

# REFLECTING THE INFINITE: INTRODUCTION TO THE 12TH ISSUE OF THE JBIB

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The editorial team is pleased to bring to you the 12th issue of *The Journal of Biblical Integration in Business*.<sup>i</sup> With the publication of this issue, the journal is on track for regular publication, with additional special issues.<sup>ii</sup>

This issue brings several changes, beginning with a change of editor. I am honored to be the new editor of *The Journal of Biblical Integration in Business* and look forward to interacting with the many excellent scholars in the CBFA. There is also a change in the physical format of the journal. For one thing, it has been modified to appear more like the *CBAR* so that the CBFA journals can be quickly identified, and for another, a new section **Living Integration** has been added. We have also brought back familiar features such as the **Dialogue**, and included an expanded **Media and Book Review** section.

If this issue of the *JBIB* has a theme, it is that of reflecting the Infinite. In this journal, we bring together the best of human thinking about organizational and economic life with the living word of the infinite God. The result is an outworking of the infinite in the human domains of business, organizations, and economics.

No one, least of all me, should be surprised that God had His plans for this issue. When the articles are put together, the issue forms a remarkable statement of how God is reflected when scripture is integrated with business.

The first article is a reprint from Leland Ryken's compelling book on the daily life of the Puritans, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were – Chapter 2: Work*. The Puritans were a group that passionately believed that the Scripture was central to life (Packer, 1990). How did they incorporate God into economic realities?

You will find their views on work, vocation, and job motivation to be gripping – and unexpected.

In a sense, the second article reverses the integration of scripture in business with a discussion of how scriptural events reflect business theory. In a paper titled "Innovation and the Early Christian Church," Gary Oster discusses the transformation process of the early years of the Church. When God wanted to do a new thing in the world, He utilized the principles of paradigm change, beginning with a change agent, Peter. In a response to the paper, Michael Cafferky enlarges and deepens Oster's thesis by bringing Organizational Theory to bear on this issue. The Dialogue is an on-going *JBIB* feature and it allows nuances to emerge as integration scholars engage theory from different perspectives.

In the next article, "The Global Financial Crisis: Biblical Perspectives on Corporate Finance," Ernest Liang explores the lack of Biblical integration in the economic life of our society. Liang suggests that excess liquidity, excess leverage and excess risk-taking lead to economic crisis and then discusses God's perspectives on these things. The paper demonstrates that bringing the Infinite into economics can create life and balance.

A new feature called **Living Integration** is inaugurated in this issue. We know that the word of God is living and powerful (Hebrews 4:12) and when scripture is applied, things happen. We know this, but we do not always know what it looks like to reflect the Infinite in this way. The purpose of this section is to show how God deals in the lives of real people who apply Scripture to business.

The first person to be featured in the new

Living Integration section is, appropriately, Richard C. Chewning. Dr. Chewning was among the first scholars to emphasize Biblical integration in the academic business fields and publish in this area. He was instrumental in the development of the Christian Business Faculty Association, and it was his suggestion and encouragement that brought this journal into being. Dr. Chewning has presented to, prayed for, and demonstrated biblical integration in business for at least three generations of business scholars. Using the CBFA conference as a forum, he taught many of

all ponder the mighty works of God.

In addition, the *JBIB* is pleased to reprint an article written by Dr. Chewning about 26 years ago. “Can Free Enterprise Survive Ethical Schizophrenia” was originally published in *Business Horizons* in 1984. You will find this article stimulating on a number of levels: it is well written, well researched and clearly argued. However, possibly the most striking thing about this article is its predictive ability. Though written decades ago, it could come out of today’s headlines. God knows human nature very well and when the liv-

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us “how to do it.” What does living integration look like? In this case it looks like mentorship and leading others by example.

Kathleen Mays and Steven Mason have captured this aspect of Richard Chewning in a paper titled “Richard C. Chewning: Model and Mentor of Business and Faith Integration.” They first outline a biblical model of mentoring, then use Dr. Chewning as an example. Sharon Johnson, a personal friend of Dick Chewning and the founding editor of the *JBIB*, reinforces this in a short essay titled “Lessons Learned from a Scholar, a Mentor and a Man of God.”

However it seemed appropriate that Richard Chewning should have the last word in this section. Those who have been privileged to hear him talk about his life, have been stirred and encouraged by his testimony. Dr. Chewning says that writing is difficult for him and reflects Paul’s words that “we have this treasure in earthen vessels to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us (II Cor. 4:7).” He graciously consented to write down his Testimony – a word used here in the legal sense of a solemn attestation as to the truth of a matter – so that we might

ing word of God is integrated into our academic thinking, our papers can take on long-lasting significance. Biblical integration in business is timeless.

The last special section of this issue is a retrospective on the life of Lisa Klein Surdyk. Dr. Surdyk, a professor of economics at Seattle Pacific University, died in November, 2009 of colon cancer, just a few weeks after she presented a paper at the CBFA conference. Lisa was a member of the CBFA board that launched the *JBIB*, and she contributed many scholarly papers to the journal. She was the second recipient of the Chewning Award (1999), after Dr. Chewning himself.

Lisa Surdyk had an unusually strong impact in the CBFA. A small story might illustrate why. At the CBFA Conference at Houghton (2000), Lisa and I joined other members on an excursion to Niagara Falls. At the time Lisa’s family and mine were in difficult places, and we leaned on the parapet and talked as the Niagara River swept below and the falls thundered. A little to my surprise Lisa, who was a self-contained person, began to pray aloud, very simply. She prayed for

the grace to abandon herself to the will of God, like a drop in the river sweeping to the beauty of the falls. When she was done, she looked at me solemnly for a long moment and then said, "I'm starved. Let's go eat lunch." And then she grinned and told me a very funny economist joke.

In the Retrospective, there are tributes from Lisa's colleagues, from her mentor Dr. Chewning, and from Dr. Sharon Johnson, the *JBIB* editor who published many of her articles. Also you will find something unusual: an exercise surrounding Dr. Surdyk's last submission to the *JBIB*. When Lisa died, her paper was going through the review process. After extensive discussion, the Editorial Board decided to honor Lisa and her commitment to peer mentoring by publishing it in its unfinished state and including

the reviewers' comments. Lisa was a powerful peer mentor and she was eager to help others succeed. This exercise demonstrates what Dr. Chewning said. Biblical integration takes thinking, it takes work, it takes prayer. Lisa knew that. With this small exercise, she leaves a legacy of encouragement for every person who works hard at the vocation of integration.

Enjoy the journal. Then go write something.

## REFERENCES

Packer, J.I. 1990. *A Quest for Godliness*, Crossway Books, Wheaton, Ill

Ryken, Leland, 1986. *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were*. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI.

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<sup>1</sup>Using issue numbers instead of dates provides continuity in the *JBIB* no matter how many issues are published in a given year. This assures our subscribers that they have a complete set of published issues.

<sup>2</sup>The Call for Papers for a special issue on *Gender, Business and Scripture*, and the Call for Papers for a special issue titled *Both for Profit and Not: Biblical Views of Organization Hybridization* are in the back of the journal