

# Integrating Faith & Scholarship

FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS | WEEK THREE

## IN THIS WEEK'S STUDY

1. Discussion Guide
2. "Academic Integration & The Christian Scholar"
3. Integrating Faith & Discipline (Video Guide)
4. Integration Application Guide

# INTEGRATING FAITH & SCHOLARSHIP

## WEEK THREE | FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS

1. **From Romans 12:1–2.** Why should we submit our lives to God? What are the dangers if we fail to?
2. How does the academy attempt to get you to conform to its mindset? Are there subtle ways in addition to overt and obvious ways?
3. Romans teaches that transformation begins with renewal of the MIND. How does this process occur?
4. How do we love God with our mind? (Mathew 22:37)
5. How is your Christian worldview related to your academic discipline? (see integration application paper)

## APPLICATION

We have seen an excellent model of how Christians in the field of philosophy have transformed that discipline over the last 30 years. Dr. William Lane Craig has written about being a Christian in the academy. Dr. Robert Koons at the University of Texas has presented a brief video on the different ways in which Christians view their role within their discipline. After watching the video, reviewing the paper, and answering sample questions about your discipline, consider writing an integration paper for a topic in your field that needs Christian commentary. You can submit that paper to the annual Christian Scholars Forum

# ACADEMIC INTEGRATION & THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR

## WEEK THREE | FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS

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### Abstract

"Because Christians are interested in the truth for its own sake and because they are called to proclaim and defend their views to an unbelieving world and to seek to live consistently with those views, it is important for members of the believing community to think carefully about how to integrate their carefully formed theological beliefs with prominent claims in other fields of study."

THOUGHTFUL CHRISTIANS ARE AGREED that an important component of Christian scholarship is the integration of faith and learning, as it is sometimes called. Because Christians are interested in the truth for its own sake and because they are called to proclaim and defend their views to an unbelieving world and to seek to live consistently with those views, it is important for members of the believing community to think carefully about how to integrate their carefully formed theological beliefs with prominent claims in other fields of study. As St. Augustine wisely asserted, "We must show our Scriptures not to be in conflict with whatever [our critics] can demonstrate about the nature of things from reliable sources." However, the task of integration is hard work, and there is no widespread agreement about how it is to be done generally or about what its results should look like in specific cases. In what follows, I shall do three things to contribute to the integrative enterprise: 1) describe the relation between integration and spiritual formation; 2) discuss current integrative priorities for the Christian scholar; 3) analyze the epistemic tasks for and models employed in integration.

## Integration as an Expression of and Aid to Spiritual Formation

Before we proceed, it is crucial that we reflect a bit further on what is so important about the task of integration at this particular moment in the church's history. To begin with, there is a widespread hunger throughout our culture for genuine, life-transforming spirituality. This is as it should be. People are weary of those who claim to believe certain things when they do not see those beliefs having an impact on the lives of the heralds. Among other things, integration is a spiritual activity. We may even call it a spiritual discipline, but not merely in the sense that often comes to mind in this context. Often, Christian scholars express the spiritual aspect of integration in terms of doxology. The Christian integrator holds to and teaches the same beliefs about her subject matter that non-Christians accept but goes on to add praise to God for the subject matter. Thus, the Christian biologist simply asserts the views widely accepted in the discipline but makes sure that class closes with a word of praise to God for the beauty and complexity of the living world.

The doxological approach is good as far as it goes; unfortunately, it does not go far enough in capturing the spiritual dimension of integration. We draw closer to the core of this dimension when we think about the role of beliefs in the process of spiritual transformation. Beliefs are the rails upon which our lives run. We almost always act according to what we really believe. It does not matter much what we say we believe or what we want others to think we believe. When the rubber meets the road, we act out our actual beliefs most of the time. That is why behavior is such a good indicator of a person's beliefs. The centrality of beliefs for spiritual progress is a clear implication of Old Testament teaching on wisdom and New Testament teaching about the role of a renewed mind in transformation. Thus, integration has as its spiritual aim the intellectual goal of structuring the mind so a person can see things as they really are and strengthening the belief structure that ought to inform the individual and corporate life of discipleship unto Jesus. Integration can aid a believer in maintaining and developing convictions about those beliefs.

Integration can also help an unbeliever to accept certain beliefs crucial to the Christian journey. This aspect of integration becomes clear when we reflect on the notion of a plausibility structure. A person will never be able to change his life if he cannot even entertain the beliefs needed to bring about that change. By "entertain a belief" I mean to consider the possibility that the belief might be true. A person's plausibility structure is the set of ideas the person either is or is not willing to entertain as possibly true. For example, no one would come to a lecture defending a flat earth because this idea is just not part of our plausibility structure. We cannot even entertain the idea. Moreover, a person's plausibility structure is largely (though not

exclusively) a function of the beliefs he already has. Applied to accepting or maintaining Christian belief, J. Gresham Machen got it right when he said,

[God) usually exerts that power in connection with certain prior conditions of the human mind, and it should be ours to create, so far as we can, with the help of God, those favorable conditions for the reception of the gospel. False ideas are the greatest obstacles to the reception of the gospel. We may preach with all the fervor of a reformer and yet succeed only in winning a straggler here and there, if we permit the whole collective thought of the nation or of the world to be controlled by ideas which, by the resistless force of logic, prevent Christianity from being regarded as anything more than a harmless delusion.

If a culture reaches the point where Christian claims are not even part of its plausibility structure, fewer and fewer people will be able to entertain the possibility that they might be true. Whatever stragglers do come to faith in such a context would do so on the basis of felt needs alone and the genuineness of such conversions would be questionable to say the least. And believers will not make much progress in the spiritual life because they will not have the depth of conviction or the integrated noetic (knowledge) structure necessary for such progress. This is why integration is so crucial to spirituality. It can create a plausibility structure in a person's mind—favorable conditions as Machen put it—so Christian ideas can be entertained by that person.

### **Current Integrative Priorities for the Christian Scholar**

But how does a Christian scholar decide on what to spend her energies in the integrative task? There are so many areas of study. What criteria are there to help one prioritize her efforts? Is there a taxonomy of issues that expresses some priorities that Christian scholars ought to adopt? I'm afraid I have a lot more thinking to do on this before I am prepared to offer anything approximating an adequate answer to these questions. Any taxonomy here would likely express the interests and biases of the taxonomist, and I am no exception to this rule. Obviously, one's own sense of personal calling and one's own curiosities will and should play an important role here.

However, I think the following three criteria are not too wide of the mark. First, integration should be focused on those areas of study that seem to be intrinsically more central or foundational to the Christian theistic enterprise. The deeply ingrained metaphysical, epistemological, and axiological commitments that constitute mere Christianity should be preserved. Second, integration should be focused on areas that are currently under heavy attack.

A third and, perhaps, less important criterion is this: integration should be focused on those areas of study in which such activity is under-represented, relatively speaking.

It is the task of Christian scholars in each discipline to decide how these criteria inform their intellectual work. However, I think points one and two converge so as to yield an integrative mandate for contemporary Christian scholars, especially those who work on the interface between science and Christian faith. A very important cultural fact that Christian scholars must face when they undertake the task of integration is this: *There simply is no established, widely recognized body of ethical or religious knowledge now operative in the institutions of knowledge in our culture*, e.g., the universities. Indeed, ethical and religious claims are frequently placed into what Francis Schaeffer used to call the "upper scary." They are judged to have little or no epistemic authority, especially compared to the authority given to science to define the limits of knowledge and reality in those same institutions. This raises a pressing question: Is Christianity a knowledge tradition or merely a faith tradition perspective which, while true, cannot be known to be true and must be embraced on the basis of some epistemic state weaker than knowledge?

There are at least two reasons why this may well be the crucial question for Christian intellectuals to keep in mind as they do their work. For one thing, *Christianity claims to be a knowledge tradition*, and it places knowledge at the center of its proclamation and discipleship. The Old and New Testaments, including the teachings of Jesus, claim not merely that Christianity is true, but that a variety of its moral and religious assertions can be known to be true.

Second, *knowledge is the basis of responsible action in society*. Dentists, not lawyers, have the authority to place their hands in our mouths because they have the relevant knowledge on the basis of which they may act responsibly. If Christian scholars do little to deflect the view that theological and ethical assertions are merely parts of a belief tradition which simply adds a "theological perspective" to an otherwise unperturbed secular topic and fails to convey knowledge, then they inadvertently contribute to the marginalization of Christianity. They do so precisely because they fail to rebut the contemporary tendency to rob the Christian faith of the very thing that gives it the authority necessary to prevent that marginalization, viz., its legitimate claim to give us moral and religious knowledge. Both in and out of the church, Jesus has been lost as an intellectual authority. Christian intellectuals should embrace the authority of Jesus and carry out their academic vocation in light of this fact.

I agree with those who see a three-way worldview struggle in academic and popular culture among ethical monotheism (especially Christian theism), postmodernism, and scientific naturalism. As Christian intellectuals seek to promote Christianity as a knowledge tradition in their academic discipline, they should keep in mind the impact of their work on this triumvirate.

Both space considerations and my own view of priorities forbid me to say much about postmodernism here. I recognize it is a variegated tunic with many nuances. But to the degree that postmodernism denies the objectivity of reality, truth, value, reason (in its epistemic if not psychological sense); to the degree that it rejects dichotomous thinking about real/unreal, true/false, rational/irrational, right/wrong; to the degree that it takes intentionality to create the objects of consciousness, to that degree it should be resisted by Christian intellectuals.

Scientific naturalism also comes in many varieties but, very roughly, a major form of it is the view that the spatio-temporal cosmos containing physical objects studied by the hard sciences is all there is. It also maintains that the hard sciences are either the only source of knowledge or else vastly superior in proffering epistemically justified beliefs compared to non-scientific fields. In connection with scientific naturalism, some have argued that the rise of modern science has contributed to the loss of intellectual authority in those fields like ethics and religion that, supposedly, are not subject to the types of testing and experimentation employed in the hard sciences. Rightly or wrongly, there are three ways that science has been perceived as a threat to the intellectual credibility of Christianity:

1. Some scientific claims call into question certain interpretations of biblical texts (e.g., Genesis 1 and 2) or certain theological beliefs (e.g., that humans have souls or are made in the image of God).
2. Some scientific claims, if correct, demote certain arguments for the existence of God (e.g., if natural, evolutionary processes can explain the origin or development of life, then we do not "need" to postulate a Creator/Designer to explain these things). There may be other reasons for believing in God, but the advances of science have robbed Christians of a number of arguments that used to be effective.
3. The progress of science, compared to other disciplines like philosophy or theology, justifies scientism either by the view that science and science alone offers true, justified beliefs (strong scientism) or that while other fields may offer true, justified beliefs, in general, the degree of certainty in science vastly outweighs what these other fields offer (weak scientism). As evolutionary naturalist George Gaylord Simpson put it:

There is neither need nor excuse for postulation of nonmaterial intervention in the origin of life, the rise of man, or any other part of the long history of the material cosmos. Yet the origin of that cosmos and the causal principles of its history remain unexplained and inaccessible to science. Here is hidden the First Cause sought by theology and philosophy. The First Cause is not known and I suspect it will never be known to living man. We may, if we are so inclined, worship it in our own ways, but we certainly do not comprehend it."

Now Christians must respond to these three problem areas. One solution is the *complementarity* view according to which propositions, theories, or methodologies in rheology and other disciplines may involve two different, complementary, non-interacting approaches to the same reality. On this view, theology and science interact much like the color and shape descriptions of an apple. Theology and science (or, for that matter, any discipline besides theology) interact in an additive way such that the whole truth is the sum of the contributions of both but neither has direct, straightforward implications for the other. In my opinion, the complementarian approach is inadequate as a total integrative model because, among other things, it contributes to the widespread philosophical naturalism that dominates much of the contemporary academy and broader culture. As Philip E. Johnson has pointed out:

Politically astute scientific naturalists feel no hostility toward those religious leaders who implicitly accept the key naturalistic doctrine that supernatural powers do not actually affect the course of nature. . . . The most sophisticated naturalists realize that it is better just to say that statements about God are "religious" and hence incapable of being more than expressions of subjective feeling. It would be pretty ridiculous, after all, to make a big deal out of proving that Zeus and Apollo do not really exist.

Elsewhere, Johnson observes:

The conflict between the naturalistic worldview and the Christian supernaturalistic worldview goes all the way down. It cannot be papered over by superficial compromises. . . . It cannot be mitigated by reading the Bible figuratively rather than literally. . . . There is no satisfactory way to bring two such fundamentally different stories together, although various bogus intellectual systems offer a superficial compromise to those who are willing to overlook a logical contradiction or two. A clear thinker simply has to go one way or another.

Johnson's remarks serve as a reminder that Christian complementarians run the risk of achieving an integration between science and Christian theism at the price of placing the epistemological authority and certain important metaphysical claims of Christianity in some private, upper story. Whether intentional or not, when employed too broadly, the complementarity approach contributes to the scientism that controls contemporary culture. Thereby, it inadvertently fosters a separation of the secular and sacred due to the fact that careful biblical exegesis does very little intellectual work in the areas of study where complementarity is employed. The effect of this is to marginalize Christian doctrine in the marketplace of ideas.

In my view, Christian complementarians give up too much intellectual ground too quickly in light of the philosophical naturalism's cultural sway. I am neither a sociologist nor the son of one, but I still opine that philosophical naturalism is sustained in the academy and broader culture by sociological—and not distinctly rational—factors. In my discipline of philosophy, signs indicate that important figures are finally acknowledging this. For example, naturalist Thomas Nagel has recently written:

In speaking of the fear of religion, ... , I am talking about . . . the fear of religion itself. I speak from experience, being strongly subject to this fear myself. ... I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that. . . . My guess is that this cosmic authority problem is not a rare condition and that it is responsible for much of the scientism and reductionism of our time. One of the tendencies it supports is the ludicrous overuse of evolutionary biology to explain everything about life, including everything about the human mind.'

Along similar lines, in his 1996 presidential address for the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association, Barry Stroud noted,

"Naturalism" seems to me in this and other respects rather like "world peace." Almost everyone swears allegiance to it, and is willing to march under its banner. But disputes can still break out about what is appropriate or acceptable to do in the name of that slogan. And like world peace, once you start specifying concretely exactly what it involves and how to achieve it, it becomes increasingly difficult to reach and to sustain a consistent and exclusive "naturalism."

I know these remarks are terse and controversial, and in the future I shall try to develop and defend my understanding of the nature and limitations of a complementarity view of integration. For now, I turn to a brief presentation of the epistemic tasks of integration and the models we'll use to carry out those tasks.

### **Epistemic Tasks for Integration**

The word "integration" means to form or blend into a whole, to unite. The human intellect naturally seeks to find the unity that is behind diversity and, in fact, coherence is an important

mark of rationality. In conceptual integration, one's rheological beliefs, especially those derived from careful biblical exegesis, are blended and unified with propositions judged to be justifiably believed as true from other sources into a coherent, intellectually satisfying worldview. One of the goals of integration is to maintain or increase both the conceptual relevance of and epistemological justification for Christian theism. To repeat St. Augustine's advice, "We must show our Scriptures not to be in conflict with whatever [our critics] can demonstrate about the nature of things from reliable sources." We may distinguish three different aspects of the epistemological side of integration, direct defense, polemics, and Christian explanation.

1. *Direct Defense.* In direct defense, one engages in integration with the primary intent of enhancing or maintaining directly the epistemic justification of Christian theism or some proposition taken to be explicit within or entailed by it, especially those aspects of a Christian worldview relevant to one's own discipline. Specific attention should be given to topics that are intrinsically important to mere Christianity or currently under fire in one's field of study. Hereafter, I will simply refer to these issues as "Christian theism." I do so for brevity's sake. "Christian theism" should be taken to include specific views about a particular area of study that one takes to be relevant to the integrative task.

There are two basic forms of direct defense, one negative and one positive.' The less controversial of the two is a negative direct defense where one attempts to remove defeaters to Christian theism. If you have a justified belief regarding some proposition P, a defeater is something that weakens or removes that justification. Defeaters come in two types: rebutting defeaters and undercutting defeaters. A rebutting defeater gives justification for believing not-P—in this case, that Christian theism is false. For example, attempts to show that the biblical concept of the family is dysfunctional and false or that homosexuality is causally necessitated by genes or brain states and that, therefore, it is not a proper object for moral appraisal are cases of rebutting defeaters. An undercutting defeater does not give justification for believing not-P, but rather seeks to remove or weaken justification for believing P in the first place. Critiques of the arguments for God's existence are examples of undercutting defeaters. When defeaters are raised against Christian theism, a negative defense seeks either to rebut or undercut those defeaters.

By contrast, a positive direct defense is an attempt to build a positive case for Christian theism. Arguments for the existence of God, objective morality, the existence of the soul, the value and nature of virtue ethics, and the possibility and knowability of miracles are examples. This task for integration is not accepted by all Christian intellectuals. For example, various species of what may be loosely called Reformed epistemology run the gamut from seeing a modest role for a positive direct defense to an

outright rejection of this type of activity in certain areas, e.g., justifying belief in God and the authority of Holy Scripture.

2. *Philosophical Polemics.* In philosophical polemics, one seeks to criticize views that rival Christian theism in one way or another. Critiques of scientific naturalism, physicalism, pantheism, and normative ethical relativism are all cases of philosophical polemics.
3. *Theistic explanation.* Christian theists ought to be about the business of exploring the world in light of their worldview and, more specifically, of using their theistic beliefs as explanations of the various relevant features regarding the intellectual landscape. Suppose we have a set of items  $x_1$  through  $x_n$  that stand in need of explanation and we offer some explanations  $E$  as an adequate or even best explanation of the items. In such a case,  $E$  explains  $x_1$  through  $x_n$  and this fact provides some degree of confirmation for  $E$ . For example, if a certain intrinsic genre statement explains the various data of a biblical text, then this fact offers some confirmation for the belief that the statement is the correct interpretation of that text.

We should seek to solve intellectual problems and shed light on areas of puzzlement by utilizing the explanatory power of our worldview. For example, for those who accept the existence of natural moral law, the irreducibly mental nature of consciousness, natural human rights, or the fact that human flourishing follows from certain biblically mandated ethical and religious practices, the truth of Christian theism provides a good explanation of these phenomena. And this fact can provide some degree of confirmation for Christian theism.

## Models Employed in Integration

When problem areas surface, there is a need for the Christian scholar to think hard about the issue in light of the need for strengthening the epistemic authority of Christian theism and placing it squarely within the plausibility structure of contemporary culture. Let us use the term "theology" to stand for any Christian idea that seems to be a part of a Christian worldview derived primarily from special revelation. When one addresses problems like these, there will emerge a number of different ways that theology can interact with an issue in a discipline outside theology. Here are some of the different ways that such interaction can take place.

1. *The Two Realms View.* Propositions, theories, or methodologies in theology and another discipline may involve two distinct, non-overlapping areas of investigation. For example, debates about angels or the extent of the atonement have little to do with organic

chemistry. Similarly, it is of little interest to theology whether a methane molecule has three or four hydrogen atoms in it.

2. *The Complementarity View.* Propositions, theories, or methodologies in theology and another discipline may involve two different, complementary, non-interacting approaches to the same reality. Sociological aspects of church growth and certain psychological aspects of conversion may be sociological or psychological descriptions of certain phenomena that are complementary to a theological description of church growth or conversion.
3. *The Direct Interaction View.* Propositions, theories, or methodologies in theology and another discipline may directly interact in such a way that either one area of study offers rational support for the other or one area of study raises rational difficulties for the other. For example, certain theological teachings about the existence of the soul raise rational problems for philosophical or scientific claims that deny the existence of the soul. The general theory of evolution raises various difficulties for certain ways of understanding the book of Genesis. Some have argued that the Big Bang theory tends to support the theological proposition that the universe had a beginning.
4. *The Presuppositions View.* Theology tends to support the presuppositions of another discipline and vice versa. Some have argued that many of the presuppositions of science (e.g. the existence of truth, the rational, orderly nature of reality, the adequacy of our sensory and cognitive faculties as tools suited for knowing the external world) make sense and are easy to justify given Christian theism, but are odd and without ultimate justification in a naturalistic world view. Similarly, some have argued that philosophical critiques of epistemological skepticism and defenses of the existence of a real, theory-independent world and a correspondence theory of truth offer justification for some of the presuppositions of theology.
5. *The Practical Application View.* Theology fills out and adds details to general principles in another discipline and vice versa, and theology helps one practically apply principles in another discipline and vice versa. For example, theology teaches that fathers should not provoke their children to anger and psychology can add important details about what this means by offering information about family systems, the nature and causes of anger, etc. Psychology can devise various tests for assessing whether one is or is not a mature person and theology can offer a normative definition to psychology as to what a mature person is.

There is much work to be done by Christian scholars in the integrative task. Moreover, as we carry out this task in our own vocations, we should place a priority on the issue surfaced by a convergence of the intrinsic nature of Christianity and the current intellectual environment

in its unfavorable aspects, viz., at showing that Christianity is a knowledge tradition and employing it as such. As we labor in this endeavor, we will want to keep in mind different epistemic tasks that focus out work, different models of integration available to us, and the role of out disciplines in the mission of concern to us all.

1. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 1.21. Cited in Ernan Mdvfollin, "How Should Cosmology Relate to Theology?" in *The Science and Theology in the Twentieth Century* ed. Arthur R. Peacocke (Norre Dame: University of Norre Dame Press, 1981)
2. George Gaylord Simpson, *The Meaning of Evolution* (New York: Bantam Books 1971), 252.
3. Phillip E. Johnson, *Defeating Darwinism* (Downers Grove,. Ill,: InterVarsity, 1997), 100–1
4. *Ibid.*, 111.
5. Thomas Nagel, *The Last Word* (New Yark: Oxford University Press, 1997), 130–31
6. Barry Stroud, "The Charm of Naturalism" *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 70 (1996): 43–44.
7. Augustine, *De genesi ad litteram* 1.21.
8. See Ronald Nash. *Faith and Reason* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1988), 14–18.
9. For a useful discussion of various types of defeaters, see John Pollock, *Contemporary Theories of Knowledge* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman & Littlefiels, 1986), 36–9; Ralph Baergen, *Contemporary Epistemology* (Fort Warth, Tex.: Hartcourt Brace and Company, 1995), 119–24.
10. Richard Bube has complained that my characterization of complementarity is confused and is actually a description of what he calls compartmentalization, *Set his Putting it All Together* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1995), 168. Cf. chs. 6 and 10. for Bube, compartmentalization treats science and theology as different descriptions about different kinds of things with no common ground or possibility of conflict. Complementarity views science and theology as different descriptions of the same reality. Unfortunately, Bube is simply wrong in this complaint towards my position. What he calls compartmentalization is dose to what I call the "two realms" view of integration and my description of complementarity is an accurate one. The source of Bube's confusion is revealing. I claim that the complementarity view eschews interaction between science and rheology and Bube says that it embraces such interaction. However, Bube equivocates on what "interaction" means in this context. For me, it is "epistemic" interaction, roughly the same description of the same reality that can be in conflict or concord to varying degrees of strength. For Bube, interaction amounts to taking two different (non-interacting in my sense) perspectives and forming them into a whole. For example, a completely scientific

description of the origin of life in natural terms could be described in rheological terms as God's activity in bringing life into being. It is clear that his notion of interaction is not the one I deny in explicating complementarity.

11. I shall elaborate more on this approach in a subsequent paper:

[www.leaderu.com/aip/conference2.htm](http://www.leaderu.com/aip/conference2.htm).

## INTEGRATING FAITH & DISCIPLINE (VIDEO GUIDE)

### WEEK THREE | FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS

Watch the video found online at [www.christiangrads.org/foundations](http://www.christiangrads.org/foundations) and consider the following outline.

**Could there be a problem with Christians trying to integrate faith?**

**Can you be too outspoken as a believer in your discipline? What results?**

**What happens if you avoid visibility to focus on raising stature in your program?**

### ACCOMMODATIONIST

**Attempting to be like other (secular) scholars who don't let faith touch discipline. (ill. @post millennial view that Spirit is working in each stage of culture: let it happen)**

1. Methodological Naturalism
2. Radical Imperialism & science and philosophy are not about the real world, but simply describing models

THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN GRADS

[WWW.CHRISTIANGRAADS.ORG](http://WWW.CHRISTIANGRAADS.ORG)

3. Problem of inconsistency if holding academic naturalism, but claiming to be a person of faith
4. Both science and philosophy are attributes of our world and life; ought to intersect appropriately
5. Post Modernism, Deconstructionism

## CHRISTIAN GHETTO MENTALITY

### **Isolated and only talking/working among themselves**

1. Extreme criticism of all secular scholarship
2. Manic: chip on shoulder toward secular scholars in the discipline
3. Douwe Weerdt (Dutch philosopher negates any secular value)  
**Wrong:** even philosophy is part of God's created order, so secular scholars, doing good philosophy, can develop truthful arguments (ie: attack on Hegel by Sartre and B. Russell). Even Nietzsche shook up secular world with his religious view.
4. Letting Christian faith leave no footprint in your discipline will be disappointing to you
5. Sometimes being explicit about Christian views, actually results in them being put under a bushel, because these lights are discounted by secularists.

## INFILTRATION MODEL

### **As a Christian, winning the respect of your secular colleagues.**

1. Good scholarship by ANY standard, but incorporating a Christian Worldview perspective
2. Interacting with secular peers to gain THEIR view of your work, even while in process
3. Find the Topic that allows for engagement, with interest by peers
4. D. Can be taken too far & pretending to fit in and not being explicit about faith (seen as prudent by some, but maybe never comes out)

## ACTION POINT

Decide for yourself and make a plan!

## GRAD RESOURCES - INTEGRATION APPLICATION

Beyond the quest for completing a degree program, graduate students need to be called to three additional goals during their pursuit of an advanced degree; integration of their faith and discipline, personal growth in the context of community, and influence through reaching out to peers. In an attempt to assess the best process for pursuing integration, it seems appropriate to ask questions that lead to a clearer picture of the needs within your particular field.

1. What is your field of study?
2. What is your specific area of research/interest?
3. What attracted you to this area of study?
4. Are there things about this field that concern you as a believer?
5. What is the image of Christianity among your secular peers?
6. Is this image accurate or undeserved and why?
7. Are you able to identify specific misconceptions and how to deal with them?
8. What would you say is the major hurdle for Christianity among your secular peers?
9. Are there issues that have theological implications (cloning, value of life, etc)?
10. Are there values in conflict with clear Christian positions?
11. Are there gray issues that could use clarification from a Christian perspective?
12. Is there a clear position on how to acquire truth, what is false, & perception of reality?
13. Is there a methodology or data collection issue for you as a believer (truth acquired only by certain means seen as valuable)?
14. Are there characterizations of the field that appear contrary to Christianity (ie. Lifestyle in the Arts, ethics, truth & relativism, etc.)?
15. Will some of the issues within your field also present concerns to the church at large?
16. Who are the prominent writers/spokespersons in the field? Do their works present an image issue or conflict with Christian beliefs?
17. Have you read any Christian authors with content relevant to your field?

18. Are you aware of Christian scholars within your field or specific area of interest?
19. Are there networking opportunities with Christian Assoc. or fellowships in the field?
20. If you could have a paper written from a Christian world view on any topic within your field, what would you want to see?
21. If you could host a debate between either a theologian or Christian scholar and a prominent secular scholar in your field, who would be the main characters and what would you want as the topic?
22. Other issues (whether ethical, lifestyle, values, character, etc.) that give me or my peers concern about Christianity and my field are...
23. Are there issues where Christians differ on positions that call for you to make choices and develop a defense as a believing scholar (ie. Theistic evolution, life viability, etc)
24. Is there background information (historical, past scholars, presuppositions, etc) that lend an understanding to the current state of the field?
25. What would you want to ask a philosopher or theologian if he/she came as a presenter to a group of believers in your field?
26. Are there unique worldview concerns to someone considering an academic career?
27. What have I forgotten that you would want to see included in an analysis of integration?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_