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THE BIBLE AND THE UNIVERSITY: *Sola Scriptura* and Interdisciplinary Engagement

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If the Bible is a sufficient source for Christian knowledge, why do we need the university? The answer to this question is that true Christian knowing requires a unified approach to knowledge and a recognition that knowing is ultimately for living. The crucial issue for knowing—the most basic of human actions—is whether what we claim to know informs the type of people we become and governs the “rightness” of our actions. The sufficient and necessary conditions for how we know have occupied modern epistemology. This article will deal with “how” we know at some level, but we will seek to address a more fundamental concern related to knowledge: we propose relating the Bible and the university in a way that provides the basis for knowledge that forms our being and acts. To do this, we must supply a unified vision for knowing that provides a foundation for interpreting the meaning and purpose for all things. We believe this foundation of knowledge reflects the biblical view of what it means to know (Prov 9:10) and of what knowledge is for (Matt 22:35–40). We must first establish a Christian conception of knowledge and truth before we relate them to the work of the university. Knowledge is often equated with the apprehension of certain propositions or states of affairs, and truth is often defined as the correspondence with reality.

These are foundational and essential commitments for claiming that one has right ideas about the world, but are they sufficient to account for a biblical vision of knowledge? Christian knowing is a peculiar type of knowledge that is more inclusive and comprehensive. It involves knowing God, his works, and his world. Christian knowing is not necessarily synonymous

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with the discipline of Christian theology, but Christian theology does offer an example of the “proper concerns” of Christian knowing. Christian theology interprets the world through the being and acts of God himself. It mediates the knowledge of God and his Word as the foundations for a Christian worldview that may be employed in other disciplines. Further, we recognize that knowledge of God’s world informs our knowledge of God and his Word. Christian knowing involves engaging in the robust process of knowing God, his Word, and his world that provides a basis for the type of persons we become and how we live our lives.

John Henry Newman expressed this vision for Christian knowing in *The Idea of University*: “All knowledge forms one whole, because its subject-matter is one; for the universe in its length and breadth is so intimately knit together, that we cannot separate off portion from portion, and operation from operation.”¹ Pursuit of a robust Christian vision of knowledge requires engagement with reality at every level, with special attention paid to the unique voices of disciplines that speak to the various strata of reality. In this essay, we attempt to offer a framework for this pursuit. We seek to diagnose the fragmentation of the university and explain how it undermines both Newman’s vision for the university and more crucially the Christian vision for knowing, even while recognizing the ongoing challenges in doing so. Shaping this framework will involve an effort to situate Christian knowing within three complementary theological affirmations: *sola Scriptura*, general revelation, and common grace. This reflection suggests that the Christian worldview paired with a critical realism can facilitate a unified approach to knowing. Finally, in light of our framework, we will offer some implications for the Christian university.

I. KNOWLEDGE AND THE STATE OF THE MODERN UNIVERSITY

Prior to modernity, knowledge was gained through the guidance of an authoritative voice, and the telos of knowing was sapience or wisdom—the proper pursuit of human excellence. Wisdom includes true beliefs about a subject of knowledge, but it also entails an attachment to the subject of one’s knowledge in order for it to be determinative of how one will see the world and live “rightly” in it. Two premodern epistemic commitments shaped this pursuit of knowledge. First, one looks through preunderstanding

¹ John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 45.

or commitment—even if only theoretically—to gain knowledge.² This understanding is reflected in the classic theological statement “faith seeking understanding.” Second, following Aristotle’s epistemic approach, the subject of inquiry dictates the very method one uses to inquire.³

With the dawn of the Enlightenment, however, the pursuit for “sapience” changed to a pursuit for “certainty.” Modernist epistemology redefined the pursuit of knowledge entirely, replacing *belief in pursuit of understanding* with *doubt in search of facts*. This modernist impulse, which distinguished between “scientific knowledge” and “value-judgments,” turned the world of theology upside down.⁴ Key Christian doctrines have been under scrutiny ever since. Specifically, the legitimacy of revelation as the basis of Christian knowledge has been largely dismissed. The early and late modern notions of truth, reason, and knowledge—formed by empiricism, rationalism, and natural sciences—appear to unseat revelation and sapience as genuine truth and knowledge.

Modern understanding of reason and knowledge that follows Locke, Hume, and Kant displaces the two previously noted premodern epistemic commitments and establishes a method for obtaining “true” knowledge that excludes theological commitments. Dallas Willard notes that this approach to knowing becomes even more acute with the arrival of the scientific method; he says, “A vague but powerful idea of the ‘scientific methodology’ came to the fore, and claims to knowledge had to be measured by their conformity or lack of conformity to ‘scientific method.’” He further describes such methods as being “against traditional knowledge in all its forms” because of methodological “overreach” and “imperialism.”⁵ Any claim not derived from it was rejected as not true knowledge but beliefs.

Julie Reuben tells the story of how this epistemic revolution impacted Christian universities. In her book *The Making of the Modern University*, she examines whether Christian American universities that emerged between 1870 and 1930 were able to maintain their mission of providing moral

² W. Jim Neidhardt, introduction to *The Christian Frame of Mind: Reason, Order, and Openness in Theology and Natural Science*, by T. F. Torrance (Colorado Springs: Helmers and Howard, 1989), xv–xx. See also Torrance, *The Christian Frame of Mind*, 1–16.

³ Dallas Willard, “The Bible, the University, and the God Who Hides,” in *The Bible and the University* (ed. David Lyle Jeffrey and C. Stephen Evans; Scripture and Hermeneutics Series 8; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 27.

⁴ See Albrecht Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation* (3 vols., trans. H. R. Mackintosh and A. B. Macaulay; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1900).

⁵ Willard, “The Bible, the University, and the God Who Hides,” 27.

and theological education.⁶ She demonstrates that a belief in the unity of knowledge and commitment to intellectual and moral development were inseparable both in the mission of the institution and curriculum design in these universities. Indeed, the institutional leaders early on possessed the conviction that the acquisition of knowledge had cognitive, moral, and practical characteristics.⁷ However, the story of most of these schools has taken an unfortunate turn. The leaders were not able to retain their commitment to the unity of knowledge. The emergence of the natural science and social science methods led to a disintegrated curriculum, and the aspiration for the moral transformation was assigned to newly developed structures for student development rather than in the academic curriculum.⁸

The resulting fragmentation of disciplines in the modern university has largely eliminated interdisciplinary conversation. Disciplinary boundaries are now accepted, and knowledge is advanced by specialists where theories are proffered in isolation from larger frames of reality. The fragmentation and consequent processes for knowing reduce knowledge to interpretation and theory formation within discrete domains of inquiry. Willard concludes, “The effect of the historical progression in Western intellectual life and in higher education to the present is that knowledge itself, along with truth, disappears from the university setting as a goal.”⁹ This situation emerges from equating knowledge with the results of the scientific method. The university has come to accept knowledge as either the accumulation of details and facts within disciplines or forms of criticism in some disciplines that deconstruct cultural norms.

Many Western intellectuals have sought an overarching method of inquiry, a *mathesis universalis*, by which the whole universe can be explained.¹⁰ This effort, most often couched in the natural sciences, is called *reductionism* (from the Latin *reducere*, meaning “to lead back”). Reductionism is the tendency of some to reduce all the issues in a complex system to its smaller constituent parts. The broad appeal of reductionism is in its offer of simple answers to intricate matters and its alleged mastery

⁶ Julie Reuben, *The Making of the Modern University* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

⁷ Reuben, *The Making of the Modern University*, 10.

⁸ Reuben, *The Making of the Modern University*, 189.

⁹ Willard, “The Bible, the University, and the God Who Hides,” 28.

¹⁰ Alister E. McGrath, *The Order of Things: Explorations in Scientific Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 97–116.

over the universe. To misquote Tolkien, the reductionist seeks “one method to rule them all, one method to find them, one method to bring them all and in the academy bind them.”

Reductionism hinders a fuller engagement with reality by forcing a choice between disparate strategies for making sense of reality. C. S. Lewis provides an eloquent description of the problem with such dichotomous reductionism in his essay “Meditation in a Toolshed.” He describes standing in a dark toolshed when the sun beams through cracks above the door. He says, “From where I stood that beam of light, with the specks of dust floating in it, was the most striking thing in the place. . . . I was seeing the beam, not seeing things by it.” But, as he tells the story, that only lasted for a few moments until his gaze changed from the beam to green leaves moving outside of the shed. From this perspective, he concludes, “Looking along the beam, and looking at the beam are very different experiences.”¹¹ Lewis makes a clear distinction between objective knowledge (“looking at”) and subjective knowledge (“looking along”), and he rejects the reductionism of those who reduce genuine knowledge to merely “looking at.” Lewis concludes, “One must look both *along* and *at* everything.”¹² Lewis’s analogy is a helpful reminder that there is always more than one way to look at a thing, but even it stops short of describing the many ways something can be objectively explained or subjectively experienced.

The most negative characteristic associated with reductionism is the way in which its employment minimizes or dismisses outright the usefulness of other disciplines. A biologist might write off the methodologies and conclusions of sociology or anthropology, reducing all social or cultural behavior to evolutionary processes. A physicist may contend that the quark is the most fundamental component in the fabric of reality and consequently deserves more attention than other sciences. The reductionist under the sway of scientism may reject any explanation for reality outside of the methods of scientific investigation. The humanities, the arts, the social sciences, and religion are tangential detours that provide very little knowledge of the nature of things other than themselves.

II. DOES *SOLA SCRIPTURA* ENTAIL REDUCTIONISM?

Theologians frequently go on the defensive when faced with reductionism

¹¹ C. S. Lewis, “Meditation in a Toolshed,” in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics* (ed. Walter Hooper; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 212.

¹² Lewis, “Mediation in a Toolshed,” 215.

from the natural and social sciences, but they too can be guilty of their own peculiar brands of reductionism. Liberal theologians inclined to reductionistic tendencies minimize the significance of Scripture for theological method. On the other hand, conservative theological reductionists often dismiss the findings of the natural and social sciences because they believe them to pose an inherent threat to biblical truth.¹³ Conservative theological reductionism often goes hand-in-hand with a particular understanding of the Protestant doctrine of *sola Scriptura*. Despite its historical significance for Protestants and evangelicals, *sola Scriptura* has been one of the most widely misunderstood and abused tenets in evangelical theology. Uncritical mutations of this doctrine have resulted in the denial of any place for tradition, reason, and experience in theological formation and have not always accounted for all dimensions of what it means to know in our world.¹⁴

The tension between the sufficiency of Scripture and theological reductionism has several expressions in evangelicalism today. Since the beginning of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy of the early twentieth century, evangelicals have wrestled with questions about how biblical authority relates to the theories and conclusions of the natural sciences. Christian psychologists and counselors have heated debates about the degree to which they should appropriate the research of secular psychology and psychotherapy; evangelicals disagree about how much biblical interpretation should employ extra-biblical resources (e.g. hermeneutics, archaeology, linguistics) in interpreting the message of the Bible. All of these in-house debates rest on how *sola Scriptura* is defined and applied.

Sola Scriptura has been called the formal principle of Christian knowledge. Though the history of Christian thought bears witness to incipient forms of this doctrine long before the Reformation, the Reformers more fully developed the conviction in a late medieval context in which ecclesial tradition was given the same level of authority as Scripture.¹⁵ They insisted that the written Word of God—not any human tradition—is the final standard by which all Christian doctrine and practice must be assessed.

¹³ Gordon Spykman, *Reformational Theology: A New Paradigm for Doing Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 77–78.

¹⁴ Naïve biblicists have used the credo “no creed but Bible” to deny tradition any place in the interpretation of Scripture. This position has also been described as *nuda Scriptura* (“naked Scripture”) or *Scriptura solitaria* (“solitary Scripture”). See Timothy George, “An Evangelical Reflection on Scripture and Tradition,” *Pro Ecclesia* 9 (2000): 206.

¹⁵ For an excellent summary of the practice of *sola Scriptura* prior to and after the Reformation, see Keith A. Mathison, *The Shape of Sola Scriptura* (Moscow, ID: Canon, 2001).

Only Scripture provides a sufficient, clear, and certain standard for saving knowledge, doctrine, and Christian practice.¹⁶ While the Bible does not explicitly teach a doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture, this doctrine is a fitting implication of its inspiration, authority, and purpose: “All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16–17). Does this mean Scripture provides an explicit description of every good work? Certainly not. But it does mean Scripture meets the most basic needs in teaching doctrine and training people to make us wise for salvation and obedient to God. Scripture provides all the necessary articles of belief and commandments necessary for the Christian life.¹⁷ As Thomas Aquinas says, “The truth of faith is sufficiently plain in the teaching of Christ and the Apostles.”¹⁸ The divine inspiration of Scripture ensures its profitableness and sufficiency for doctrine, correction, and obedience. Because the Bible is inspired by God, it is reliable, in line with God’s character, infallible, and inerrant.

The Reformers did not teach *sola Scriptura* in such a way that they rejected a proper place for tradition, reason, and experience in theology or in their Christian knowing. Luther, Calvin, and the other reformers held a proper place for all these things.¹⁹ Instead, they rejected a late medieval view of tradition that elevated it to the level of special revelation. They argued that Scripture was *materially sufficient*, meaning Scripture contains all that is necessary to know God, to be saved, and to be an obedient follower of Christ. This affirmation is not a claim to an exhaustive knowledge of God or his will.²⁰ According to the Second Helvetic Confession (1566), perhaps the most developed Reformation-era statement on this doctrine, Scripture’s sufficiency is for “true wisdom and godliness, the reformation and government of churches; as also instruction in all duties of piety.”²¹

Tony Lane points out that we do not mean to say Scripture is the only

¹⁶ *The Baptist Confession of Faith* (1689), 1.1.

¹⁷ Mark D. Thompson, *A Sure Ground on Which to Stand: The Relation of Authority and Interpretive Method in Luther’s Approach to Scripture* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2006), 274.

¹⁸ *Summa Theologiae*, II. II. I. 10 ad.

¹⁹ Thompson, *A Sure Ground on Which to Stand*, 252–74; Anthony N. S. Lane, “*Sola Scriptura?* Making Sense of a Post-Reformation Slogan,” in *A Pathway into the Holy Scripture* (ed. Philip E. Satterthwaite and David F. Wright; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 300–12.

²⁰ The Westminster Confession of Faith 1.1.

²¹ Quoted in Arthur C. Cochrane, ed., *Reformed Confessions of the 16th Century* (London: SCM Press, 1966), 224.

resource available to us when we say “Scripture alone” in Christian knowing. Tradition, experience (though we may disagree about what counts as a valid spiritual experience), and reason are all resources needed for interpretation. In addition, the insights of other disciplines in the natural sciences, social sciences, and history should all play a role in our knowledge of God, his Word, and his world.²² The Reformation doctrine of *sola Scriptura* is not a denial of other forms of knowledge or other sources of authority in Christian knowing, but rather, it is an affirmation that Scripture is the only *norm* or standard by which these other resources and sources can be measured. Reason, experience, tradition, and other sciences present to us fallible knowledge. Inerrant and infallible Scripture must be the ruler by which the insights of these other sources is weighed.

The Reformers also taught that Scripture is *formally sufficient*, meaning no magisterium or church office is necessary to discern its basic meaning. Scripture is clear by design, and the Holy Spirit enables believers to understand and apply it to their lives. What is more, the clearer portions of Scripture help us make sense of the more difficult portions. This Reformation doctrine of the formal sufficiency of Scripture means, as Timothy Ward explains, that Scripture contains within itself all “the means by which the Lord can lead us into greater covenant faithfulness.”²³ To affirm the formal sufficiency of Scripture is not to reject tradition altogether—or even its derivative authority—but to assert that no extracanonical tradition is a necessary, binding norm needed for Scripture to be interpreted properly.²⁴

A concept of *sola Scriptura* becomes reductionistic when it does not account for the full endeavor of Christian knowing. As the Reformers understood it, *sola Scriptura* is not a rejection of other sources of Christian knowledge but an affirmation that all other sources must be measured and

²² Lane, “*Sola Scriptura?*,” 298–99.

²³ Timothy Ward, *Words of Life: Scripture as the Living and Active Word of God* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2009), 115.

²⁴ Rhynne R. Putman, *In Defense of Doctrine: Evangelicalism, Theology, and Scripture* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015), 211–14. The Second Helvetic Confession states: “The apostle Peter has said that the Holy Scriptures are not of private interpretation (II Peter 1:20), and thus we do not allow all possible interpretations. Nor consequently do we acknowledge as the true or genuine interpretation of the Scriptures what is called the conception of the Roman Church, that is, what the defenders of the Roman Church plainly maintain should be thrust upon all for acceptance. But we hold that interpretation of the Scripture to be orthodox and genuine which is gleaned from the Scriptures themselves . . . and which agree with the rule of faith and love, and contribute much to the glory of God and man’s salvation.” Cochrane, *Reformed Confessions*, 226.

weighed by Scripture.²⁵ Though Scripture is the primary way we know God's truth, God "speaks" through other means such as nature, history, and the internal witness of the Spirit.²⁶

III. NATURE, GENERAL REVELATION, AND COMMON GRACE

Scripture is the only source for us to know the triune God, but it is not the only source for us to know about him and his world. The Bible describes creation itself as one way in which the character of God is revealed to the world. Theologians typically refer to this divine act of self-disclosure in creation as general revelation or natural revelation. It is an incomplete source of knowledge about God that was never meant to be the singular, definitive source. While it is a necessary source for knowing God, it must be complemented by the special revelation of Scripture. But coupled with Scripture, it provides a fuller picture of reality than we would have without it. Scripture and general revelation were meant to be read and understood together and not in isolation from one another. Non-theological disciplines within the university help us better understand the "text" of creation.

The primary locus of general revelation is the natural world. Everyone who examines nature bears witness to the majesty and greatness of the Creator. God purposed to reveal his "invisible attributes" in the creation of the world so that men who suppress the truth are without excuse (Rom 1:18-21). Biblical writers also use personification to describe the way creation "speaks" about the glory of God, even without human speech (Ps 19:1-3). The manifold works of God in creation are a testament to his perfect wisdom (Ps 104:24). God's wisdom has even been embedded in things found in nature (Prov 8:20-36; 30:24-28).

Human nature and history are also considered by some as a locus of general revelation. Since Immanuel Kant, philosophers and Christian apologists have argued that the moral nature of human beings is ample evidence for God's existence. Only an objective moral lawgiver can account for the moral law writ large in every culture and in every time and place. Paul makes this case in Romans 2:11-16 when he asserts God has imprinted his moral law on the hearts of all human beings (2:15). Scripture does not make a direct connection between revelation and the events of world history, but it contains several references to God's providential work in

²⁵ Spykman, *Reformational Dogmatics*, 78.

²⁶ John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God: A Theology of Lordship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2002), 212-13.

directing nations to accomplish his purposes (Job 12:23; Dan 2:21; 4:17; Acts 17:26).²⁷ The study of world history at least provides some evidence of the great theological truths of Scripture playing out before our eyes.

Most evangelical theologians agree that general revelation is inferior to the special revelation God gave through prophets, apostles, the incarnation, and Scripture. General revelation does not reveal God himself or provide saving knowledge of him. It is almost universally understood among evangelicals that the study of nature, history, and the human being is a “supplement to, not a substitute for, special revelation.”²⁸ Furthermore, evangelicals acknowledge the suppression of truth from general revelation and at least some distorting noetic effect of sin that prevents human beings from being fully aware of what creation reveals.

Though most evangelical theologians affirm the notion that God objectively reveals himself in nature and the human conscience, they disagree about the *scope* and *effectiveness* of general revelation. Some theologians suggest general revelation is restricted specifically to ways in which God directly reveals himself in creation. The late Robert L. Thomas writes, “Any efforts to widen the scope of general revelation to include information or theories about aspects of creation, man, or anything else besides God do not have support from the Bible, which limits the scope of general revelation to information about God.”²⁹ By contrast, Robert K. Johnston suggests that a biblical case can be made for including experience, culture, and art under the broader category of general revelation.³⁰

Other evangelical theologians like Cornelius Van Til and Gordon Spykman posit a reciprocating relationship between general revelation as the created “Word” of God and special revelation as the inspired “Word” of God, so that they must be interpreted alongside of each other with the aid of Scripture.³¹ The natural scientist plays a role in making better sense of God’s created word in nature because “all created reality reveals the holding power of God’s Word *reflexively*.”³² Discoveries made in science correspond with things revealed in Scripture, but they also reflect the glory of God to those who see them so that “we gain insight into the

²⁷ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 123.

²⁸ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 141.

²⁹ Robert L. Thomas, “General Revelation and Biblical Hermeneutics,” *TMSJ* 9.1 (1998): 11.

³⁰ Robert K. Johnston, *God’s Wider Presence: Reconsidering General Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014).

³¹ Spykman, *Reformational Theology*, 78–83.

³² Spykman, *Reformational Theology*, 80; italics his.

‘knowledge of God’ as Creator (Calvin) by observing how his various creatures respond to the holding power of his Word, each creature ‘after its kind.’”³³ This holding power of his Word has implications for every aspect of created reality: migrating birds, land use, human rationality, and child development, among others. Every aspect of reality has its own manner of testifying back to God: “For from him and through him and to him are all things” (Rom 11:36).

God’s words have always been needed to interpret God’s works (Gen 2:15–18). Daniel Strange helpfully notes that God’s works in creation are “hermeneutically ambiguous.”³⁴ God’s purpose was never for general revelation to operate isolated from special revelation. We observe this fact in the pre-Fall reality present in the Garden of Eden (Gen 1–2). Furthermore, while the Fall created a new epistemic condition, that does not mean that special and natural revelation have ever been disentangled entirely.³⁵ While God’s revelation “comes to us through various media (nature, history, word, person), all of which are authoritative and consistent, all of which are interdependent on the others,”³⁶ to borrow from Calvin, the “spectacles of Scripture” correct our blurry vision and allow us to read creation rightly.³⁷ This is even more acutely the case after the Fall. We should always interpret the world *through* the Word.³⁸

We ought to take seriously that we interpret the Word *in* the world, which according to Calvin is “the theatre of God’s glory.”³⁹ Van Til illuminates the significance of Calvin’s imagery when he says, “Saving grace is not manifested in nature; yet it is the God of saving grace who manifests himself by means of nature.”⁴⁰ In other words, the purpose of general reve-

³³ Spykman, *Reformational Theology*, 81.

³⁴ Daniel Strange, “Not Ashamed! The Sufficiency of Scripture for Public Theology,” *Themelios* 36.2 (2011): 251.

³⁵ Cornelius Van Till, *Introduction to Systematic Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1974), 78. “Hence we should not think of the revelation of God in nature and seek to establish man’s responsibility from that alone, as though nothing else were to be taken into consideration. No concrete case exists in which man has not more than the revelation of God in nature. It is no doubt true that many have *practically* nothing else, inasmuch as in their case the tradition of man’s original estate has not reached them and no echo of the redemptive principle has penetrated their vicinity. Yet it remains true that the race as a whole has once been in contact with the living God, and that it was created perfect. Man remains responsible for these facts. Back of this arrangement is the Creator and, therefore, the sovereign God.”

³⁶ Strange, “Not Ashamed!,” 251.

³⁷ Cf. also John Calvin, *Institutes* I.vi.1, xiv.1.

³⁸ Strange, “Not Ashamed!,” 251.

³⁹ Calvin, *Institutes*, I.v.8; II.vi.1; cf. also I.xiv.20.

⁴⁰ Van Til, “Nature and Scripture,” in *The Infallible Word: A Symposium* (ed. N. B. Stonehouse

lation is to provide the theatrical set for God's redemptive works in Christ, and at the same time it also becomes an object of his very redeeming work. Van Til further states, "Here then is the picture of a well-integrated and unified philosophy of history in which revelation in nature and revelation in Scripture are mutually meaningless without one another and mutually fruitful when taken together."⁴¹ Thus, natural revelation was never meant to function by itself and was insufficient for Christian knowing without special revelation. It is sufficient as the context for God's redeeming Words and works and is a sufficient object of God's redemption. The question remains, however, how we might (and can we) affirm the reciprocal claim. Special revelation was never meant to function by itself. We affirm that it is sufficient as the revelation of God and his interpretation of his redeeming works, and we affirm that it is also sufficient as the redeeming word-act. We do wonder if special revelation would be sufficient for Christian knowing without natural revelation.⁴²

Knowledge advanced in the wider academy is a product of common grace. We suggest that common grace entails two components: God's sustaining and restraining power and a demonstration of God's goodness to allow (perhaps cause) fallen creatures to think and act with consistency and to inflect some harmony within the creation order.⁴³ This proposal is consistent with how the early Reformers viewed this doctrine. Calvin, along with his contemporaries Heinrich Bullinger, Wolfgang Musculus, and Peter Vermigli, affirmed a notion of divine mercy and favor (distinct from saving grace in operation and purpose) upon humanity in general—restraining sin and allowing human life to continue as a type of grace.⁴⁴

and Paul Woolley; Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1946), 266.

⁴¹ Van Til, "Nature and Scripture," 269. "God's revelation in nature, together with God's revelation in Scripture, form God's one grand scheme of covenant revelation of himself to man. The two forms of revelation must therefore be seen as presupposing and supplementing one another. They are aspects of one general philosophy of history" (266).

⁴² John Frame expounds the relevance of this recognition from a worldview perspective when he says, "Christians sometimes say that Scripture is sufficient for religion, for preaching, or theology, but not for auto-repairs, plumbing, animal husbandry, and dentistry. That is to miss an important point. Certainly, Scripture contains more specific information relevant to theology than to dentistry. But sufficiency is not sufficiency of specific information but sufficiency of divine words. Scripture contains divine words sufficient for all of life. It has all the divine words the plumber needs, and all the divine words that the theologian needs. So, it is just as sufficient for plumbing as it is for theology. And in this sense, it is sufficient for science and ethics as well." John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R), 221.

⁴³ Strange, "Not Ashamed!," 248.

⁴⁴ For an overview of each, see J. Mark Beach, "The Idea of 'General Grace of God' in *Some Sixteenth Century Reformed Theologians other than Calvin*," in *Church and School in Early Modern Protestantism: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Muller on the Maturation of a Theological*

Later, in development of this doctrine, Dutch Reformed theologians more explicitly emphasized that God grants grace for moral virtue and natural provisions.⁴⁵ Indeed, Kuyper and Bavinck represent an “important shift in the discussion on common grace as an attempt to reconcile the doctrine of total depravity with one’s everyday experience of human creativity and virtue.”⁴⁶ Common grace served for Kuyper to reflect on God’s universal intent of saving grace. The accomplishment of Christ’s redemption restores humanity to its creational integrity and creational purposes. Thus, by God’s common grace, the created integrity is preserved because sin does not destroy the faculties and relational capacities of humanity but rather misdirects them.

We previously cautioned against a hard separation of general and natural revelation for epistemic/hermeneutic concerns. Within this vein, Peter Leithart argues for the needed category of a “middle grace.”⁴⁷ His argument determines that much of the efficacy of so-called “natural revelation,” in all actuality, finds its true epistemological ground in the “special revelation” of Scripture. So, the influence of notions such as a moral consensus and/or the sanctity of marriage are thus “not a product of pure ‘common grace’ (devoid of all contact with revelation), nor of ‘special grace’ (saving knowledge of God through Christ and his word), but what I call . . . ‘middle grace’ (non-saving knowledge of God and his will derived from both general and special revelation.”⁴⁸ His use of middle grace reminds us of Van Til’s observation that special and natural revelation have never been entirely disentangled.⁴⁹

Tradition (ed. Jordan Bailor, David Sytsma, and Jason Zuidema; Studies in the History of Christian Traditions 170; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 97–109.

⁴⁵ Herman Kuiper, *Appendix to Calvin on Common Grace* (Goes: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1928), i–iv.

⁴⁶ Dennis Greeson, “Kuyperian Molinism? A New Perspective on the Problems of Common Grace,” accessed May 26, 2020, https://www.academia.edu/38244897/Kuyperian_Molinism_and_the_Problems_of_Common_Grace.

⁴⁷ Strange, “Not Ashamed!,” 253.

⁴⁸ Peter J. Leithart, *Did Plato Read Moses? Middle Grace and Moral Consensus* (Biblical Horizons Occasional Paper 23; Niceville, FL: Biblical Horizons, 1995), 4–5. Elsewhere Strange notes the “importance of acknowledging phenomenologically the way religions, in their myths, doctrines, rituals, etc., have idolatrously taken and distorted not simply ‘natural’ revelation, but redemptive-historical ‘special’ revelation.” Gavin D’Costa, Paul Knitter, and Daniel Strange, *Only One Way? Three Christian Responses to the Uniqueness of Christ in a Pluralistic World* (London: SCM, 2011), 120.

⁴⁹ Van Til, *Introduction to Systematic Theology*, 78.

IV. THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE FOR THE CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

Sola Scriptura does not rebuke other sources of knowledge about God, his world, or how we live in it. It establishes the authoritative rule of God over all academic disciplines by establishing Scripture's final authority within the nexus of Christian knowing, which is "inspired" and "commissioned" by the very same God who inspired the Scriptures. Though God's Word is expressed in creation and the internal witness of the Word, Scripture is the only normative standard by which we assess the encounter with his Word in general revelation and discern the genuine activity of the Spirit in our lives.⁵⁰

Scripture does not provide exhaustive knowledge of God, the human condition, or nature but does provide all the knowledge necessary and sufficient for formulating a robust Christian worldview. As Gordon Spykman observes, Scripture is "the only . . . noetic key to a right understanding of the ontic order of created reality. It is the indispensable pair of glasses . . . which we with our sin-blurred vision must now wear in order to discover the meaning of creation, history, Christ, religion, and the rest. If we are serious about the search for truth as related to the Truth, we cannot bypass this Book."⁵¹ Scripture alone provides us with the essential framework for engaging reality, even if it does not account for all the methods of investigation needed at every stratum of reality. We recognize and practice the ultimate authority of Scripture whenever we submit to its truth as the lens through which we know our world and live in it.

The Bible is the best and most complete source of the knowledge of God on earth. With Scripture, God personally and verbally reveals his character, his nature, his purposes, and his activities in human history. Only the written Word of God provides us with sufficient knowledge of the work of God in Christ, who is "the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of his nature" (Heb 1:3a). However, the divine author of Scripture is still selective about what he reveals about himself (Deut 29:29; Rom 11:34; 1 Cor 2:16) and Jesus Christ (John 20:30; 21:25). While no source provides us with better or more complete knowledge of God, other sources like tradition, reason, and experience remain valuable and necessary auxiliary tools for the theological enterprise. We may glean knowledge from other sources of truth, but Scripture alone is inerrant and infallible.

⁵⁰ Frame, *The Doctrine of God*, 213.

⁵¹ Spykman, *Reformational Theology*, 76–77.

Scripture does not provide us with a comprehensive account of natural or human history. It does, however, provide us with the grand narrative through which all of natural and human history should be interpreted. Scripture accounts for the origin and meaning of creation, the Fall of that creation as a consequence of human sin, God's redemptive activity in Israel, Christ, the church, and the inevitable conclusion to human history in the final consummation of the Kingdom of God. The historian has his proper stratum for investigating reality, but the historian with a worldview shaped by the biblical narrative has a better grasp on the deeper meaning behind human events than one who does not. Human history repeatedly testifies to divine providence in human activity, the folly of sin and rebellion against God, and humanity's great need for Christ.

Only Scripture reveals the image of God in every human, the fallen nature of human beings, and the way by which we become new creatures in Christ (2 Cor 5:17). Scripture alone provides a clear revelation of human purpose. While human beings may recognize human dignity through general revelation or common grace, only Scripture provides a sufficient foundation for that dignity in the *imago Dei*.

Though Scripture is the primary means by which we know the fundamental human condition, it can be supplemented with other sources that bridge the gaps of our knowledge about it. Again, we must recognize the authorial intent of Scripture. If it was never intended by its divine-human authorship to describe all the mechanics of the human anatomy or every inner working in human psychology, then it is an affront to its authorial intent and authority to make such demands of it. No source better describes the spiritual nature of human beings than the Bible, but human beings are complex, embodied creatures who also wrestle with hormones, emotions, and memories not detailed by Scripture.

Every stratum of human nature has its own method of inquiry, and the resources of the natural and social sciences as well as philosophy can be of great value in making sense of the strata not explicitly addressed in the Bible. Scripture alone explains the root cause for human brokenness, but it does not enumerate every symptom and ailment of that broken human condition (e.g. physical illnesses, mental illnesses, reasons for economic disparity). Lane asks an important question of those who uncritically refuse social sciences any place in the contemporary study of theological anthropology: "How useful would a contemporary Christian doctrine of humanity that studiously refused to learn anything from modern

anthropology, psychology, sociology, biology, *etc.* be unless it was already found in the Bible? This does not imply an uncritical absorption of such disciplines, only that the denial that they have anything distinctive to contribute is not realistic.”⁵²

Though it does not give specific instructions for every aspect of life, the Bible alone provides us with a sufficient ethical framework through which every moral decision can be made. Biblical authors provide clear moral teachings and pictures of moral goodness for us. The indwelling Holy Spirit aids the believer in comprehending and applying biblical instructions to his or her life. Even still, there is an important role for tradition, reason, and experience to play in addressing moral dilemmas not explicitly mentioned by Scripture.

V. A CHRISTIAN VISION OF KNOWLEDGE FOR THE UNIVERSITY

Methodological reductionism has rendered a situation in which we are unable to unite all things and provide contact with the whole of reality. These moves lead to the displacement of the unique contribution of the Christian faith to knowledge. “The ethos of the modern secular research university,” John Webster says, “is such that Christian theology can only exist there at cost to some of its positive character as the reflective life of the culture of faith.”⁵³

In recent decades, evangelical Christians working in higher education have sought to regain a place for the Christian faith within the university, and many have called for a recovery of a distinctive Christian approach to education.⁵⁴ Some of these efforts have proposed a model of integrating the Christian faith with other disciplines. Integration often results in unintended costs because it is advanced with what Webster calls “defensive gestures.” Webster identifies an “extraordinary high level of anxiety” that has often been shown by theology “about its place in the

⁵² Lane, “*Sola Scriptura?*” 302; italics his.

⁵³ John Webster, *The Culture of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 101.

⁵⁴ David S. Dockery, *Renewing the Minds: Serving Church and Society through Christian Higher Education* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007); Dockery, ed., *Faith and Learning: Handbook for Christian Higher Education* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012); David Claerbaut, *Faith and Learning on the Edge: A Bold New Look at Religion in Higher Education* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004); Duane Litfin, *Conceiving the Christian College: A College President Shares His Vision of Christian Higher Education* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004); Bruce Riley Ashford, “What Hath Nature to Do with Grace? A Theological Vision for Higher Education,” *Southeastern Theological Review* 7, no. 1 (2016): 3–22.

universe of learning,” along with a “deference to more prestigious models of inquiry” and a “reticence in fielding its own rhetoric or appealing to its own grounds.”⁵⁵ When this occurs, integration may accomplish limited results. The model may succeed in holding back the encroachment of various assumptions that undermine the Christian faith, and it may mitigate against the isolation of disciplines. Yet, the risk is that we surrender the “proper concerns” of Christian knowing and the contribution that it makes “by being nothing other than itself.”⁵⁶

A truly Christian epistemology requires neither world-denying obscurantism nor a sacrifice of biblical convictions. Truth, wherever found, points back to reality, and reality ultimately serves as a witness to the glory of God. Our goal as knowers is not epistemic mastery over reality, *à la* modernistic reductionism. Rather, we want to engage with reality—to make sense of our experience and have a competent knowledge of God and the world he created as we move through it.⁵⁷ Our motivation as Christian believers is to know reality for God’s glory. Though all truth belongs to God no matter where we discover it, our uniquely Christian epistemology differs from those of the unbelieving world because we take the authority of Scripture seriously.⁵⁸

Christian theologians and philosophers have shown ways in which a robust realism can prevent theological reductionism. Esther Meek, in her interaction with the work of Michael Polanyi, has developed a covenantal epistemology that stresses purposeful epistemic contact with the various levels of reality, not mere correspondence, and confidence in our ability to know, not burdened by certainty.⁵⁹ Following the work of Polanyi and sociologist Roy Bhaskar, Alister McGrath has made a case for critical realism that recognizes the stratification of all human knowledge.⁶⁰ We will here summarize the key points about their respective versions of realism that we believe are central to a truly interdisciplinary theological epistemology.

First, reality exists independently of our knowledge and perception

⁵⁵ Webster, *The Culture of Theology*, 103.

⁵⁶ Webster, *The Culture of Theology*, 103.

⁵⁷ Esther Lightcap Meek, *Longing to Know: The Philosophy of Knowledge for Ordinary People* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2003).

⁵⁸ Frame, *The Doctrine of God*, 199.

⁵⁹ Meek, *Longing to Know*, 124–40; Meek, *Contact with Reality: Michael Polanyi’s Realism and Why it Matters* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017).

⁶⁰ Alister E. McGrath, *A Scientific Theology*, vol. 2, *Reality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 209–44; McGrath, *The Science of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 139–52.

of it. The majority of people intuitively believe this proposition and act accordingly, largely because its alternative, anti-realism, is an unlivable tenet. While this claim is by no means distinctively Christian, it is essential to a biblically informed Christian worldview. When we say we believe God exists, what we really mean is that God exists independently of our mental conceptions of him. The Christian doctrine of creation clearly distinguishes between the transcendent Creator and the created knowers that perceive him. Without a robust realism, there can be no ground for Christian truth or truth of any kind for that matter. Everyone would be solipsists, and everyone else would be figments of their imaginations.

Second, our minds play an active role in the way we know and perceive reality, as seen in Michael Polanyi's influential work *Personal Knowledge*. We are not passive recipients of objective knowledge about the real world. Instead, we formulate beliefs about the world as we perceive it, critically reflect on which of those beliefs actually correspond to reality, and offer creative proposals for explaining why the world is the way it is. We encode our beliefs with symbols and metaphors that act as catalysts for deeper understanding. We approximate in our descriptions. And because the human mind is prone to error and miscalculation, we hold all of our beliefs with varying degrees of provisionality.

Third, ontology directs epistemology. Simply put, the way things really are governs the way things are known. The "specific nature of some aspect of reality determines the *manner* in which it is to be known, and the *extent* to which it can be known."⁶¹ Proving an explanation of Torrance's understanding of this very point, Elmer Colyer writes, "The nature of the object or subject-matter in question defines the methods employed in investigating it, the mode of rationality used in conceptualizing what is discovered, and the form of verification consonant with it."⁶² As Bhaskar illustrates this idea, a stone can be thrown because it is solid; it is not solid because it can be thrown. In the same way, the nature of a thing defines the methodology by which it can be known. McGrath appropriates this important principle in defense of theology against positivists who insist that the only known truths are those that are directly observable. The fact that we cannot physically observe a non-material being does not logically necessitate that a non-material being does not exist.

⁶¹ McGrath, *The Science of God*, 144.

⁶² Elmer Colyer, *How to Read T. F. Torrance: Understanding his Trinitarian & Scientific Theology* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001), 322; cf. also Thomas F. Torrance, *Theological Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), xii.

Finally, reality is complex and layered with different strata or levels of understanding. The various strata of reality require multiple methods of investigation. Each stratum could bring discipline-specific knowledge to bear on the same real thing because of the complexity of that reality. Real things exist with deference to these strata, and each stratum requires its own method of investigation. As McGrath observes, “A unitary understanding of reality, such as that mandated by a Christian doctrine of creation, does not demand that each human intellectual discipline should adopt identical methods for their tasks, but that they should accommodate themselves to the distinctive natures of those aspects of reality which they attempt to represent and depict.”⁶³ In the natural sciences, no one methodology has explanatory power over all the phenomena of nature. For example, a lion on the African plains could be studied by a veterinarian, a biologist, an ethologist, a biophysicist, a biochemist, an ecologist, and many other disciplines.

A biblical case study might better illustrate the many means within the university required to engage with the whole of reality. Consider the question, “Why did Jesus die?” As theologians, we instinctively answer that question with a theological answer: “Jesus died for sinners.” This answer is, of course, faithful to Scripture and true. Biblical authors give this answer as the *telos* or final cause of Jesus’s death (Isa 53:5–6; Rom 3:25; 1 Pet 3:18; 1 John 2:2). This proposition corresponds to a divinely ordained state of affairs, but it is not the only true answer someone could offer to this question as it is stated.

A social historian might answer the same “why” question differently: Jesus was executed because Jewish religious authorities and Roman officials perceived him to be a social, political, and religious threat. This proposition would also be true because it corresponds to the complex realities surrounding Jewish religious power in the first century, the claims made by or about Jesus, and the ongoing tension between Jews and their foreign rulers. Such a claim is consistent with the threat of death that followed Jesus throughout his ministry (Luke 4:29; John 8:59; 10:31) and that came to a head with his cleansing of the temple on the week of Passover (Luke 19:45–48).

Likewise, natural scientists may be able to shed new light on the same event. A biologist or medical doctor might spell out how Jesus died of asphyxiation and heart failure resulting from blood loss and difficulty

⁶³ McGrath, *The Order of Things*, 107.

breathing on the cross. A biochemist could talk about the change of oxygen levels in the blood due to this asphyxiation. Physicists could wax eloquently about the change or redistribution of energy that occurred when Jesus died. Sociologists, psychologists, and other social scientists may be able to offer additional insights into the emotions, motivations, and personality types involved in the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. Astronomers, astrophysicists, and meteorologists could offer competing natural explanations for why “darkness came over the whole land” and why “the sun’s light failed” (Luke 23:44-45).

If asked, a representative from every department in a Christian university could give a presentation on the real event of Christ’s suffering, either explaining the event itself or unpacking its ramifications in history, art, literature, etc. One might observe that none of these natural explanations relate to the “meaning” of events, whether theological or historical, but the “how” and “why” questions are indistinguishable on the level of natural observation. How and why questions both relate to different types of causes (i.e. material causes, formal causes, efficient causes, and final causes). A naturalistic reductionist would reduce the events surrounding Jesus’s death to a material or efficient cause. In so doing, he or she would miss the whole reason why Jesus died and its ongoing effects in history. The theological reductionist might discount the efficient and material causes of the other strata all together and consequently miss the beauty and complexity of the whole picture.

VI. PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITIES

So, how do we put into practice a Christian theory of knowledge that recognizes the sufficiency of Scripture for worldview formation *and* the complex nature of God’s created world with the need for interdisciplinary engagement? We here want to offer suggestions for Christian universities committed to a coherent Christian vision of knowledge, faith, and practice. First, integrate *worldview formation* into the mission and vision of the university. Many Christian liberal arts schools give lip service to the notion of a Christian worldview but give little attention to the integration of worldview studies at every level of the university. To integrate worldview formation thoroughly begins with viewing the Bible as God’s thesis for the world,⁶⁴ so that whatever we know, we know in relation to

⁶⁴ H. Evan Runner, *The Relation of the Bible and Learning* (Jordan Station, Canada: Paideia,

our knowledge of God⁶⁵ and his purposes in the world.⁶⁶ If worldview integration is a vital part of a school's mission and vision statement, then there are internal accountability mechanisms to ensure this process is done well (e.g. institutional effectiveness, accrediting agencies, trustee systems).

Second, Christian universities would do well to appoint a theologically trained worldview specialist—who embodies personally and professionally the mission and vision of *worldview formation*—to the academic leadership of a school. This specialist's role would be similar to the professional development program that has been adopted by the newly formed International Alliance for Christian Education, and this academic officer would be responsible for developing specific curricular and cocurricular outcomes that reflect the robust appropriation of *worldview formation* in the mission and vision of the school. In addition, they should facilitate the formation of the needed conceptual frameworks and faculty and staff development initiatives to integrate *worldview formation* across the university, with specific attention given to implementation in every class and ensuring that it is integral to every major or discipline. It is not enough for Christian schools simply to offer a regular curriculum like those of their secular counterparts with the small addition of a Bible class or two. Concentrated efforts need to be made to assess the curriculum from top to bottom to ensure attention to worldview and to guarantee that a Christian theory of knowledge shapes the beginning of the student's journey and is reinforced in the capstone of the curriculum. Further, it is not enough for Christian schools to implement worldview integration merely academically. If formation of people is the ultimate goal, integration of Christian worldview must be embodied within the institution's culture and modeled by faculty, staff, and student leaders.

Third, a Christian worldview course at the beginning of a student's degree program can train students in what the sufficiency of Scripture means for their own outlook on the world and the way in which they engage in their respective majors and how it should shape the type of people they are becoming. A course like this would have an evangelistic or apologetic function for non-Christian students, but it would also provide confidence for students who are believers and supply a vision of Christian

1982), 56.

⁶⁵ Alvin Plantinga, "When Faith and Reason Clash: Evolution and the Bible," *Christian Scholar's Review* 21 (1991): 30.

⁶⁶ Dallas Willard, "The Bible, the University, and the God Who Hides," 20–24; John Webster, *The Culture of Theology*, 99–114.

discipleship that calls for the stewardship of one's entire life. We would encourage offering a primary textbook on worldviews that would be coupled with worldview books geared directly toward the student's declared major. We strongly recommend individual volumes from the 15-volume Crossway series *Reclaiming the Christian Intellectual Tradition*, edited by David S. Dockery, as supplemental texts for education, history, science, literature, arts, political science, psychology, and biblical studies students.

Finally, and most importantly, non-religion faculty need hands-on training in worldview formation and expression. We mentioned the need for professional development and training above when we discussed the role of academic officers who will be needed to oversee worldview formation. It is important to recognize that appointing someone with these responsibilities and actually prioritizing the initiative are different. This distinction warrants highlighting it again. We may presume the faculties at evangelical universities profess faith in Christ and can even sign a doctrinal statement affiliated with the university. We cannot presume they have been trained in any formal way to give expression to Christian worldview concerns outside of their own personal discipleship experiences or time in the local church. For this reason, faculty workshops and seminars focused on worldview formation can encourage them to seek ways to bring explicit attention to God's creative Word in their classrooms. Within the Christian university, natural scientists, social scientists, historians, and humanities scholars should be able to articulate the Christian worldview in each of their distinctive disciplines.

VII. CONCLUSION

Theology unifies the various strata of reality by pointing back to the God who stands behind reality at its every layer. Torrance says, "The kind of order that ought to be realized in the world is the law of God's love."⁶⁷ He explains that "[it] is creative and normative, redemptive and regulative, at the same time."⁶⁸ The natural world is God's creation, a created word that testifies to the existence and glory of God (Ps 19:1–4; Rom 1:20). The events of history communicate God's providence in bringing about his purposes. The human being is created in his image. Though natural and theological science pursue the created order in different directions, Torrance suggests, "Dialogue can help theology to purify its apparatus of

⁶⁷ Torrance, *The Christian Frame of Mind*, 20.

⁶⁸ Torrance, *The Christian Frame of Mind*, 21.

concept and term ... freeing it to unfold knowledge of the living God on the proper ground of his self-revelation to mankind within the structured objectivities and intelligibilities of the space-time world where God has placed them.”⁶⁹ Torrance further reasons that “Since the new scientific view of the universe is not hostile to the Christian faith ... it is now possible for theology to engage in constructive dialogue with natural science.”⁷⁰ This is a crucial affirmation because of the role that natural science methodology played in the fragmentation of knowledge in the Modern period.⁷¹

In summation, as God’s good work of creation, we as humans are endowed with latent rational structures and categories that make the knowledge of God possible. And when God’s perfecting work of his gracious revelation takes effect, there is integration, ever so subtly, of these latent structures and categories. While by themselves these structures are not sufficient for true knowledge, they do account for the unanswered questions of life that serve as a pointer beyond our created order to God’s Trinitarian being.



⁶⁹ Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order*, 83–84.

⁷⁰ Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order*, 83. Thanks to Stephen Lorange for pointing us to this material from Torrance.

⁷¹ Thus, in *The Ground and Grammar of Theology: Consonance between Theology and Science* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001), Torrance argues, “There is an area of overlap in the inquiries ... and it is in dialogue between theological and natural science within that overlap that natural theology has its natural place” (106).