

## DICK CHEWNING LESSONS LEARNED FROM A SCHOLAR, A MENTOR AND A MAN OF GOD

*Sharon Johnson*

Dick Chewning is a man who shaped my life personally and professionally in profound ways. There is rarely a day that goes by that I don't find myself thinking about his influence, acting on that influence, and sharing insights from that influence with others.

**Dick Chewning taught me how to do faith integration.** I learned from him to respect the Bible's power to speak to a wide range of business and economics issues, both directly and indirectly. Sometimes this integration is directly related to passages from Scripture (though needing to be confirmed by additional passages – Dick's rule of thumb: always verify a Biblical conclusion by at least three different Bible passages). Other times

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the connections are important but less direct, such as the use of parables. Dick taught me that proper faith-integration rests on a foundation of fidelity to the context and content of Bible material.

**Dick Chewning taught me that professional forms of faith-integration must come out of a commitment to faith-integration in our personal lives.** It is too easy to view Scripture as a document to be studied and examined. Dick taught me that Scripture is a document to be lived. Unless we are allowing Scripture to reach into every part of our hearts and minds, allowing it to transform our minds and capture our hearts, then we will never really grasp the truth of Scripture. For more years than I will ever know, Dick Chewning has day after day allowed Scripture to percolate through his life. His faith-integration

is scholarly BECAUSE it is first of all true and authentic in his life.

**Dick Chewning taught me that a commitment to faith-integration at both a professional and personal level carries both personal and professional costs.** While we rightfully honor the man whose scholarship we so admire, it has been my great privilege to see the costs Dick has paid along this journey. That journey has been filled with thousands of hours of work, professional disappointments, personal and family trials, medical barriers, and other experiences that bear witness to what God does when he takes an ordinary person and uses him for extraordinary things.

**Dick Chewning has taught me that age is, truly, just a number.** After coming through my own medical and emotional "bouts" with aging, Dick's example of a "long obedience in the same direction" has energized me. He still is a man with new ideas, seeking new challenges (mountains – like Caleb?) to climb – or in his case, new things yet to write. It takes a long time to become really skilled at faith-integration. Dick is a living illustration that God gives us all the time we need.

Throughout my life God has placed significant men of God to help refine, rebuke, reinforce and redirect me. Dick Chewning has played all these roles in my life – and in the lives of many others throughout the CBFA. I owe him a huge personal debt – knowing him, however, the only repayment he would ever ask is to seek what Paul expressed in the letter to the Philippians. Philippians 3:12-14, "Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."