As the years go by, it becomes harder and harder to remember exactly whose thoughts about what topics have influenced my thinking and beliefs, so I extend a thank-you to all the folk, whether I have met them or not, who have influenced my thinking on this topic. Note that this reflection does not use the phrase “integration of faith in learning” simply because I see integration as taking two or more dissimilar things and bringing them together—each still separate but forming a new collective whole. The integration model according to Jacobsen and Jacobsen degenerates into conflict and scholarship needs to build from a healthy base. Thus, this reflection is more about the foundation of scholarship and teaching rather than a model of how to do something right versus how others do the same thing wrong.

Anything that we deem “great” should be at the forefront of our thinking and, as such, the Great Commandment to love God and to love our neighbor along with the Great Commission to go and make disciples of the nations forms the beginning foundations for this article. From the foundation, my reflection moves to Romans 12:2 in that I believe that both scholarship and teaching are ultimately about transformation. Gyertson has written on the process of head first, then heart, and then hands, and I believe that this is part of the process of transformation that impacts our scholarship and teaching.

I. GREAT COMMANDMENT

Jesus established the framework for all we do in all walks of life during a discussion with the Pharisees as recorded by Matthew:

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

If all of the Law hangs on these two commandments, then all of our scholarship and teaching must hang on these two. If a scholar/teacher truly loves God, then the scholar/teacher cannot help but want to understand what God has said in the scriptures that relate to the scholar’s discipline. For me, I seek to understand what principles of management and leadership God has given us and how we should apply them in our organizations. While theologians have studied the New Testament for two millennia, surprisingly little has been done, to any depth, with application in our organizations. There are books and papers that use and refer to scripture, but little that really goes into the depth of what the scriptures mean to us in our organizations today. The downside of all the books and papers that are surface-level study is that we fail to get to the root issue of the principles. As I studied the Beatitudes, I was amazed at the depth and simplicity of the profound principles. But, only through deeper study of the original Greek, did I find these truths. Not being trained in Biblical Greek makes it slower and more difficult for me to understand the texts and requires the use of a good Lexicon, commentaries, and discussions with theologians who do understand Biblical Greek. I spent time learning exegetical study and research methods so that I could accurately understand, interpret, and apply God’s word. I am convinced that a good scholar is constantly seeking how to learn more research methods and how to use more research tools. Thus, the scholar is always a student.

The second commandment follows the first; for if you truly love God, you cannot help but want to teach others what you have learned from God’s word. W. E. Deming, a mentor of mine, once stated that “[h]e who does no research possesses no knowledge and has nothing to teach.” Dr. Deming indicated that a good researcher is not always a good teacher, but that when he or she is both, that it is a good thing. A good teacher makes the knowledge gained through research not only understandable but relevant. Facts become knowledge, knowledge becomes information, and information becomes wisdom in the process of understanding ever more increasing application while ever more increasing in simplicity.

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3 Mt 22:34-40. All scripture references are taken from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.
Simplicity

God created a very simple universe—a handful of commandments, a few handfuls of principles—yet, man continues to try to complicate and obfuscate (I use a complex term here to illustrate) the simplicity of it all. I recall a meeting in which I mentioned (boasted) that the great benefit of a degree program that the school’s faculty built was its simplicity. I was advised by a professor from another school that no program that was simple could possibly be good. I left that meeting wondering how that professor could ever teach anyone anything. Wisdom exists when concepts and application are explained in a manner that everyone can understand. This is not to say that complexity does not exist—it does—but it exists as a collection of simple systems interacting with each other; this is the core of understanding complex–adaptive organizations.

The research of a topic and the teaching of a topic should not be separate elements, for in the teaching one finds how well one knows the topic. If one finds that one is not all that adept at teaching the simplicity of the topic, it is indicative that one does not fully know the topic. This does not mean that one should not teach until perfection is achieved, but that one should seek to know in his or her teaching how well he or she knows the topic. G. K. Chesterton said, “That if a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly.” This quote was part of an essay about women, education, and expectation of what women do, and I am taking it out of context here and using it to say that good teaching done badly is better than no teaching, for in the questions by the students (and all good students should ask questions) the teacher finds what he or she did not understand clearly enough to present in a manner that everyone can understand.

II. GREAT COMMISSION

A goal of good teaching is to equip the student to go and make other people disciples of Jesus. This, to me, is not in the form of direct proselytizing, but in the form of teaching others what the students learned from the teachers and in the process of maturing to become scholars themselves. Paul framed this when he told Timothy, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”

I believe that for the scholar/teacher this is how we are to fulfill Jesus’ request: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing the them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

It is through the research in the scriptures about management and leadership and through the teaching of the concepts to others that we in organizational leadership can make disciples for Christ. Wisdom shows when you can explain the simplicity to

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6 2 Tm 2:2.
7 Mt 18:18-20.
others when at first the others could not see the simplicity. When our students can then go and teach others, we not only transform the student, but the student, in turn, transforms others.

III. TRANSFORMED

Paul’s letter to the Roman church was in two main parts—philosophy and action—with the following statement as a pivotal point between the two parts: “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Scholars begin their research projects with the intention of not being conformed to the current understanding of their disciplines, but seek to be transformed through the discovery of new insights and information. The word we translate into transformed is the word metamorphoo from which we get the word metamorphosis—a slow conversion from one state to another from which there is no return. The scholar is transformed by the new knowledge and insight that he or she gains through the process of discovery and contemplation. The scholar seeks to validate new discoveries and, as validation occurs, the scholar becomes “changed” and is not able to go back to the prior form of understanding, but now sees the world through new eyes using the new discoveries.

Head

Paul says in Romans 12:2 that this transformation is by the renewing the mind. Scholarship and teaching is about the mind first. We must understand a thing before we know the thing. This is difficult for some people to accept; it seems in that we may seek to know something before we understand it. But for a scholar, it is important to understand something first. For example, to understand the order of the Beatitudes in Matthew 5 is to know the importance and to know how the Beatitudes build one upon another and how the seventh Beatitude cannot occur unless the prior six are all in place. This process of knowing requires a significant amount of time mentally wrestling with the topic until it gives you the blessing of knowing; just as Jacob wrestled with God, so do scholars wrestle with God to understand his word.

Heart

While understanding is in the mind, knowing is in the heart. Simplicity is still the mainstay of knowing, for it is easier to comprehend the simple than it is to know the complex. When we know the importance and value of the simple lessons learned from God’s word, we will know what God’s will is, as Paul pointed out in Romans 12:2. As we know what God’s will is, we can see that it is good, pleasing, and perfect. This is where the teacher gains passion for his or her topic and where students catch the value of the concept. Passion is from the heart, and when the teacher teaches the content that he or she knows, his or her passion shows in the teacher’s eyes, face, and voice/text.

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8 Rom 12:2.
To know one is to love one. Understanding comes first and then knowing. It is the same with personal relationship as it is with scholarly pursuit. Wisdom evolves after a couple get to first understand and then to know each other. This knowing is similar to having faith in the other as the scholar has faith in the discovery of information that becomes knowledge, and then wisdom. With faith, comes works; for if you really have faith, you cannot help but have works as shown in the scriptures:

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.  

When the scholar has faith through knowing he or she must have actions.

**Hands**

Action occurs by the hand/mouth for the scholar in the form of publishing and teaching. Dr. Gyertson’s work on head–heart–hands guides our understanding in how the “hands” are prepared through the understanding of the head and the knowing of the heart. Labor is a joy when you have passion about what you are doing. W. E. Deming, in his theory of profound knowledge, claimed that joy came from profound knowledge and knowing what to do with it. Langford, during a speech at the 2009 Deming Conference, remarked that “Dr. Deming often said we should create joy in work. When he was asked how to do this, he responded: ‘When I understand who depends on me, then I may take joy in my work.’”

When we, as scholars, understand who depends on us, then we can think of how best to serve them. This “them” may be students, editors, conference attendees, or anyone who may benefit from understanding, and hopefully, knowing the value of our research.

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9 Jas 2:14-26.  
10 Gyertson, “Leadership Reflection.”  
11 David P. Langford, “Develop Joy in Learning and Leading” (lecture, Deming 2009 Conference, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, Saturday, October 15, 2011).
IV. WHERE TO PUBLISH

As part of the hands concept and the working of the hand/mouth comes the question of where to publish. Where to teach is usually decided on by the school administrators, and we teach where we are assigned; but it is up to the scholar to decide where to publish. I have been told by some scholars that only publications in tier-1 journals should be the goal, but who reads these? Other scholars of tier-1 journals. I am not opposed to tier-1 journals and would be quite pleased to publish in the top of the line publications, but I am more interested in getting my discoveries out to the people who “depend” on me as a scholar. We might reach 40 scholars with a publication in a top-tier, peer-reviewed journal, but we can reach thousands and tens of thousands by publishing on the web in free-access journals and in large-audience websites. As part of the work of the School of Business & Leadership, I have endorsed and supported the creation of several online journals. As I came to understand that the people who depended on us as scholars at the School of Business & Leadership were the millions of people around the world who did not have the time, skills, etc., to research scripture in order to understand the principles of scripture, but who deeply wanted to know, I came to understand Deming’s concept of how joy in work comes from knowing who I need to serve. Accompanying this joy is the passion of “knowing” and the expression of passion through scholarly publication and teaching.

About the Author

Bruce E. Winston, Ph.D., serves as an associate professor of leadership at Regent University’s School of Business & Leadership in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Dr. Winston teaches, trains, and consults in the areas of leadership and organizational development, as well as university administration and strategic foresight. In addition, he has 13 years of experience leading organizations in the commercial printing industry and 17 years of experience leading academic units at Regent University. Dr. Winston has lectured and consulted in the United States, as well as Canada, Europe, and South Africa. He also speaks and teaches in other areas including communication, quality improvement, and marketing.

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