

**Finding the Holy Spirit at the Christian University:
Renewal and the Future of Higher Education
in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Tradition**

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**Finding the Holy Spirit at the Christian University?
Renewal and the Future of Higher Education in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Tradition**

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Abstract

This essay argues that “Renewal” is not, and should not, be understood first as foremost as a doctrine or a theological –ism; rather, Renewal marks a distinctive modality of Spirit-filled lifelong teaching and learning that has been the legacy of Pentecostal and charismatic institutions of higher education in the twentieth century. Its central thesis is that such a foregoing notion of Renewal expansively and ecumenically understood is essential to the success of the Christian university in the global context of the twenty-first century precisely because it promises to distinguish Pentecostal and charismatic institutions of higher education from those that are either merely religious and theistic, or even evangelically Christian, precisely through the vitality of Spirit-inspired teaching, learning, service, and scholarly activity. This concept of a Renewal-based education is explored through a case study of Regent University.

Introduction

In 1996, the book *Finding God at Harvard* made a big splash, providing what some thought was a definitive response to Ari Goldman’s best-selling book, *The Search for God at Harvard*, which suggested that while there was plenty of “religion” on the Ivy League campus, a living existential Christian faith in God was much less prevalent.¹ Yet both volumes made headlines not just because Harvard was all that newsworthy, but because Harvard was considered the apex of the modern university, symbolized the Enlightenment’s neutral, objective, and scientific approach to knowledge, and insisted on a non-confessionalist, secularist, and reductionist study of religion. In this modernist context, that God was to be found at all was indeed noteworthy. In fact, the “return” of God to the modern university was all the more

¹ See Ari L. Goldman, *The Search for God at Harvard* (New York: Times Books/Random House, 1991), and Kelly Monroe, ed., *Finding God at Harvard: Spiritual Journeys of Thinking Christians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996).

surprising given that many of these institutions of higher education, Harvard included, began as religiously affiliated schools but had increasingly secularized over time.²

Christian colleges and universities have not been immune to these trends in higher education. In their efforts to resist the forces of secularization, the schools within the orbit of evangelicalism in North America have worked hard to integrate their Christian faith with their methodological, academic, and scientific training. Thus in the over 100 institutions affiliated with the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU), the goal has been to articulate what has been variously called a Christ-centered, biblically based, or historically orthodox foundation for education while insisting that students receive just as quality an education as at any secular university. Yet very few of these institutions have been able to specify what difference their evangelical faith *in Christ* makes to the educational task that is distinctive from those more generically committed to a theistic worldview. In other words, evangelical commitments may make a difference for the campus' spiritual life and vitality (which is absolutely essential), but not as much for the details of the liberal arts curriculum, for work in the social and natural sciences, or for excellence in professional studies at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In these academic arenas, it is accrediting standards and norms established by the various disciplines and guilds that count for much more.³

But what then about institutions of higher education affiliated with or serving Pentecostal and charismatic churches and constituencies? Many of these colleges and universities are

² The sequel to *Finding God at Harvard* identified parallels to the Harvard story at many well respected secular universities across the American landscape; see Kelly Monroe Kullberg, *Finding God Beyond Harvard: The Quest for Veritas* (Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2006).

³ The tension is reflected, e.g., in the following texts: Cornelius Plantinga, *Engaging God's World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning, and Living* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen, eds., *Scholarship and Christian Faith: Enlarging the Conversation* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); and Harry Lee Poe, *Christianity in the Academy: Teaching at the Intersection of Faith and Learning* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004).

affiliate members of the CCCU, and they are thus equally committed to a Christ-centered, biblically-based, and historically orthodox expression of Christian faith. But now it has been shown that God can be found even on the most secular of institutions in this country, and given the ambiguous results of efforts by institutions in the CCCU to differentiate a Christ-centered education from a merely theistic one, how are such Pentecostal and charismatically informed institutions distinctive, if at all? What would bring students to these schools rather than lead them to opt for the many other CCCU, secular, or even Ivy League institutions that are vying for their tuition dollars and may be giving out just as much if not more in terms of scholarships?

I suggest that Pentecostal and charismatically related colleges, seminaries, and universities are unique because students can find not only God or Jesus Christ on campus, but also the Holy Spirit. To be sure, given the history of all things associated with the Holy Spirit, we might want to embrace this identity very cautiously. However, the following is an invitation to think about how the emphasis on the renewing work of the Holy Spirit can make a positive difference for such institutions amidst the marketplace of educational ideas as we engage the task of education in the global twenty-first century context. Along the way, we must be discerning about how such an emphasis can be divisive instead of uniting, and about the challenges confronting our efforts to integrate what might be called renewal faith within the context of our work as teachers, researchers, and scholars in the wider academy.

Our focus will be on a case study of a particular institution, that of Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia. In this essay, we will explore Regent's renewal roots within the twenty-first century global context, describe renewal studies as it has developed at Regent University's School of Divinity, and then attempt to sketch what might serve as the framework for a distinctively renewal pedagogy across the disciplines. Our goals throughout, however, will

be to explore the possibilities of a specifically renewal approach to higher education vis-à-vis the future of the Christian university.

Renewal at Regent: Past, Present, and Future

Why Regent? In large part because it is presently the one with which I am affiliated and most familiar, but in part also because it is representative of institutions affiliated with the Pentecostal and charismatic tradition. Further, Regent has both undergraduate and a full spectrum of graduate programs reflective of the major university model. Finally, the Regent faculty is presently engaging precisely this question of what it means to be a university in the renewal tradition.⁴

As recounted by Vinson Synan, dean emeritus of the School of Divinity, the founding of Regent University (formerly CBN University) is firmly set within the history of the charismatic renewal movement of the 1960s and 1970s.⁵ To be sure with the establishment of the School of Biblical Studies (now School of Divinity) in the early 1980s, Regent's founder, Dr. M. G. "Pat" Robertson was uncomfortable with the excesses of the charismatic renewal movement,⁶ and thus wanted to avoid sectarian labels: "We are not a Calvinistic school, an Arminian school, a pre-millennial school, an a-millennial school, a Baptist school, a Pentecostal school, a Catholic

⁴ Thus a previous draft of this essay was presented to the Regent University faculty at "Regent's Renewal Roots," Part I of "Global—Renewal—and the 21st Century: Dr. M. G. 'Pat' Robertson, His Legacy and Contribution to Regent University and Christian Higher Education" series, Virginia Beach, Virginia, on 20 November 2009.

⁵ See Vinson Synan's *A Seminary to Change the World: Regent University School of Divinity at 25 Years* (Virginia Beach, Va.: Regent University School of Divinity, 2007).

⁶ Most urgent at that time was the growing realization of the harms that had been initiated by the Shepherding movement. For discussion, see S. David Moore, *The Shepherding Movement: Controversy and Charismatic Ecclesiology* (New York and London: T & T Clark, 2003). For documentation of other excesses of the charismatic renewal movement, see Ian Cotton, *The Hallelujah Revolution: The Rise of the New Christians* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1995). For historical perspective on the abuses of revival movements in the history of Western Christianity, see Ronald A. Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion, with Special Reference to the XVII and XVIII Centuries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950).

school, a Charismatic school. We are a biblical school...fully committed to a belief in the authority of the Scriptures....”⁷ Yet even with these reservations, Robertson clearly expressed: “I enthusiastically practice and fervently believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the working of miracles today. But these should not be considered ‘Charismatic’ experiences, they are ‘biblical’ experiences!”⁸ In other words, Robertson’s vision for the university has always involved what could be called the renewing work of the Holy Spirit.

Robertson’s vision was captured and extended in the life and scholarship of Regent’s most recognized and renowned theologian, J. Rodman Williams (1918-2008).⁹ Williams’ magnum opus, the three-volume *Renewal Theology*, was a major contribution to evangelical theology upon its publication and remains one of the few providing an explicitly renewal perspective in the field.¹⁰ Williams’ ecclesial and academic background epitomized, in many ways, Robertson’s wish for a non-sectarian but yet evangelical understanding of renewal. With training in philosophy of religion and ethics at Columbia University in New York City (including a PhD from that institution), faculty service at Austin Presbyterian Seminary (from 1959-1972), and experience in the charismatic renewal, first in the Presbyterian Church of which he was a part, and then as a participant in the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue, Williams represented the kind of non-sectarian, evangelical, yet ecumenical identity fit for the interdenominational and

⁷ See memo from Pat Robertson to Richard Gottier, Jerry Horner, J. Rodman Williams, and John Rea, 20 August 1982, quoted in Synan, *A Seminary to Change the World*, 12.

⁸ Ibid. In what follows, my references to “renewal,” the “renewing work of the Spirit,” etc., all presume these Robertsonian elements. On their own, they may be too vague for some in the wider Pentecostal and charismatic community, but specified in any particular direction, they might be perceived as being too exclusivistic. Perhaps it how this tension is adjudicated that will be crucial for the development of Pentecostal and charismatically affiliated institutions of higher education in the next generation.

⁹ For an overview of Williams’ life and contributions, see Stanley M. Burgess, “J. Rodman Williams,” in Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Handbook of Evangelical Theologians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 307-20.

¹⁰ J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: Systematic Theology from a Charismatic Perspective*, 3 vols. – vol. 1, *God, the World, and Redemption*; vol. 2, *Salvation, the Holy Spirit, and Christian Living*; and vol. 3, *The Church, the Kingdom, and Last Things* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988, 1990, and 1992 respectively; 3 volumes-in-one edition, 1996).

non-denominational character of the evolving renewal movement. Yet the centrality of the person and work of the Holy Spirit was unmistakable across Williams' *Renewal Theology*.

Of course, Williams' charismatic and renewal perspectives were interwoven with his Presbyterian and Reformed theological sensitivities. The result was that *Renewal Theology* provided, when it was originally published, an alternative to the predominantly Holiness oriented versions of Pentecostal and charismatic theologies,¹¹ even as it demonstrated the plausibility of a Reformed version of renewal.¹² Yet Williams did not insist on "renewal" as being "owned" by the Reformed tradition. Rather, *Renewal Theology* invited consideration about how the work of the Holy Spirit could invigorate any theological tradition, by calling it to its biblical roots as centered on the New Testament church's experience of and testimony to the Spirit's presence and activity. In other words, it was particularly in showing the relevance and possibilities of "renewal" as applied to the Reformed theological tradition broadly construed that *Renewal Theology* also modeled the possibility of the kind of non-sectarian, ecumenical, and biblical commitment to the work of the Spirit characteristic of the legacy Robertson sought to leave.

I want to return to this important point momentarily, but for now, it is important to recognize that this accent on the Spirit's work has been historically neglected or at least under-appreciated, especially in the Western church and its theological traditions.¹³ Undoubtedly part of the reason for this neglect is that the church has perennially been concerned with checking the

¹¹ For the Holiness roots and connections, see Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971); Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, and Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1987); and Cheryl J. Sanders, *Saints in Exile: The Holiness-Pentecostal Experience in African American Religion and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

¹² Since Williams' work, other efforts to combine renewal and Reformed perspectives have emerged, including that of Oral Roberts University theologian, Larry D. Hart, *Truth Aflame: Theology for a Church in Renewal* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005).

¹³ See, e.g., Frederick Dale Bruner and William Hordern, *The Holy Spirit: Shy Member of the Trinity* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984).

abuses and avoiding the messiness associated with charismatic enthusiasm and, in the process, the forces of institutionalization have always threatened to domesticate the Spirit's work.¹⁴ Yet, the contemporary renewal movement is reminding the church catholic of the importance of the life of the Spirit.¹⁵ In this sense, renewal is inherently no more and no less than Christian.

I would like to suggest that such a non-sectarian focus on the renewing work of the Spirit serves as a distinctive identity marker that has the potential to respond to the demands for Christian higher education in the North American and global context. Consider that in North America, as has already been indicated, the renewing work of the Holy Spirit is not the property of any one church, denomination, or theological tradition. Rather, the genius of renewal is its broadly Christian character, more particularly, its call to experiencing and understanding the fullness of life in Christ as empowered, inspired, and led by the Holy Spirit. Hence renewal belongs to the church universal, and it has not only touched but even become a significant feature of the many traditions of contemporary Christianity, whether Reformed, Lutheran, Wesleyan, Anglican/Episcopalian, Catholic, Orthodox, or, in the contemporary landscape, non-denominational and independent churches.¹⁶

¹⁴ As delineated in Jeffrey Burton Russell, *A History of Medieval Christianity: Prophecy and Order* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1968).

¹⁵ See Charles E. Hummel, *Fire in the Fireplace: Contemporary Charismatic Renewal* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1978), and the sequel, *Fire in the Fireplace: Charismatic Renewal in the Nineties* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993); and cp. Thomas C. Oden, *Turning around the Mainline: How Renewal Movements are Changing the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006).

¹⁶ That these are not just possibilities but are also actualities, see, e.g., Calvin H. Chambers, *In Spirit and in Truth: Charismatic Worship and the Reformed Tradition* (Ardmore, Penn.: Dorrance & Co., 1980); Carter Lindberg, *The Third Reformation: Charismatic Movements and the Lutheran Tradition* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1983); Howard A. Snyder, *The Divided Flame: Wesleyans and the Charismatic Renewal* (Grand Rapids: F. Asbury Press, 1986); Robert Webber, *Signs of Wonder: The Phenomenon of Convergence in Modern Liturgical and Charismatic Churches* (Nashville, Tenn.: Star Song Pub. Group, 1991); Paul Josef Cordes, *Call to Holiness: Reflections on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1997); David Hilborn, ed., *"Toronto" in Perspective: Papers on the New Charismatic Wave of the Mid-1990's* (Carlisle, UK, and Waynesboro, Ga.: Acute/Paternoster, 2001); and Joseph D. Small, ed., *Fire and Wind: The Holy Spirit in the Church Today* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002). For a discussion of how the renewing work of the Spirit has impacted the church ecumenical in general and its various traditions and denominations in particular, see the work

Yet while renewal has brought to mainline Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church a certain kind of “evangelicalization,” it has also simultaneously served to open up the world of evangelicalism to a less sectarian, even ecumenical, posture. Renewal Christianity is certainly understandable as being, in some respects, “evangelical-plus,” reflecting its commitment to Christ-centeredness, biblical authority, and historic orthodoxy characteristic of all CCCU institutions; but renewal is potentially more insofar as it also affirms of the work of the Spirit that remains muted at least in some segments of the evangelical world.¹⁷ In fact, it is just these non-renewal (even anti-renewal in some) segments of evangelicalism that have historically dominated institutions affiliated with the CCCU, and even today, many CCCU schools remain deeply embedded within the evangelical tradition that has either been suspicious about the manifestations of the Spirit or has rejected the legitimacy of such work altogether as having ceased after the apostolic period.¹⁸ However, there are increasing openings to the renewing work of the Spirit even within such circles.¹⁹ Not coincidentally, these developments have converged with the broad spectrum of the contemporary renewal movement, from the megachurch to the Emerging church, along with the growing “charismatization” of the Black Church and “Pentecostalization” of Latino/a Christianity in between.²⁰ Without claiming too much, I would

of Fuller Theological Seminary, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology: Ecumenical, Historical & Global Perspectives* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002).

¹⁷ Having just said this, of course, renewalists must also be aware that one of the criticisms often leveled against renewal Christianity is that they think their Christian spirituality as superior to those who have not been filled with the Spirit (or whatever other way in which the Spirit-filled life is designated or understood). This cannot be the *raison d'être* of renewal in the Regent context. The issue is not one of superiority but one concerning the recovery of the biblical and apostolic form of life regardless of our contemporary ecclesial affiliations.

¹⁸ See Jon Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990).

¹⁹ Thus, for example, the splash made by Jack Deere’s *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit: A Former Dallas Seminary Professor Discovers that God Speaks and Heals Today* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), precisely because it revealed that even Dallas Theological Seminary, long a bulwark defending the cessationist position, was not impervious to the Spirit’s renewing work.

²⁰ E.g., Arlene M. Sánchez-Walsh, *Latino Pentecostal Identity: Evangelical Faith, Self, and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003); Shayne Lee, *T. D. Jakes: America’s New Preacher* (New York: New York

suggest that schools in the Pentecostal and charismatic orbit not only have anticipated the confluence of these various trends across North American Christianity, but will be increasingly attractive to many who also consider themselves Christ-centered, Bible-believing, orthodox Christians but do not wish to be divided by traditional denominational or ecclesial labels.

At a second level is that these North American trends both parallel and participate in what is happening around the world. Recent studies are consistent in identifying Pentecostal, charismatic, and similar movements at the vanguard of the explosive growth of Christianity in the global south.²¹ Forty plus years ago, just before the emergence of the charismatic renewal among the mainline Protestant churches, it was already anticipated that Pentecostal-type movements might be the dominant face of global Christianity by the end of the twentieth century.²² These intuitions have proven correct: as of mid-2007, there are an estimated 602,792,000 renewal Christians worldwide, which represents about 27.5% of the global Christian population.²³ Included in this demographic survey are Pentecostal, charismatic, neopentecostal, and neocharismatic believers, the last two groups serving as catch-all categories that comprise thousands of “independent, indigenous, postdenominational groups that cannot be

University Press, 2005); Scott Billingsley, *It's a New Day: Race and Gender in the Modern Charismatic Movement* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 2008); Jonathan L. Walton, *Watch This! The Ethics and Aesthetics of Black Televangelism* (New York: New York University Press, 2009); and Shayne Lee and Phillip Luke Sinitiere, *Holy Mavericks: Evangelical Innovators and the Spiritual Marketplace* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), among others.

²¹ See Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Cf. also David Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford, UK, and Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1993); Karla Poewe, ed., *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994); Harvey Gallagher Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1995); and Allan Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2001).

²² See Henry P. van Dusen, “The Third Force in Christendom,” *Life* (9 June 1958): 113-24

²³ See David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson, “Missionometrics 2007: Creating Your Own Analysis of Global Data,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 31:1 (2007): 25-32, esp. p. 32. The largest group of Christians remains Roman Catholicism, which accounts for approximately half of the Christian world.

classified as either pentecostal or charismatic but share a common emphasis on the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, pentecostal-like experiences..., signs and wonders, and power encounters.”²⁴

One of the major problems with the current discussion on global Christianity concerns its categorization. Most of these groups self-identify using neither the historic denominational associations nor Pentecostal or charismatic designations. Yet it also cannot be denied that the growing forms of Christianity in the majority world, and certainly the forms that are most responsible for the shift of the Christian axis from the Euro-American north to the global south (of Asia, Africa, and Latin America) are groups that are evangelical or Bible-believing in their theological or doctrinal convictions *and* Pentecostal or charismatic in terms of their spirituality, worship styles, piety, and practices.²⁵ What is also clear is the emergence and acceptance of “renewal” as encompassing these otherwise disparate groups, churches, and movements.²⁶

I would like to think that the renewal accent at institutions informed by Pentecostal and charismatic traditions can empower their developments both locally in North America and globally in ways that will establish their uniqueness from other schools, including but not limited to those in the CCCU. It seems clear that such renewal-oriented schools would be poised to meet the needs of the burgeoning numbers of renewal Christians worldwide who either are or will soon be looking for undergraduate and graduate level Christian educational institutions that not only tolerate their spiritual commitments but also nurture them. If a Christian university can go further and demonstrate how renewal perspectives inform and guide its mission that may be even more attractive. The question, of course, is what that means for teaching, scholarship, and service

²⁴ See “Introduction” to Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard van der Maas, eds., *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), xviii-xxi, quotation from xx.

²⁵ See Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

²⁶ As reflected in the use of the “renewalist” categorization in the recent PEW Forum’s “Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals” (October 2006), available at <http://pewforum.org/surveys/pentecostal/>.

in such educational communities.

Renewal and Regent University's School of Divinity: An Emerging Conversation

In the rest of this essay, I hazard a few guesses at this major question, and do so in two major steps. First, I proceed more or less descriptively, recounting how the renewal emphasis has unfolded at the Regent University School of Divinity. Then, in the next section I take a more speculative turn to suggest how the renewal motif can be understood within a liberal arts framework, particularly as that is being developed in Regent's School of Undergraduate Studies, and also make some suggestions about what renewal might mean at the level of graduate and professional education. Again, this case study of renewal at Regent is meant to be no more than a springboard for discussion about possible trajectories for the future of the Christian university, and hence should be read as an invitation to dialogue about if and how this might be implemented or perpetuated at Pentecostal and charismatic institutions of higher education.

In many respects, the outworking of a renewal-self-understanding has occurred very organically in the School of Divinity (SOD), ably guided over the years by Williams and dean (now emeritus) and historian Vinson Synan, among many others. While the SOD has always been engaged with the conversation about renewal studies, the establishment of the PhD specifically in that area in 2003 has catapulted the SOD into the center of the global discussion in this field.²⁷ Yet this does not mean that SOD faculty see eye-to-eye about what renewal means across the theological curriculum. Let me explicate this by presenting two levels of how the

²⁷ There are only a handful other recognized university programs offering PhDs in what might be called the field of Renewal Studies: the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, through its Hollenweger Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements; the University of Birmingham (UK), through its Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies; and The University of Wales, Bangor, through its Center for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies.

renewal notion registers in our work, the first rather uncontested, the second more so.

First, and most obviously, renewal has been and is a major topic of study in SOD. Historians teach classes and write books and articles on the Pentecostal, charismatic, and related renewal movements. Theologians reflect on renewal phenomena, manifestations, and experiences, and attempt to articulate a normative understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Biblical scholars devote their energies to interpretation and understanding of Scripture and related ancient documents and artifacts in the effort to comprehend the renewing work of the Spirit in the history of the biblical traditions and what that means today. Last but certainly not least, practical theologians have worked assiduously on developing a Spirit-centered curriculum, published widely on renewal-related subjects, been sensitive to renewal trends as they relate to Christian formation and ministry, done congregational studies on renewal churches, etc., all of which both contribute to an understanding of renewal Christianity and provide insight into ministerial praxis. For an evangelical school with a central emphasis on the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, all of this should be expected, and none of this should be too controversial.²⁸

Where the debate begins, however, is with the question about whether or to what extent renewal can be a methodology for inquiry rather than just a subject of teaching and research. The establishment of and ongoing deliberations regarding the PhD program in Renewal Studies forced the question. In 2007, the following program definition was passed by the faculty:

The Regent University School of Divinity Ph.D. program understands Renewal Studies as a methodological approach to global Christian engagement with discourses in the academy, church, and world as informed by critical reflection derived from charismatic movements and their practices throughout the history of God's people.

But what does this mean for the work of the SOD faculty? I make some observations in each of

²⁸ SOD faculty has published widely on renewal across the theological disciplines; those interested can follow the work of individual faculty here: http://www.regent.edu/acad/schdiv/faculty_staff/faculty.shtml.

the four major faculty areas of specialization, even while noting where the discussions remain unresolved.

In historical studies, the shift from renewal being a subject of study and research to renewal being a historiographical perspective has significant implications for teaching and research. The former would focus specifically on renewal movements and their events and personalities. The latter, however, produces a historical lens that is not limited to modern Pentecostal or charismatic movements. Rather, the entire history of Christianity is open for reassessment from a renewal vantage point such that the past is retrieved as a critical component for the forging of a new future. Thus scholars like Dr. Stanley Burgess, Distinguished Professor of Christian history at the SOD, have led the way in retrieving these “peoples of the Spirit” who have been marginalized during the patristic, medieval, Reformation, and even Eastern Christian traditions.²⁹ Seen historiographically, then, renewal is not just a twentieth century phenomenon reducible to Pentecostalism or the charismatic movement, but an important feature of the entire history of Christianity. To be sure, such a renewal historiography will be more easily received in the circles of those researching and writing Christian history, even as it will make less sense outside of this arena.

Similarly, in biblical studies, the question is, bluntly put: Is there a distinctively renewal approach to reading and interpreting the Bible? Some have proposed a biblical hermeneutic in the renewal tradition that takes seriously (rather than just giving lip-service to) the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding the reader’s (and the reader’s community’s) cognitive and affective

²⁹ See Stanley M. Burgess, *The Spirit and the Church: Antiquity* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1984); *The Holy Spirit: Eastern Christian Traditions* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1989); and *The Holy Spirit: Medieval Roman Catholic and Reformation Traditions* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997). A new Burgess volume, *Christian Peoples of the Spirit: A Documentary Collection*, is under contract with New York University Press.

response to the biblical text.³⁰ Others have gone even further to suggest that contemporary renewal insights and experience provide perspectives on the biblical material that open up topics and areas of study similar to how a renewal historiography functions in the discipline of Christian history. Thus, Dr. Kevin Spawn, associate professor of Old Testament at SOD, has noted that if charismatic movements have existed throughout the history of God's people, then renewal is not just a New Testament phenomenon, but also applicable to ancient Israel as well. Thus he has proposed correlations between the renewal of the postexilic community of Judah (as preserved in 1-2 Chronicles) and the apostolic and contemporary renewal movements.³¹ To a large degree, this proposal for a distinctively renewal biblical hermeneutic is consistent with a wide range of confessional approaches to biblical hermeneutics that have a long history across the evangelical world (e.g., the work on biblical hermeneutics that has long been practiced in The Wesleyan Theological Society and The Evangelical Theological Society). Yet even so, it remains to be seen to what degree such a renewal hermeneutic will be received within the wider biblical studies academy, which continues to be dominated by historical-critical and literary approaches that remain suspicious of what are seen as confessional or experientially informed interpretive methods.

In theological studies, the shift in question has been that from a focus on the renewing work of the Spirit – *pneuma* in the Greek, thus on the topic of pneumatology, broadly considered – to efforts to renew the theological task altogether from a pneumatological perspective. Scholars have delineated how whole theological traditions are structured by the historic creeds, to the extent that even entire theological systems are essentially patrological (based on the Fatherhood

³⁰ See Kevin Spawn and Archie Wright, eds., *Spirit and Scripture: Examining a Pneumatic Hermeneutic* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010).

³¹ Kevin L. Spawn, "Sacred Song and God's Presence in 2 Chronicles 5: The Renewal Community of Judah and Beyond," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 16:2 (2008): 51-68.

of God as creator of heaven and earth) and even christological (based on the redemptive work of Christ); but the result is the marginalization if not complete disregard of the Spirit.³² So what if we were to begin with the Spirit instead?³³ The work of Wolfgang Vondey and I in SOD suggest that such a renewal theological methodology is, following the path blazed by J. R. Williams, inherently ecumenical but yet also global in scope and content.³⁴ The articulation of a specifically renewal theological method is, at least by now, met with the least resistance, given the previous acceptance of distinctively Calvinist, Lutheran, Wesleyan, etc., theological methodologies.

Finally, in practical theology, it is expected that theological schools that self-identify in distinct traditions will form their students according to those traditions. Hence there is not as much dispute about the need for a uniquely renewal pedagogy for the SOD. Still, there is ambiguity about what that means, and SOD faculty members are at the center of efforts to clarify this notion.³⁵ The results will be beneficial not only to other schools located within the renewal compass, but also for all who are seeking to provide relevant theological education within a global horizon.

There is much more important work being done by my esteemed SOD colleagues that has

³² See D. Lyle Dabney, “Otherwise Engaged in the Spirit: A First Theology for the Twenty-First Century,” in Miroslav Volf, Carmen Krieg, and Thomas Kucharz, eds., *The Future of Theology: Essays in Honor of Jürgen Moltmann* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 154-63, and “Starting with the Spirit: Why the Last Should New Be First,” in Gordon Preece and Stephen Pickard, eds., *Starting with the Spirit: Task of Theology Today II* (Adelaide, Australia: Australia Theological Forum, Inc., and Openbook Publishers, 2001), 3-27, among his other essays.

³³ As in Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996). See also Henry Pitt van Dusen, *Spirit, Son, Father: Christian Faith in Light of the Holy Spirit* (New York: Scribner, 1963).

³⁴ E.g., Wolfgang Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010); and Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), and *The Spirit, Creation, and New Creation: Pentecostal Perspectives on Divine Action in a World of Science* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011).

³⁵ See James T. Flynn, Wie L. Tjong, and Russell W. West, *A Well-Furnished Heart: Restoring the Spirit's Place in the Leadership Classroom* (Fairfax, Va.: Xulon Press, 2002).

not been mentioned. My goal, however, has been limited to providing just a few examples of how renewal has functioned as a historiographical, hermeneutical, and methodological lens for our teaching, scholarship, and theological work. These approaches are certainly not uncontested, but I think the ongoing discussion will further refine and secure the place of renewal not only in renewal circles but also in the wider theological academy.

Renewal, the Liberal Arts, and Professional Education: Actualities & Possibilities

How might the preceding discussion of renewal at Regent inform, if at all, what happens across the full spectrum of the liberal arts, scientific disciplines, and professional education at schools within the renewal orbit? In response, I begin with a recommendation and then raise a series of exploratory questions.

My recommendation consists in the invitation to reflect on the nature of what might be called the renewal worldview. If there is a distinctive gestalt to the way renewalists see and engage the world, such may be suggestive for how renewal can be central to teaching and scholarship outside of the theological studies, broadly considered. On this issue, I present for consideration the work of James K. A. Smith, who teaches philosophy at Calvin College.³⁶

Rather than being a catalogue of propositional beliefs about the world, Smith suggests:

“embedded in the embodied practices and spirituality of pentecostalism are the elements of a latent but distinctive *understanding* of the world, an affective ‘take’ on the world that constitutes

³⁶ See James K. A. Smith, “Advice to Pentecostal Philosophers,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 11:2 (2003): 235-47, esp. pp. 245-46, and developed at length in chapter 2, “Elements of a Pentecostal Worldview,” in Smith’s *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Interventions in Christian Philosophy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), forthcoming. Note that what Smith calls a “pentecostal worldview” is synonymous with the broader and non-sectarian construal of “renewal” that we are working with in this paper.

more of a social imaginary than a cognitive framework.”³⁷ These elements unfold in five directions: (1) a posture of radical openness to God’s doing something different or new; (2) an “enchanted” rather than materialistic or mechanistic view of creation and culture; (3) a non-dualistic affirmation of human spirituality-and-embodiment; (4) an affective, narrative way of knowing (epistemology); and (5) an orientation to mission and justice in light of the coming kingdom of God. I offer these not as definitive of the renewal worldview, but as a catalyst for our own discussion. I wonder if such conversation will lead us to think of renewal not merely as an incidental add-on to an otherwise evangelical Christian worldview, but rather as having the potential to transform our way of thinking and how we do Christian education.

For starters, a renewal worldview invites a more embodied, affective, and holistic epistemology commensurate with the spirituality of renewal piety.³⁸ This has major implications for the future of Christian higher education since the various academic and scholarly guilds to which we belong, by and large, remain entangled with the modernist, Enlightenment, and rationalist epistemological assumptions that are prevalent across the modern university. Yet those of us in quest of a renewal-friendly epistemology now have allies in the work of others searching for epistemological, not to mention neurobiological, models that are not merely cognitivist (or positivistic, rationalistic, or scientific).³⁹ How might the learning which occurs

³⁷ See Smith, *Thinking in Tongues*, p. 54 of the pre-publication manuscript version. Smith here is in dialogue with the work of philosopher Charles Taylor, especially Taylor’s *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2004).

³⁸ On this point, the work of Regent University School of Undergraduate Studies faculty member and theologian Steven B. Sherman, *Revitalizing Theological Epistemology: Holistic Evangelical Approaches to the Knowledge of God* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2008), comes to mind. Although in this Sherman’s primary aim is to provide a sympathetic if not uncritical account of evangelical postconservatism rather than to explicate a renewal epistemology, the results are complementary to the latter task.

³⁹ E.g., on the philosophical front: William J. Wainwright, *Reason and the Heart: A Prolegomenon to a Critique of Passional Reason* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), and James R. Peters, *The Logic of the Heart: Augustine, Pascal, and the Rationality of Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), among other works; and on the neurobiological front, Daniel Goleman, *Emotional*

in this renewal vein be similar to but yet also distinctive from what happens at other CCCU institutions or secular universities given this renewal approach to knowing and teaching?

Further, I wonder if a renewal approach to Christian higher education would provide us with a distinctively theological rationale for embracing the liberal arts curriculum for the university's undergraduate education. Classically understood, a liberal arts education has always been concerned with the formation of whole persons as moral citizens. Certainly a renewal pedagogy would pay attention to the spiritual formation of students as part of such a goal. But might not a renewal pedagogical model also enable us to approach at least some of the contemporary humanistic arts – such as philosophy, history, and even literature – from a perspective that opens up space for the Holy Spirit's nurturing of the Christian virtues? More specifically, to pursue this thought experiment with regard to the study of literature, might not the fact that the Holy Spirit speaks to us not just through our intellects but also through our hearts (e.g., our embodied affections or our interpersonal relations) provide an explicitly theological reason for our expectation that we can learn a great deal from the various literary genres? From a renewal vantage point, would it be outrageous to think that the diversity of literary genres provides a plurality of vehicles that mediates communication to human beings constituted by multiple intelligences?⁴⁰

Mention of literature and human communication leads me next to think about the communicative arts. In this domain, let me conjecture boldly. I wonder, for example, about whether there is a distinctively renewal aesthetic through which we can not only reproduce but

Intelligence (New York: Bantam, 1995), Jaak Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), and Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*, 2nd ed. (New York: Penguin, 2005), among other works.

⁴⁰ Is this a stretch of Howard Gardner's by now classic *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983)?

also, in some small yet no less substantive way, create an “enchanted” world in our artistic work?⁴¹ I don’t think this means a spiritualization of the creative arts. On the contrary, does not the embodied piety of renewal spirituality translate into a theological affirmation of the physical world that in turn sanctifies the material and corporeal productions of the aesthetic imagination? If so, then might not a renewal approach to the creative arts open up to not only an incarnational-christological but also a pneumatological creative sensibility, one that not only enables our work as artists but also inspires modes of creativity that is radically open to the newness of what the Spirit might be saying and doing? The results might be artistic creativity that is “enchanted” (rather than conventionally bound), intersubjective and holistically engaged (rather than either merely subjectivistic or objectivistic), and missionally oriented (rather than merely being creative for creativity’s sake). Hence, I am wondering if there are parallels between how renewal functions methodologically (i.e., historiographically and hermeneutically) in the theological disciplines and how renewal might also similarly function in the communicative, theatrical, cinematic, and journalistic arts.

What about work in the human sciences? In some respects, psychology faculty, for example, may already have what those in other disciplines might not: some common ground especially with colleagues in the evangelical Christian guild who are open to and even utilizing pneumatological language and categories in their work. Included here is acknowledgement of the centrality of the Spirit’s work in the discipline of Christian counseling.⁴² Yet it is also clearly the

⁴¹ Here I take my cues from and read together Leland Ryken, *The Christian Imagination: Essays on Literature and the Arts* (Grand Rapids: Baker 1981), and Patrick Sherry, *Spirit and Beauty: An Introduction to Theological Aesthetics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

⁴² See, e.g., from more explicitly renewal perspectives, Marvin G. Gilbert and Raymond T. Brock, eds., *The Holy Spirit and Counseling*, vol. 1, *Theology and Theory* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1985), and idem, eds., *The Holy Spirit and Counseling*, vol. 2, *Principles and Practice* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1988), and John Kie Vining, *Spirit-Centered Counseling: A Pneumascriptive Approach* (East Rockaway, NY: Cummings & Hathaway, 1995); and from more broadly evangelical viewpoints, H. Newton Malony, Michele Papen-Daniels, and Howard

case that Christian efforts to engage with the wider guild of psychology will just as often confront reductionistic paradigms that resist theistically-grounded, not to mention renewal-related, theories and models. But if any Christian anthropology involves a spiritual (i.e., emotional and affective) dimension, I wonder if generically theistic or even mainstream evangelical traditions will be less equipped to handle the issues since they lack that pneumatic horizon – or, the pneumatological-renewal imagination and worldview – that can play an important role at the level of theory and of practice. In short, might a rigorously investigated and articulated renewal approach to psychology distinguish the study of at least this branch of the human sciences in renewal institutions from a crowded Christian (especially CCCU) field that is struggling to find ways to integrate faith with learning?⁴³

I think a similar argument could be made regarding the social sciences. Given the explosion of renewal movements around the world, there is undoubtedly plenty of descriptive and analytical work for those working in the social scientific disciplines. Here, renewal can be an object of study that will keep political scientists, sociologists, and economists engaged with wider debates in their fields for awhile.⁴⁴ There are various empirical and theoretical questions,

Clinebell, eds., *Spirit Centered Wholeness: Beyond the Psychology of Self*, Studies in the Psychology of Religion 2 (Lewiston and Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), and John Coe and Todd W. Hall, *Psychology in the Spirit: Contours of a Transformational Psychology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009).

⁴³ The burgeoning field of leadership studies also warrants engagement from an explicitly renewal perspective. I was pleasantly surprised to see that the nomenclature of “spirit” is already quite prevalent in the field of leadership studies even in the secularly published literature. An initial Worldcat search combining “leadership” and “spirit” as title keywords identified: John Renesch and Willis W. Harman, *New Traditions in Business: Spirit and Leadership in the 21st Century* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1992); Jay Alden Conger, *Spirit at Work: Discovering the Spirituality in Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994); Larry C. Spears, *Insights on Leadership: Service, Stewardship, Spirit, and Servant-leadership* (New York: Wiley, 1998); Harrison Owen, *The Spirit of Leadership: Liberating the Leader in Each of Us* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1999); Robert J. Spitzer, *The Spirit of Leadership: Optimizing Creativity and Change in Organizations* (Provo, Ut.: Executive Excellence Pub., 2000); Juana Bordas, *Salsa, Soul, and Spirit: Leadership for a Multicultural Age* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2007), among others. This is beside the many titles of theological books devoted to the Holy Spirit and leadership.

⁴⁴ In fact, I myself find the most intriguing research on renewal to be studies by scholars who work in the social sciences - e.g., Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of*

for example, about the political, economic, and social demographics of global renewal and the implications thereof, about the prosperity gospel prevalent in renewal movements and how that facilitates (or not) upward social and economic mobility or how they impact or interact with local and global economic systems, about how renewal contributes (or not) to democratic nation-building, etc.⁴⁵ The role of renewal movements in each of these domains beg for research and study. So long as this is the case, faculty and scholars in the social sciences can teach and write about renewal within the framework of whatever social scientific discipline they have been trained in without worrying too much about the methodological implications of renewal for their work. At the same time, it is also undeniable that the process of focused and extended research on a particular subject or phenomenon will over time refine the methodological tool-kit so that our approaches will be commensurate with the subject of study.⁴⁶ In this case, prolonged engagement with the Renewal phenomenon might itself suggest revisions to the regnant anthropological, sociological, economic, or political-scientific methods that will in turn re-shape these disciplines as we now know them.

Finally, I wish to consider work done in professional disciplines such as education and

Prosperity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2004); R. Andrew Chestnut, *Competitive Spirits: Latin America's New Religious Economy* (Oxford University Press, 2007); Robert Mbe Akoko, “*Ask and You Shall be Given*”: *Pentecostalism and the Economic Crisis in Cameroon* (Leiden: African Studies Centre, 2007); Christl Kessler and Jürgen Rüländ, *Give Jesus a Hand! Charismatic Christians, Populist Religion and Politics in the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2008); and Ruth Marshall, *Political Spiritualities: The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), among many others.

⁴⁵ For example, the recent multivolume Evangelical Christianity and Democracy series published by Oxford University Press – e.g., T. O. Ranger, ed., *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa* (2008); Paul Freston, ed., *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Latin America* (2008); and David H. Lumsdaine, ed., *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Asia* (2009) – calls for a similar series focused on renewal movements in global context.

⁴⁶ See, e.g., Margaret M. Poloma, “Is Integrating Spirit and Sociology Possible? A Postmodern Research Odyssey,” in Amos Yong and James K. A. Smith, eds., *Science and the Spirit: Pentecostal Engagements* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2010), forthcoming; cf. also Amos Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

law (which are graduate schools here at Regent). The former domain invites reflection especially at the pedagogical level. Within the field of renewal studies, Cheryl Bridges Johns has suggested, in dialogue with Paolo Friere's educational theory, that renewal is best understood as a program of spiritual formation and conscientization.⁴⁷ While perhaps more directly applicable for Christian catechesis and discipleship, I wonder if this proposal for a liberative education in the renewal mode may not be pertinent to what we are trying to accomplish here at Regent: that of producing Christian leadership to transform the world? In other words, how might pedagogical goals informed by renewal perspectives be adaptable to or incorporable within a broader set of objectives related to training teachers, educators, and administrators who may or may not work within explicitly Christian environments?

Last but not least, I can't help but reflect on a book by a practicing barrister, and Associate Research Fellow at Spurgeon's College in London, that I had just started reading when I was writing the first draft of this essay. David McIlroy's densely argued theological work, *A Trinitarian Theology of Law*, conducted in extended dialogue with Thomas Aquinas' reflections on law, leads me to pose the following questions for our colleagues in the Law faculty.⁴⁸ First, McIlroy's trinitarian theology of law raises the question about how far an explicitly Christian, rather than merely theistic, approach to law will go in legal circles. Second, and extending the first, to what degree can such a trinitarian account of law not only tolerate but also welcome and even require a substantial pneumatological dimension, whether that proposed by McIlroy himself (in which the Spirit's work is to enable the fulfillment of divine, revelatory, natural, and even human laws – to use the Thomistic categorization – by implanting them into human hearts) or

⁴⁷ Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy among the Oppressed* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

⁴⁸ David McIlroy, *A Trinitarian Theology of Law* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2009).

otherwise? Finally, for now, how might such a trinitarian and pneumatological model inform the teaching of law and perhaps even the practice of law? As a complete novice in the field of law, I have no idea if these questions even make any sense, but perhaps if they are not complete gibberish, that itself might be a sign that our law colleagues have already been thinking in at least some of these directions and that there is already common ground for a broader university conversation on these matters.

The Renewal of the Academy: Can Pentecostal & Charismatic Institutions Lead the Way?

My goal in this essay is quite modest. I have no delusions that any two faculty members at Pentecostal or charismatic affiliated institutions will agree on the definition of renewal or what that might mean for all of us. Instead, my hope is that the essay inspires vigorous conversation and debate about renewal and what is at stake for the future of higher education in Pentecostal, charismatic, and related traditions. To do so, I have proposed that we view renewal neither as a theological –ism nor as a sectarian label. I have suggested instead that it is the intention to cultivate and nurture a distinctive *habitus*, a way of lifelong learning consistent with the Spirit-filled life. If this is so, then is it not also plausible to consider that the renewal motif has the potential to serve as a marker of our spiritual identity, one that emphasizes the transformative work of the Holy Spirit not only in our personal lives, in our community life and worship, and in corporate work together, but also in our teaching, scholarship, and service? I am optimistic that such a renewal perspective, based on the empowering and renewing work of the Spirit, potentially distinguishes Pentecostal and charismatic affiliated institutions from secular colleges and universities (in whom even God is now said to be found), but also from other Christian and even evangelically defined institutions (who otherwise remain very afraid and ignorant of the

Holy Spirit). Perhaps the future of renewal schools, marked by the Spirit's work of *semper renovanda* – renewed and always renewing, to paraphrase a famous Reformed motto – may yet also provide a model for what it means to be a vibrant Christian university in the global context of the twenty-first century.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ I appreciate Vinson Synan for inviting my participation at various phases of this project, culminating in its presentation at the Empowered 21 conference and publication in the book he is editing. Thanks to the following for feedback on previous drafts of this essay: my colleagues, both deans and faculty, in SOD; Louis B. Gallien, Jr., Distinguished Professor of Education, Regent University School of Education; and Carolyn Tennant, Professor of English at North Central University. None of this suggests that the preceding speaks for anyone but myself, I take full responsibility for the ideas presented herein, with hopes only that they will be received for what they are intended: as a stimulus for our reflection and discussion