fondly a younger sister who led a competition every summer to see who could read the most books. She learned to read the way children often do, by observing older siblings. Helping younger siblings to learn planted the seeds for teaching in her very early, she recalls. Learning and teaching have been part of every stage of her calling since—she even taught first and second grade while writing her dissertation.

A self-described “quiet” person, her deepest formation came from sitting and listening in the company of her mother and grandmothers, actively absorbing the natural wisdom they exchanged. “They are my greatest influence,” she insists. From them she learned “to value people and to care for those in need,” and she credits their legacy for her commitment to students’ learning and growing. “My love for learning and the skills for being a teacher grew as a direct result of those women,” she believes, fueling a passion to empower others and work toward spiritual and vocational formation of the students she continues to impact.

Mignon R. Jacobs is associate provost for accreditation and educational effectiveness at Fuller as well as associate professor of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Visit <http://fuller.edu/Academics/>

