

# Twenty-One Methods of Biblical Faith-Learning Integration

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper examines twenty-one methods of biblical faith-learning integration with the goal of providing faculty members with ways to mentor and disciple their students in biblical faith-learning integration. The paper begins with a look at the need for biblical faith-learning integration and examines some of the challenges. Key propositions are delineated, relying on Chewning (2001). The paper then sets forth twenty-one methods of biblical faith-learning integration, categorized by the extent and intentionality of the integration as natural, intentional, or strategic and by the focus of the integration as professor-, classroom-, program-, or student-centered.

**Key Words:** styles of biblical faith-learning integration, Biblical worldview, natural integration, intentional integration, strategic integration

## INTRODUCTION

The Fall 2001 edition of the *Journal of Biblical Integration in Business* contained an excellent article by one of the “patriarchs” of the Christian Business Faculty Association, Dr. Richard C. Chewning (2001), entitled “A Dozen Styles of Biblical Integration: Assimilating the Mind of Christ.” In this article, Dr. Chewning proposed twelve styles of Biblical integration, including examples of each:

1. Presuppositional assimilation/integration
2. Doctrinal assimilation/integration
3. Principles assimilated/integrated
4. Personality traits assimilated/integration
5. Wisdom literature assimilation/integration
6. Allegories assimilated/integrated
7. The “History Books” assimilated/integrated
8. “Selected Lenses” assimilated/integrated
9. “Answered Questions” assimilated/integrated
10. “Cherry-Picking” assimilation/integration
11. Paradigms assimilated/integrated
12. Discipline-specific integration/assimilation

Chewning’s article is foundational — and critically important to faculty members committed to the integration of faith and learning — but its focus is on styles of Biblical integration, not methods of Biblical integration. Faculty members may be committed to the concept of

Biblical integration, yet have a limited understanding of methods for doing so. And students are more likely to become competent in biblical faith-learning integration when faculty members with experience in biblical faith-learning integration mentor and guide them. This paper, therefore, examines twenty-one methods of biblical faith-learning integration. These methods are drawn from the author’s personal experience, experiences of colleagues, and the literature, and especially from articles published in the two journals of the Christian Business Faculty Association: the *Journal of Biblical Integration in Business (JBIB)* and the *Christian Business Academy Review (CBAR)*. The author’s personal experience includes having served full time in pastoral ministry, taught for more than 25 years at four different Christian institutions (two non-denominational and two denominationally affiliated) and one public institution, served as a chair or dean for fifteen years, developed curricula, and served as a commissioner and then a full-time executive of a business accreditation association. These experiences, along with more than 15 years of participation in Christian Business Faculty Association conferences, have allowed the author to observe many colleges and universities firsthand and to think deeply about biblical faith-learning integration.

The paper begins with a look at the need for biblical faith-learning integration then examines some of the challenges of biblical faith-learning integration. Key propositions are delineated, relying on Chewning (2001).

The paper then sets forth twenty-one methods of biblical faith-learning integration, categorized by the intentionality and extent of integration, described as natural integration, intentional integration, and strategic integration. These methods are further categorized by the focus of the integration, described as professor-centered integration, classroom-centered integration, program-centered integration, and student-centered integration. The resulting framework is shown in Figure 1.

This description and review of biblical methods of faith-learning integration should be helpful to Christian business faculty members in their journey toward effective integration. In addition, this paper may provide an impetus for the identification of additional methods which can then become part of the literature available to Christian business faculty.

### **THE NEED FOR BIBLICAL FAITH-LEARNING INTEGRATION**

Research by the Barna Group reveals a serious Biblical worldview gap. Barna (2009) defines a Biblical worldview as:

...believing that absolute moral truth exists; the Bible is totally accurate in all of the principles it teaches; Satan is considered to be a real being or force, not merely symbolic; a person cannot earn their way into Heaven by trying to be good or do good works; Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth; and God is the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the world who still rules the universe today. (n.p.)

Based on this definition, Barna (2009) found that only nine percent of American adults have a Biblical worldview. More importantly, Barna found that less than half of one percent of adults in the “Mosaic” generation — ages 18 to 23 — have a Biblical worldview. Given that this is the general age range of traditional college students, there appears to be a great need to inculcate a Biblical worldview in our students.

And yet, even inculcating a Biblical worldview in our students is not sufficient in that we are training students for careers in business. The goal is for our graduates to make a difference, both professionally and spiritually, in the world of organizations — for-profit, nonprofit, governmental, and ministry organizations. Thus our challenge as Christian business faculty is not only to help our students to assimilate a Biblical worldview, but also a Christian business worldview. While other departments

in our colleges and universities may promote a Biblical worldview, few will promote a Christian business worldview—thus it is extremely important for Christian business faculty to lead the way for their students in biblical faith-learning integration in business.

### **CHALLENGES OF BIBLICAL FAITH-LEARNING INTEGRATION**

The integration of faith and learning is essential to the mission of most Christian colleges and universities. biblical faith-learning integration is one of the key differentiating factors between Christian colleges and secular institutions; “the Christian college is distinctive in that the Christian faith can touch the entire range of life and learning to which a liberal education exposes students” (Holmes, 1987, p. 45).

As mentioned earlier, the author has taught at four Christian universities and has participated in accreditation reviews at many more. His observation is that an inaccurate assumption seems to be prevalent at many Christian colleges: that graduating from a Christian college produces an integrated person with a Biblical worldview. In other words, that the mere experience of attending a Christian college for four years brings about an integrated person. If a student attends classes taught by Christian professors, attends chapel services, participates in various extracurricular activities, and is influenced by living in close surroundings with other young Christians, then, somehow, by the time that student graduates, he or she will be an integrated person.

When stated this way, the assumption appears absurd. However, the fact is that such “accidental” integration sometimes actually occurs — just often enough to make people continue to hold to the assumption. On the whole, however, “accidental” integration fails miserably at producing integrated graduates. For most students, biblical faith-learning integration takes place with the guidance of committed Christian faculty members who are deliberately providing opportunities for integration. Smith and Johnson (1997) assert that integration never happens accidentally, easily, or passively. Biblical faith-learning integration is a challenge because it must be deliberate, and it takes a significant investment of time, effort, and thought. “If students are to learn that the Bible does speak to all areas of life...they will need to see it modeled before them in a continuous and intentional way” (p. 56).

Figure 1: Methods of Biblical Faith-Learning Integration

<i>Focus of Integration</i>	<b>Intentionality and Extent of Integration</b>		
	<b>Natural Integration</b>	<b>Intentional Integration</b>	<b>Strategic Integration</b>
<i>Professor-Centered Integration</i>	The Christian professor The Christian professor with a biblical world-view The Christian professor with a biblical world-view living a highly-integrated life		
<i>Classroom-Centered Integration</i>	Classroom prayer Random devotionals	Classroom prayer with devotionals keyed to course material Intentional integration of biblical perspectives into course material	Series of devotionals with a central theme linked to course materials
<i>Student-Centered Integration</i>	Student-led random class devotionals	Student-led class devotionals with links to course material Reflection on devotional material Class discussions Cases with Christian content or a Christian focus Biblical integration essays Spiritual/ethical exercises Service learning with spiritual reflection Mission trips with business/faith connections and spiritual reflection	End-of-program reflection papers Integrated reflection papers
<i>Program-Centered Integration</i>			Comprehensive spiritual curriculum Comprehensive spiritual curriculum integrated with course content

Another challenge of biblical faith-learning integration is that integration is more difficult in some subject areas than in others. Within the business curriculum, subjects such as management, marketing, ethics, and leadership readily provide opportunities for biblical faith-learning integration. Such opportunities may be more difficult to find in such subject areas as quantitative methods, statistics, and finance. Nevertheless, biblical faith-learning integration is important to all subject areas within business and requires the commitment of all business faculty members to succeed. If we believe, as did Luther and Wesley, in *sola scriptura* — that the Bible is our “all sufficient rule for faith and practice,” then we must also believe that the Bible contains principles that relate to every subject.

### KEY PROPOSITIONS

Before examining twenty-one methods of biblical faith-learning integration, it is important to revisit Chewning’s (2001) key propositions regarding biblical integration, as they are critical not only to the various styles of biblical integration, but are essential in any biblical faith-learning integration process. Chewning’s first proposition is that “integration requires the help of the Holy Spirit” (p. 114). Anything done out of our own strength as Christian business faculty is as “wood, hay, or straw” and will be “burned up” (1 Corinthians 3:12-15). As Chewning described:

Given the fact that Christian teachers cannot do anything to advance the kingdom of God in their teaching environment apart from the abiding presence, guidance, and help of the Holy Spirit, it behooves us to repeatedly seek the face of Christ in prayer. (p. 115)

Chewning’s second proposition is that the “mind of Christ is available to those whom He calls into teaching” (Chewning, 2001, p. 115). In 1 Corinthians 2:16 (NIV), Paul declares, “But we have the mind of Christ.” In making this statement, Paul was speaking of those who have obtained some measure of spiritual maturity (1 Corinthians 2:9-15). Chewning recommends that professors declare:

I believe that God desires to give me more of the mind of Christ. I will therefore go and ask Him to help me secure more of the mind of Christ, in the belief that He will honor my request because it is His will that His children have the mind of Christ.

Furthermore, I believe that to be especially true for those of us who are called to serve in Christian higher education. (p. 117).

For a faculty member to have confidence in his or her biblical integration, the belief that we can have the mind of Christ is essential.

The third proposition is that “integration requires cooperation between the Christian and the Holy Spirit” (Chewning, 2001, p. 118). The Christian life is a paradox: we can do nothing without Him (John 15:5), and He will do nothing without us — we are His hands (e.g., Acts 9:12-17; 28:28). God has called us to be His partners, which means that we must trust Him to work through us. As Chewning says:

Living by faith means, in this context, that we faithfully acknowledge our absolute dependence upon God, who both guides us and strengthens us for His work. And then we are to rise from our prayers and go forth and work as hard as we can, believing He is both present and enabling us to work for His good pleasure. (p. 118)

Biblical faith-learning integration is challenging work and cannot be done without the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

As academics, we tend to focus on the head — the mind. VanderVeen (1997) asserted that just thinking about biblical integration is insufficient; the goal is integrative behavior outside the classroom. Biblical faith-learning integration, therefore, requires also engaging the heart. Proverbs 3:5 tells us to “trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding...” We cannot just address the mind; our methods of integration need to get to students’ hearts. According to John Eldredge (2006) in the book, *Waking the Dead*, “The Bible sees the heart as the source of all creativity, courage, and conviction. It is the source of our faith, our hope, and of course, our love. It is the ‘wellspring of life’ within us (Proverbs 4:23), the very essence of our existence, the center of our being, the fount of our life” (p. 40). As Chewning (2001) says, “God is in the process of changing hearts — the repository of all our presuppositions” (p. 120).

### METHODS OF INTEGRATION

Biblical faith-learning integration can be accomplished in many ways. The twenty-one methods are categorized in two different ways. First is by the extent

and intentionality of the integration, described as natural, intentional, or strategic and secondly by the focus of the integration, described as professor-centered, classroom-centered, program-centered, or student centered.

### Natural Integration

Some integration happens naturally, without much deliberate intentionality. As will be discussed, such integration can be very effective; the fact that such integration happens naturally is a positive, not a negative. Some natural methods of integration can be especially effective in environments where intentional or strategic integration is challenging, such as in classroom settings on secular campuses. Of the twenty-one methods discussed in this paper, six are natural integration methods.

Three natural integration methods are professor-centered: (1) the Christian professor, (2) the Christian professor with a Biblical worldview, and (3) the Christian professor with a Biblical worldview living a highly integrated life. While these are presented as “methods,” it could be argued that these three represent “being” more than doing. Being a Christian, however, is an essential part of biblical faith-learning integration.

*The Christian Professor.* At a minimum, biblical faith-learning integration requires the presence of a Christian professor in the classroom. In practice, this is not as simple as it sounds. Finding qualified professors is not easy, and institutions have been known to be tempted to compromise spiritual standards in order to place an academically qualified professor in the classroom.

The mere presence of a Christian professor in the classroom has a positive impact. It provides a level of respect for the Christian faith and a safe place for Christian students to explore the relationship of their faith to the subject matter. If the professor does not have a reasonable working knowledge of the Bible or a solid Biblical worldview, however, the impact of that professor will be less than it otherwise could be. It is important for Christian faculty members to spend significant time in God’s Word (Chewning, 2001).

The presence of a Christian professor in a secular classroom can also have a positive impact. The author taught as a full-time business faculty member in a public university setting where explicit references to the Bible would be difficult to defend academically. Several times students who did not have a faith commitment came to the author’s office and communicated that they could tell that there was something different about the professor and

asked what that might be; these occasions provided an opportunity to share the Gospel with them. In addition, many Christian students discerned that their professor shared their Christian faith, which made it possible for them to consider the relationship of their faith to the subject matter.

*The Christian Professor with a Biblical Worldview.* Given Barna’s (2009) estimate that only nine percent of American adults have a Biblical worldview, the question of what percentage of Christian business faculty members have a Biblical worldview is a reasonable one to ask (and could make for a fascinating research study). It is probable that a professor with a Biblical worldview has, on the average, a better working knowledge of the Bible than a professor without a Biblical worldview. In part, Barna defined a Biblical worldview as “believing that absolute moral truth exists [and] the Bible is totally accurate in all of the principles it teaches” (Barna, 2009, n.p.). These beliefs are essential elements in Biblical integration; without a belief that the Bible is true, Biblical integration is nearly impossible.

The Christian professor with a Biblical worldview will integrate faith and learning naturally; his or her attitudes, behaviors, and words will often reflect that Biblical worldview. In the author’s own experience, this is true even when teaching in a secular institution where overt religious references are prohibited. Students still pick up on the Christian attitudes and behaviors of the professor. In some situations, opportunities arise to make explicit moral applications. For example, a Christian professor teaching at a public university encountered student teams price-fixing in a business simulation. This gave the professor the opportunity to discuss with the students that price-fixing is not only illegal, but morally wrong.

*The Christian Professor with a Biblical Worldview Living a Highly Integrated Life.* If the Christian professor with a Biblical worldview is living a highly-integrated life, the impact on his or her students is even greater. One of the challenges of the Christian life is avoiding hypocrisy, where a believer’s beliefs, words, and actions do not agree with each other. Students recognize hypocrisy quickly; therefore, the professor who is living a highly-integrated life is recognized as being beyond the norm. The professor provides students with powerful examples of the integration not only of faith and learning but of faith, learning, and living. For some students, it becomes an inspiration to them to live such a life.

For example, a Christian faculty member teaching at a secular institution was issued a terminal contract due to a lack of timely completion of a dissertation. This meant that the faculty member taught for 15 months knowing that he had been terminated. The faculty member chose to live out those 15 months with a positive attitude. In doing so, the faculty member's behavior was noticed not only by students but by other faculty members, and was an inspiration to many of them.

Two natural integration methods are classroom-centered: (1) classroom prayer and (2) random devotionals. Classroom-centered methods take place primarily in the classroom and are primarily instructor-driven. Unlike professor-centered methods, classroom-centered methods are active rather than passive; they require the professor to *do*, not just *be*.

**Classroom Prayer.** When an instructor opens a class session with prayer, several things happen. First, doing so communicates a Biblical worldview, in that it acknowledges that "God is the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the world who still rules the universe today," (Barna, 2009, n.p.). Secondly, it acknowledges that there is an Authority who has more power than either the professor or the students. If prayer requests are shared by students, it helps the students to look beyond their own needs to the needs of others. It also communicates that spiritual matters are relevant to the material being covered. All of these encourage the integration of faith and learning. In addition, opening a class session with prayer is an important classroom management technique in that it quiets the students down and gets them ready to learn. Classroom prayer, therefore, can be a significant natural method of biblical faith-learning integration.

**Random Devotionals.** If, in addition to prayer, the professor shares a short devotional with the class, further integration of faith and learning can take place, even if the devotional is random (in the sense that the devotion is not tied to the course material). Effort and preparation are required on the part of the professor to provide devotionals for each class session. Some professors minimize this by using a devotional book; others develop new devotionals for each class. Some rely on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to provide the right devotional for that day, so that the Holy Spirit can speak through them to the needs of students in the class. Students can learn valuable spiritual insights not only from the devotional material shared by the professor but by observing the process used by the professor to develop devotional material. Random

devotionals are an important natural method of biblical faith-learning integration.

One natural integration method — student-led random class devotionals — is student-centered. Professor-centered integration and classroom-centered integration depend primarily on the faculty; the students are more-or-less passive recipients or observers. For students to not only see integration modeled but to begin a lifelong process of biblical faith-learning integration, methods that involve students in integration are needed.

**Student-Led Random Class Devotionals.** Student-led class devotions may be voluntary or required; in either case, the professor typically uses a sign-up sheet to schedule the dates for each student to present. Devotionals are typically short — five minutes or less — and the choice of devotional material is left to the students. Because of the randomness of the devotionals, this is categorized as a natural integration method. The benefit of this method is student involvement; the drawback is that the biblical faith-learning integration varies considerably. If the professor provides feedback, the level of biblical faith-learning integration will normally increase over time as effective devotionals are noted and ways to improve devotionals are provided.

### Intentional Integration

Some integration is deliberate and planned; the faculty member is proactively thinking about integration and attempting to bring it about. Of the twenty-one methods discussed in this paper, ten are intentional integration methods. Two of these are classroom-centered methods; the remaining eight are student-centered methods. The classroom-centered methods include: (1) classroom prayer with devotionals keyed to class materials and (2) intentional integration of biblical perspectives into course material.

**Classroom Prayer with Devotional Keyed to Course Material.** If, in addition to prayer, the professor shares a short devotional keyed to course material, the students can be led even further toward biblical faith-learning integration. When devotionals are keyed to course material, the professor is modeling the intentional integration of faith and learning for his or her students.

For example, a professor teaching strategic planning may share Luke 14:28-32 with his or her class:

Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the

foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, "This fellow began to build and was not able to finish." "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. (NIV, 1984)

In these examples, Jesus teaches the importance of planning in strategy. The students then have the opportunity to make explicit connections between biblical teaching on planning and the course material; in this way, significant integration of faith and learning may occur.

This method of intentional integration requires considerable effort on the part of the professor and also requires a good command of the Scriptures, although there are resources available to assist professors in this process. For example, Lynn and Wallace (2001) provide an extensive list of Bible passages keyed to various topics in business and economics, including such topics as resource distribution, justice, money, and work. The late Lisa Klein Surdyk (2002) provided a list of selected Bible passages with economic themes. Although effort and biblical knowledge are required, when students see business professors modeling integration in this manner, it can be very powerful.

*Intentional Integration of Biblical Perspectives into Course Material.* Creating explicit, intentional integration of Biblical perspectives into course material, such as lectures, helps students to see the connections between Biblical principles and the business world. For example, Martinez (2003) suggests that the Biblical concept of dominion, as presented in Psalm 24:1—"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it"—is relevant to understanding firms and the domain of strategic managers. Martinez describes several ways to present strategic management concepts from a Biblical perspective.

Stewart (2003) discusses using the Biblical principle of "firstfruits" in a financial management course, drawing on Mark 12:28-31, Exodus 23:19, and Proverbs 3:9 to illustrate the importance of putting God first in all things, financial and otherwise. Stewart points out, using the Biblical principle of first fruits, that (1) the financial system exists to promote efficiency, effectiveness, and

cooperation; (2) sharing with others is an important function of work, and (3) students should be effective stewards of the resources God has given them and thus should have an attitude of thankfulness. In a similar vein, Lemler (2003) applies the Biblical concept of the fall of creation (Genesis 1-3) to a managerial accounting course, helping students to understand that employees want more from the labor transaction than mere compensation; they want work that is creatively fulfilling. Lantos (2012) discusses how an examination of theories of consumer behavior, such as rational choice theory, classical conditioning, psychoanalytical theory, or the theory of the social consumer can be used to help students develop a philosophy of life, including doing so from a Christian worldview.

Eight intentional integration methods are classroom-centered:

1. Student-led class devotionals with links to course material
2. Reflection on devotional material
3. Class discussions
4. Cases with Christian content or a Christian focus
5. Biblical integration essays
6. Spiritual/ethical exercises
7. Service learning with spiritual reflection
8. Mission trips with business/faith connections and spiritual reflection

*Student-Led Class Devotionals with Links to Course Material.* When students are asked to link devotionals to course material, the students are not only getting involved, but they are being encouraged to integrate their faith with the material; this then becomes an intentional classroom-based method of integration. In this way, students become active participants in the biblical faith-learning integration process. The level of integration tends to vary considerably, especially among different levels of students. With practice, however, students can become adept at connecting devotional material with course material. In some cases, professors have found it desirable to begin the first week of the semester by modeling linking devotionals with course material; this helps students to grasp the concepts more quickly.

*Reflection on Devotional Material.* The importance of reflection in learning is well established (e.g., Kolb, 1984). Reflection can be a powerful tool to stimulate learning and retention of learning (Hegeman, Edgell, & Jochemsen, 2011). Allowing students a few moments of class time, either following the devotion or at the end of class, to record their reflections on their learning can help

the students to think about what the devotional material means to them and how to apply it to their lives. If these reflections are in the form of a journal, where the student can occasionally look back over the reflected material, the intentional biblical faith-learning integration can be even more meaningful. For today's students, those reflections can even be kept in an electronic form on their notebook computers or tablets; digitizing the reflections helps to ensure that they will be around for a long time.

When setting aside class time for reflection, a few considerations are in order. First, assure the students that the reflections are confidential — that a student can choose to share reflections but will not be required to do so. Second, insist that the time for reflection not be used for other purposes. Some students will initially be resistant to the concept of reflection, so insisting that the time set aside for reflection is actually used for reflection is essential. If the students know that an end-of-term paper will include a reflection section for which the end-of-class reflections are used as source material, the students are more likely to take the reflection time seriously. In addition, if the professor also uses this time for writing reflections, the modeling effect often works well.

*Class Discussions.* Involving students in active class discussions related to the integration of faith and business concepts can be a positive way to encourage biblical faith-learning integration. For example, Halberg (2010) has students work through an interactive exercise in setting interest rates, including biblical references to debt, interest, and usury. The class discussion that follows helps students to integrate their Christian faith with this topic. Adams (2011) used John Wesley's sermon on "The Use of Money," in conjunction with Luke 16:1-13 — The Parable of the Shrewd Manager — to encourage class discussion concerning shareholder wealth maximization in a finance class. If a reflective element is added to follow-up on the class discussion, this intentional method of biblical faith-learning integration is enhanced.

*Cases with Christian Content or a Christian Focus.* Cases with Christian content or a Christian worldview can assist students in the intentional application of biblical truths or a biblical worldview to business situations. Chewning and Haak (2002) assert that a "case pedagogy can be used to help students identify (1) what they believe, (2) why they believe it, and most importantly (3) *how to biblically defend their beliefs* — their world/lifeworld" (p. 55, emphasis theirs). Karns (2002) describes

using the book of Acts as a case study of marketing principles. Clark (2003) suggests assigning cases on Christian organizations, such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes or Campus Crusade for Christ, in a marketing course on a secular campus. Johnson (2005) suggests:

Christian worldview cases invite students also to bring their Bibles to the laboratory — examining the people and decisions described in the case through the lens of Scripture. While such an examination is not likely to result in 'THE biblical answer,' students do learn that Scripture, indeed, is relevant to today's business and economic issues. (p. 5)

*Biblical Integration Essays.* Surdyk (2002) describes assigning students integrative essays in a principles of macroeconomics course as an intentional student-centered biblical integration method. Students could choose from topics such as biblical perspectives on work, stewardship, or poverty/economic injustice. They were expected to carefully read a number of Bible passages related to the topic, and were graded based on "careful thought and reflection, effectiveness of presentation, thoroughness of responses to each part of the assignment...." (p. 96). Surdyk reported that, by the term's end, students were "more aware of biblical principles on economic decision-making and about how they might apply these principles in their lives" (p. 69).

*Spiritual/Ethical Exercises.* One of the challenges that professors face is helping students to move beyond knowing the right answers to doing the right things. For example, it is not unusual to find students who can perform an outstanding analysis of an ethics case, but whose personal and/or professional lives are not consistent with that analysis. Providing spiritual or ethical exercises that attempt to mimic real-world situations is an intentional, student-centered method of biblical faith-learning integration.

For example, the author provided students in a management simulation with an ethical dilemma. This "opportunity" came at a time when the class was not doing well in the simulation. In other words, all of the teams were losing money. The student teams were given the opportunity to apply for a government grant to build a plant in a region of the country where the company was physically unable to build a plant. The instructions stated that there was only about a 15 percent chance that the government would realize that the company had requested a grant in a physically impossible location; if discovered, the company would be fined. Five of the six teams in the class decided to apply for the grant. When

the professor informed the class that five of the six teams had “fraudulently applied for a government grant,” one of the students said, “You make it sound so bad when you put it that way!” A meaningful discussion followed.

The bottom line is this: students will often give the right answers if nothing is on the line. But when real — or even simulated — dollars are at stake, the pressures to behave unethically intensify. Engaging students in ethical exercises gives them an opportunity to integrate their faith in a similar-to-the-real-world manner.

Similarly, Kellaris (2010) advocates using in-class ethical exercises to help students understand three different tendencies toward unintentional moral relativism, in which a person’s moral compass is “pulled off course by the powerful sway of circumstances” (p. 41). The first exercise demonstrates the “contrast effect,” in which “exposure to a prior event establishes a frame of reference used to judge a current event” (p. 42). The second demonstrates the “framing effect,” in which a choice is framed in such a way that it appears more attractive. According to Kellaris, when this demonstration experiment was used at a Christian university, many students chose ethically controversial choices, thereby offering an opportunity to highlight tendencies toward unintentional moral relativism. The third exercise demonstrates the “numerosity bias,” in which individuals “count the number of items presented rather than evaluating content on its merit” (p. 43).

*Service-Learning with Spiritual Reflection.* Many Christian colleges and universities (along with secular ones) are involved in programs that provide students with opportunities for service-learning, such as Enactus (formerly Students in Free Enterprise), whose motto is “a head for business, a heart for the world” (Enactus, 2013, n.p.). Students, under the guidance of a faculty sponsor and often as part of a course, engage in service projects designed to use, in the words of Enactus’ mission statement, “the power of entrepreneurial action to transform lives and shape a better more sustainable world” (Enactus, 2013, n.p.).

This type of service learning gives students the opportunity to put their faith into practice, which results not just in the integration of faith and learning but the integration of faith, learning, and living. This is especially true if reflective processes are included under the guidance of a faculty member.

*Mission Trips with Business/Faith Connections and Spiritual Reflection.* In a similar way, mission trips — especially those with business, humanitarian, or service

learning components — provide a fertile ground for the intentional integration of faith, learning, and living. Once again, reflective processes under the guidance of a faculty member help to promote such intentional student-centered integration.

### Strategic Integration

In addition to being intentional, strategic integration includes a time dimension where the integration activities take place in a planned manner throughout an entire course or program. In essence, strategic integration is integrated integration: integration activities are integrated in a coordinated manner throughout a course or program, which requires a high level of intentionality. Of the twenty-one methods, five are strategic integration methods. One of these methods — a devotional series with a central theme linked to course material — is classroom-centered. Two methods — end-of-program reflection papers and integrated reflection papers — are student-centered. The final two methods — comprehensive spiritual curriculum and comprehensive spiritual curriculum integrated with course content — are program-centered.

*Devotional Series with Central Theme Linked to Course Material.* A step beyond devotionals linked to course material is a series of devotionals with a central theme linked to course material. Because of the level of complexity and the time element over an entire course, this is considered to be a strategic integration method. For example, a finance class can have a series of devotionals related to what the Bible teaches about managing money. Or a leadership class can have a series of devotionals centered on the Old Testament narrative concerning Joseph. Or an ethics class can have a series of devotionals concerning Daniel. Or a project management class can have a series of devotionals featuring Nehemiah.

In this case, integration is taking place on multiple levels. Intentional connections are being made between the Bible and course concepts, but there is also integration among the Biblical concepts. Significant effort is required by the professor to craft well-integrated devotionals. Once again, however, the modeling of Biblical integration in this intentional and strategic manner can be very powerful.

Two strategic integration methods are student centered: end-of-program reflection papers and integration reflection papers. Both provide students with opportunities for reflection, which can be a powerful learning mechanism.

*End-of-Program Reflection Papers.* The end of a degree program is a natural point for reflection. Typically this reflection should be guided; in other words, the students should be given reflection questions to answer. Some programs use end-of-program reflection papers as a method of assessing biblical faith-learning integration in the program; a few even incorporate a pre-test, post-test design, wherein students write initial reflection papers in a course taken early in the program, then write papers on the same topics at the end of the program, typically in a capstone course.

One of the long-term benefits of end-of-program reflection papers is that the process helps students to realize the spiritual growth that has taken place over the time period that they have been earning a degree. Doing so helps the students see what God has done in their lives and to be grateful for it. A side benefit is that it helps the students to be grateful to the institution and the program for providing them with meaningful avenues for spiritual growth.

*Integrated Reflection Papers.* Reflection can be powerful and can be even more powerful when practiced consistently. Programs that integrate reflection opportunities throughout the program help students to establish a habit of reflection. Integrating reflection papers throughout a program in a meaningful way requires significant effort and cooperation on the part of the business faculty and is thus a strategic, student-centered method of integration.

If students are provided with a reasonable way to archive these reflections, such as an electronic portfolio, then spiritual development over time can be observed (Roller, Feezell, & Ellis, 2003). This provides a method for students to erect a spiritual marker stone — referred to as an “Ebenezer” — to look back on and say, “thus far God has helped us” (1 Samuel 7:12).

Two strategic integration methods are program-centered. Program-centered integration consists of biblical faith-learning integration that takes place over an entire academic program in an integrated manner. In this section, two methods of program-centered biblical faith-learning integration are examined: (1) comprehensive spiritual curriculum throughout an entire program, and (2) comprehensive spiritual curriculum integrated with course content. The level of complexity required is higher than professor-centered or classroom-centered methods of integration: professor-centered integration requires the professor to *be*, classroom-centered integration requires the professor to *do*, and program-centered

integration requires the professor to *collaborate* with other faculty members.

*Comprehensive Spiritual Curriculum.* When academic departments develop academic programs, the faculty collaboratively design a series of courses designed to systematically cover specified material and accomplish program objectives (which are also collaboratively determined in most cases). The departmental faculty ask, “What should a graduate of this program know and be able to do?” Rarely, however, is the same process followed in terms of biblical faith-learning integration goals and content. If the integration of faith and learning is valuable, however, then the development of a comprehensive spiritual curriculum to be offered side-by-side with the academic curriculum should be valuable.

The development of a comprehensive spiritual curriculum is not simple; it requires tremendous collaboration by the faculty. Issues of level and sequence must be addressed; these are lessened somewhat in lockstep programs, especially those with a prescribed curriculum.

This approach to integration has potential advantages in the processes of assessment and accreditation. If spiritual goals have been established for a program and the curriculum has covered that material, then end-of-program assessments can be designed to assess whether the spiritual goals have been accomplished. Even pre-test, post-test designs are possible, thus allowing the measurement of spiritual value added as the result of a program.

*Comprehensive Spiritual Curriculum Integrated with Course Content.* More complex still is the development of a comprehensive spiritual curriculum integrated with course content. This requires not only defining spiritual objectives and a comprehensive spiritual curriculum but also doing so such that the components are integrated with course content. This sends powerful integration messages to students in that over the course of the entire program, they see the development of a spiritual theme or themes. At the same time, those themes directly tie to the content of each course.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed twenty-one methods of biblical faith-learning integration with the goal of providing faculty members — especially those relatively new to biblical faith-learning integration — with ways to mentor and disciple their students in biblical faith-learning

integration. These methods have been presented by the focus of the integration — professor-centered, classroom-centered, program-centered, or student centered — and by the extent and intentionality of the integration — natural integration, intentional integration, or strategic integration. It is almost certain that other methods of biblical faith-learning integration exist and are being used. The author, however, has not found this type of review anywhere else in the literature. It is hoped that providing this discussion of twenty-one methods will encourage other writers to describe additional methods they have used. In addition, various combinations of these methods could be used.

This paper could serve as the catalyst for future research in several ways. A survey of Christian faculty and administrators might provide additional integration methods along with an evaluation of the effectiveness of various methods. In addition, the categorical framework used in this paper, especially the categories based on the extent and intentionality of the integration as natural, intentional, or strategic methods, could be empirically tested. Interviews with faculty and students as to the value and impact of these methods could provide qualitative support for these methods.

Biblical faith-learning integration is a lifelong journey for faculty members. It is a journey that most Christian faculty members desire to model for their students. It is very difficult, however, for a guide to take someone to a place that the guide has never been. As faculty members, we must blaze the trail for our students and help students to join in our journey.

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