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*A Journal of Holiness Theology for Asia-Pacific Contexts*

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*Bridging Cultures for Christ*  
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## Preface

2018 marks the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Like many heirs of the Reformation, APNTS celebrated the occasion with thanksgiving and festivities. One of those festivities is represented in the current issue of *The Mediator*. The first article herein, authored by Dr. Jason Valeriano Hallig, was presented as the keynote address of the APNTS Reformation event, “Celebrating the 500 Years of Reformation.” Dr. Dick O. Eugenio offered a formal response to Hallig’s paper, likewise included herein.

Though not yet approaching the 500-year mark, another tradition of some standing, i.e., the formal installation of new APNTS faculty, is also represented in the current issue, with the installation addresses of Dr. Clark Armstrong, Assistant Professor of Christian Education and Pastoral Ministry (now Associate Professor), and of Dr. Peggy Oldham, Assistant Professor of Leadership.

Whereas the first articles of the present issue represent well-established traditions, the last entries represent a new tradition, namely, the inclusion of the abstracts from the newly published APNTS theses and dissertations in the spring issue of *The Mediator*. It is the editor’s hope that this will become an annual feature of the *The Mediator*, not only showcasing the best scholarship produced by APNTS students each year, but also inspiring others to excellence.

Darin H. Land, Ph.D.

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***Sola Scriptura*—Reformation’s Ecclesial Legacy:  
Hermeneutical Freedom and Interpretive Diversity  
toward a Reformed Catholicity of the Church**

October 28, 2017\*

Jason Valeriano Hallig, Ph.D.

Abstract

*Why celebrate the Reformation? Critics think that the Reformation/Protestantism is a dangerous idea. On the contrary, we believe that the Reformation was a positive movement—a positive moving toward the gospel. The Reformation offers today the same principle the Reformers fought for 500 years ago—sola Scriptura—the Reformation’s ecclesial legacy. This paper calls for a retrieval—celebrating and communicating the spirit of semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei (always reforming according to the Word of God). It challenges the church to cherish and embrace responsible hermeneutical freedom and interpretive diversity toward a reformed, and always reforming, catholicity of the church that is faithful to the Scripture and the Scripture alone. The author believes that the Reformation in and through sola Scriptura redefines what it truly means for the Church of Christ to be one, holy, apostolic, and catholic Church as Christ prayed for in John 17, and in such spirit calls the church (Roman Catholics, Protestants/Evangelicals, Orthodox churches, and other independent churches) to confess in unity that we are only the Church of Christ according to the Scripture.*

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Why do we celebrate the Reformation? Perhaps this is the first question we need to ask ourselves today. What significance does today’s celebration have for us as heirs of the Reformation? Should we rejoice for what happened 500 years ago or should we repent for what happened and transpired afterwards? Critics likened Protestantism to Darwin’s dangerous idea. Is Protestantism indeed Christianity’s dangerous idea? Alister McGrath likes to think so.<sup>1</sup> He

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\* This paper was presented by Dr. Hallig on the occasion of the seminary’s celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation.

<sup>1</sup> Alister McGrath, *Christianity’s Dangerous Idea: The Protestant Revolution—A*

believes that Protestantism with its principles, like the priesthood of all believers, is a memetic idea that spreads from person to person, culture to culture, nation to nation through not genetic but cultural replication.<sup>2</sup> McGrath thinks that it is a dynamic but dangerous idea that constantly evolves unpredictably and uncontrollably.<sup>3</sup> On the contrary, we believe that the Reformation is a positive idea or a movement that seeks to reform the Church toward a more apostolic and catholic, gospel-centered Christianity. For example, Michael Reeves and John Stott give us a good reason to preserve and promote the Reformation:

If the Reformation were merely a negative reaction to a purely historical problem, then it would not be significant for evangelicals today. But the closer one looks, the clearer it becomes: the Reformation was not, principally, a negative movement, about moving away from Rome; it was a positive moving towards the gospel. And to move towards the gospel means unearthing original, scriptural, apostolic Christianity by then buried under centuries of human tradition. That is what preserves the validity of the Reformation for today. For the church must always be reforming and constantly moving ever closer to the gospel. This is encapsulated in two words we often hear: ‘*semper reformanda*.’ But their context is important, for the full Latin phrase is *ecclesia reformata et semper reformanda secundum verbum Dei* (‘The church reformed and always reforming according to the Word of God.’) The Reformation cannot be over. It must be an evangelical banner, borne with both humility and resolution.<sup>4</sup>

Yet the question remains, “What legacy does the Reformation have that warrants celebration and the preservation of the spirit of *semper reformanda* today?” While there are perhaps a number of proposals such as the five *solas*, from the biblical scholars’ perspective, *sola Scriptura* would be

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*History from the Sixteenth Century to the Twenty-First* (New York: HarperOne, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> See Kevin Vanhoozer, *Biblical Authority After Babel: Retrieving the Solas in the Spirit of Mere Protestantism* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2016), 8.

<sup>3</sup> McGrath, *Christianity’s Dangerous Idea*, 463.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Reeves and John Stott, *The Reformation: What You Need to Know and Why* (Oxford: Monarch, 2017), 25–26.



the prime ecclesial legacy of the Reformation—the very soul of Protestantism. And as a New Testament student and a pastor at the same time, I want to focus on this particular legacy of the Reformation, hence the title: “*Sola Scriptura—Reformation’s Ecclesial Legacy: Hermeneutical Freedom and Interpretive Diversity toward a Reformed Catholicity of the Church.*” Here I will be focusing on a two-fold impact of the Reformation—Biblical interpretation and ecclesiastical reformation.

*Sola Scriptura: Scripture, Tradition, and the Controversy*

Indeed, the Reformation was not a negative reaction, but a positive one. It was not about ecclesiastical reform centered on politics or personalities. The Reformation was centered on the Holy Scriptures. If it were not, then perhaps we have no business today to be here. We have nothing to celebrate for there is nothing to *retrieve*. Here I use the word of Kevin Vanhoozer, who believes that the Reformation was a *retrieval*, first and foremost of the Biblical gospel, particularly the Pauline articulation, but also, secondarily, of the church fathers.<sup>5</sup> Vanhoozer writes, “The Reformers were engaged in theology as retrieval long before it became trendy. Retrieval theology is the name for a ‘mode or style of theological discernment that looks back in order to move forward.’”<sup>6</sup> To retrieve is not just to celebrate but also to communicate to the next generation what we believe—a living tradition. But this is more in connection with the active role of tradition, and in the language of Avery Dulles, a Roman Catholic theologian, it is called *traditioning*—the active engagement of the Church in passing on or handing down what has been passed on or handed down to us: “In its preaching, life and worship... [the church] hands on to every generation all that it is and all that it believes. Thus tradition is identified with the total life and praxis of the Church.”<sup>7</sup> Hence, today we are engaged in traditioning—an attempt to celebrate and communicate the legacy of the Reformation.

The “tradition” of the Reformation was not something of its creation. Luther was not attempting to create a tradition of his own independent of the

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<sup>5</sup> Vanhoozer, *Biblical Authority*, 22–23.

<sup>6</sup> Vanhoozer, *Biblical Authority*, 22–23.

<sup>7</sup> Avery Dulles, *The Craft of Theology: From Symbol to System* (New York: Crossroad, 1995), 95.

then Catholic Church. He was calling the Church to reform its tradition/s in the light of the Holy Scriptures. Walker and others give us a vivid description of the controversy that led to the Reformation,

In Late 1517, Luther felt compelled to speak up against a crying abuse. Pope Leo X (1513–1521) had earlier issued a dispensation permitting Albrecht of Brandenburg (1490–1545) to hold at the same time the archbishopric of Mainz, the archbishopric of Magdeburg, and the administration of the bishopric of Halberstadt. This dispensation from church regulations against “pluralism” (multiple offices) cost Albrecht a great sum, which he borrowed from the Augsburg banking house of Fugger. To repay this loan, Albrecht was also permitted to share half the proceeds in his district from the sale of indulgences that the papacy had been issuing, since 1506, for building that new basilica of St. Peter which is still one of the ornaments of Rome. A commissioner for this collection was Johann Tetzel (1470–1519), a Dominican monk of eloquence, who, intent on the largest possible returns, painted the benefits of indulgences in the crassest terms. Luther himself had no knowledge of the financial transaction between Albrecht and the pope. His objections to the proceedings were pastoral and theological: indulgences create false sense of security and are thus destructive of true Christianity, which proclaims the cross of Christ and of the Christian, not released from deserved punishment. As Tetzel approached electoral Saxony—he was not allowed to enter, though many members of the Wittenberg congregation crossed the border to buy letters of indulgence—Luther preached against the abuse of indulgences and prepared his memorable “Ninety-five Theses,” copies of which he sent on October 31, 1517, to Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz and Bishop Jerome of Brandenburg, in whose jurisdiction Wittenberg lay. Whether Luther on that day also posted his theses on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg, which served as the university bulletin board, is a matter of controversy among historians, though it seems most likely that he did.<sup>8</sup>

Luther and the Reformers were fighting for theological corrections of

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<sup>8</sup> Williston Walker, et al. *A History of the Christian Church*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1985), 425–26.

the doctrines or traditions of the Church that were incoherent with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. They were convinced that the Church had gone too far in its exercise of the “apostolic succession,” resulting in theological deviations and wrong church practices such as the selling of indulgences for the benefit of the Church and its bishops. Luther cried out for what would be the Protestant principle and the basis of Protestant tradition: *sola Scriptura*. The Reformers believed that the Church is under the sole authority of the Scripture; the Church is bound to follow and preach what the Scripture explicitly teaches. They further maintained “the possibility that the church fathers, the councils, and the creeds have fallen into error, as firmly as the Roman Church maintains just the opposite with its doctrines of papal infallibility.”<sup>9</sup>

The Reformation gave birth to the Protestant theological tradition that would serve as interpretive of Protestant theology. Out of the theological struggles with the Church on forgiveness and salvation created by the selling and granting of *indulgentia* came Luther’s theological principle of “justification by faith.” To Luther, salvation is a free gift of God to all repentant sinners; hence, it is by grace alone (*sola gratia*). And this salvation is received only through faith (*sola fide*) and not by works of buying *indulgentia*. Sinners are justified by faith through the grace of God in Christ Jesus. To Luther, justification by grace through faith is the clear teaching of the Holy Scriptures. The church failed to embrace justification by grace through faith because of its adaptation of the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. In his synthesis of the interpretation of the Reformation, Cairns rightly observes that the theology of the undivided Church behind its offer of *indulgentia* was highly influenced by Thomas Aquinas’s thought on human will and the church authority to dispense grace on behalf of God.

It emphasized his teaching that [human] will was not totally corrupted. By faith and the use of the means of grace in the sacraments dispensed by the hierarchy, [people] could achieve salvation. Augustine, *however*, believed that [human] will was so totally depraved that he could do nothing toward his salvation. God would extend grace to [people] to energize [their] will so that [they] could

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<sup>9</sup> Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1988), 81.

by faith take the salvation that Christ proffered.<sup>10</sup>

However, it should be noted that the Reformation was not motivated by Augustine's theology. The Reformers resorted instead to the teachings of the Scriptures and called upon the Church to closely examine the Scripture. Cairns notes this about the Reformers,

It was the Scripture that brought home the profound truth to them. The theological cause of the Reformation was the desire of the Reformers to go back to the classic source of the Christian faith, the Bible, in order to counter the claims of Thomistic theology that salvation was a matter of grace obtained through the sacraments dispensed by the hierarchy.<sup>11</sup>

It was the principle of *sola Scriptura* that prompted the Reformers indeed to counter the teachings of the Church on salvation and its practice of *indulgentia* which for them was a clear theological error—a misinterpretation of the truth of the Scripture on salvation and grace. Theology and Scripture go together in the shaping or molding of the tradition and practice of the Church. The Church is not in the position to divorce theology and practice from the authority of the Scripture. There is an inherent relationship that exists between the two which the Church had to recognize and respect as the steward of the gospel or the kingdom of God. However, due to its romantic relationship with the principle of “apostolic succession” and Thomas Aquinas's naturalistic theology influenced by Aristotle, the undivided western Church had developed another source of authority for doing theology that was divorced from the authority of the Scripture. But Luther, out of his personal and evangelical breakthrough, challenged the Church to go back to the source and to reform its ways of doing theology and ministry that were based primarily on the Holy Scriptures.

Luther's ninety-five theses were all grounded on the Scriptures. I noted this in a paper I wrote in 2004,

With his 95 theses, Luther signaled the beginning of a long struggle for theological truths. But Luther's theological cry was rooted upon the principle of “*sola Scriptura*.” He had made the Scripture

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<sup>10</sup> Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 275. Italics added.

<sup>11</sup> Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries*, 275.

the sole authority both in the dogma and praxis of the church. He denied any authority, including that of the Pope, the council, and the church. The church’s understanding of the Scripture in the light of its tradition, for Luther, had greatly marred the Biblical teachings, especially its conception of the righteousness of God in Christ. He used the Bible as a means to judge both the theological dogma and praxis of the church. When called upon to recant his teachings against the church’s doctrine and authorities, including that of the Pope, Luther declared, “Unless I can be instructed and convinced with evidence from the Holy Scriptures or with open, clear, and distinct grounds and reasoning—and my conscience is captive to the Word of God—then I cannot and will not recant, because it is neither safe nor wise to act against conscience.” He added, “Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen.”<sup>12</sup>

#### *Sola Scriptura: Hermeneutical Freedom and Interpretive Diversity*

The principle of *sola Scriptura* laid the foundation for an evangelical revival of Biblical interpretation that guided Protestant reading of the Scriptures and the construction of a more evangelical theology.<sup>13</sup> Scholasticism highly influenced the pre-Reformation milieu that affected Biblical interpretations and theological works of the Western church. The faith and practices of the Church that served the background of the Reformation were highly scholastic indeed.<sup>14</sup> The openness of the church to natural theology influenced by Thomas Aquinas obviously catered to more dogmatic teachings of the Church under the authority of the hierarchy and the high “sacramentalism” of ecclesiastical spirituality.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, *sola Scriptura*, on the one hand, was

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<sup>12</sup> Jason V. Hallig, “Luther’s Understanding of *Sola Scriptura*.” A paper submitted to Dr. Won, Jung Chun as part of the requirements for the class “Reformation” at AIGS, Seoul Korea (2004): 7.

<sup>13</sup> Three major Protestant principles are usually identified: *sola gratia et fides* (salvation by grace through faith alone), *sola scriptura* (Scripture above all other authorities for Christian faith and practice), and the priesthood of all believers. See Roger E. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition and Reform* (Leicester: Apollos, 1999), 370–374.

<sup>14</sup> William R. Step, *Renaissance and Reformation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), ix.

<sup>15</sup> Walker, et al., *History*, 344–45.

moving away from the growing and controlling influence of scholasticism, and, on the other hand, it was moving toward the gospel centered on the person and work of Christ. Gerald Bray writes,

The watchword of the Reformation was *sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone), and this principle guided its theological development. Luther and the first generation of Reformers were still deeply immersed in medieval categories of thought, and they tended to interpret “Scripture alone” in the traditional Christological way.<sup>16</sup>

*Sola Scriptura* freed the Church from the abuses of the hierarchy caused by its eccentric interpretation of the Bible and its ecclesiastical authority based on “apostolic succession” granted by its acceptance of Thomas Aquinas’s theology of grace and the sacraments. Luther’s appeal for *sola Scriptura* called on the Church to anchor its faith and practices in the clear teachings of the Scripture centered on the mediatorial work of Christ and Christ alone, or *solus Christus*.

The Reformation, then, offered to the Church *hermeneutical freedom*. It is freedom from highly ecclesiastical interpretation of the Bible by the hierarchy under the final authority of the Pope. *Sola Scriptura* gave the whole Church, i.e., the people and priests alike (hence, the priesthood of all believers), the authority to examine the Bible and check the interpretations of the hierarchy of the Church based on the literal and clear meaning of the text, which Luther believed was marred by the early allegorical/mystical and later dogmatic interpretation of the Bible. To Luther, the authority to read and interpret the Scriptures was everybody’s business in the Church as its priests, but interpretation must be done based on the literal and clear sense of the text. Although Luther was not totally freed from allegorical interpretations of the Biblical texts—for he did apply it in many ways—he was heavily guided by the clear and literal interpretation of the Bible. His ninety-five theses were appealing to the literal and clear interpretations of Biblical passages and stories. Hence, Luther said, and let me repeat it here, “Unless I can be instructed and convinced with evidence from the Holy Scriptures or with open, clear, and distinct grounds and reasoning—and my conscience is captive to the Word of God—then I cannot and will not recant, because it is neither safe nor wise to act against conscience.” He

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<sup>16</sup> Gerald Bray, *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present* (Leicester: Apollos, 1996), 167.

added, “Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen.”

Admittedly, Luther’s and other Reformers’ interpretations of the Bible did not immediately yield for us solid and mature interpretations of the Bible or a robust evangelical theology as we have today. However, the Reformation gave the Church its hermeneutical freedom—from a number of Bible translations to various approaches to Biblical interpretation. Today we have in our hands the Bible in our languages and dialects. Had it not been for the Reformation, perhaps we would still be under the “three-languages heresy”—Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. Bray notes,

However, Latin remained the cultural language of western Europe, a development which was reinforced by a group of ninth-century theologians, who proclaimed what was known in the East as the “three-languages heresy.” They claimed that there were only three languages in which God could be worshipped—Hebrew, Greek and Latin. But Hebrew had fallen into disuse because of the apostasy of the Jews, and the Greeks were prone to heresy. Only Latin remained pure, and therefore it was only in that language that God could be properly worshipped.<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, Biblical interpretation has given us varied approaches to reading and interpreting the Bible, from historical and grammatical criticisms to present literary criticisms that yielded for us deeper insights into the truths of the Scriptures, enriching the Church in its faith and practice, life and mission. Rightly so, because the authority now lies with the whole believing Church. This means that hermeneutical freedom engenders interpretive creativity under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the canonical authority of the Church.

Hermeneutical freedom, however, does not set aside the earlier works of the Church on Biblical interpretation and theology.<sup>18</sup> We still hold on today to the great contributions of the early church fathers and theologians such

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<sup>17</sup> Bray, *Biblical Interpretation*, 130.

<sup>18</sup> Grant R. Osborne writes, “Trace the developing contextualization (*the discipline of doing contextual theology*) of the doctrine through church history... By considering carefully how the church reshaped and applied the dogmas to meet its changing needs, we are given negative (heresy) and positive (creeds and confessions) examples for our contemporary contextualization.” *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2006), 408. Italics added.

as St. Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas.<sup>19</sup> Aquinas, for example, laid the foundation for beyond-the-use-of-literal-sense in Biblical interpretation and the use of philosophy or reason in the study of theology. They have laid the foundations for what we do today in the Church. I cannot imagine, for example, theology without the influence of either Augustine or Aquinas. To do theology today that disregards these men of wisdom is either plain ignorance or pure arrogance. We owe the church fathers and early theologians Biblical and theological foundations for our work today.

Let me for a few seconds give emphasis to how we should keep and promote hermeneutical freedom still. Sadly, the Church today appears to have surrendered this freedom to Biblical scholars and systematic theologians—perceived as the Church’s experts. We have left the reading and interpreting of the Bible in the hands of those whom we believe or perceive as more able men and women today. The Church is becoming more and more complacent in its hermeneutical and theological tasks. This is so because of the influence of the present society that is so engrossed with the technological advances we experience today. Both Bible and theology are losing their appeal to young people today. The result is that we have technological advances void of morality and ethics, to say the least. Today’s celebration of the Reformation should challenge us to go back to what our great fathers of the faith had given to us and modeled for us—the love of the Scriptures and our freedom to read and interpret them for our lives, our Church, and our society. There is so much “nominalism” today, not because we failed to be faithful to the Church, but because we failed to be responsible for reading and interpreting the Bible. Hence, I challenge our teachers, pastors, and lay people alike, especially our young people, to engage in reading and interpreting the Bible with the purpose of writing “theological” books and the like for the Church and the society. The Church is indeed always in need of reformation. We must hold on to the Reformation principle of *semper reformanda*—‘always reforming’ or better ‘always being reformed’ by the Scripture and by the Scripture alone—*sola Scriptura*.

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<sup>19</sup> For a theological work that traces the development of theology through the history of the church, see Roderick T. Leupp, *The Renewal of Trinitarian Theology: Themes, Patterns and Explorations* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2008), 12, where he writes, “Western trinitarian formulations are usually indebted to the groundbreaking work of Augustine, and this indebtedness has come in for reexamination.”



Apparently and consequently, hermeneutical freedom has led to interpretive diversity. This is where some critics accuse us as heirs of the Reformation of being anarchists. Hermeneutical freedom, they say, begets anarchy or chaos in Biblical interpretation. We have been accused of not coming to one interpretation that could unify the Church. With the results of the Reformation—and today there are about 38,000 Protestant churches or denominations worldwide and still growing—we have been labeled as anarchists. Kevin Vanhoozer’s book is a response to the accusations thrown at us. Vanhoozer, however, argues that the interpretive diversity we have in the Church vis-à-vis Biblical interpretation is what brings Protestant Biblical interpretation into its own life and meaning—the Pentecostal experience and significance. Today, no theologians whether from the East or West can claim superiority or monopoly of interpretations or readings. Each of us, with our own readings and interpretations influenced by our presuppositions, contributes to the rich and varied meanings of the Scripture today. The Scriptures have come to life and its dynamism. As it is said, “It takes a thousand tongues to sing my redeemer’s praise”—what a beautiful Pentecostal song of grace and praise indeed!

#### *Sola Scriptura: Toward A Reformed Catholicity of the Church*

*Sola Scriptura* is also an ecclesiological principle that seeks to offer a reformed catholicity of the church. A narrow understanding of *sola Scriptura* limits the principle to general hermeneutics or Biblical interpretation. As a result, Reformation critics criticize the Reformers of having destroyed the catholicity of the church due to their individualistic interpretations of the Holy Scriptures. Protestantism for them is anti-catholicity. They believe that Protestantism destroys the *one, holy, apostolic, and catholic* Church. And so we must ask ourselves today, are we the cancer cells that have spread out all over the body of Christ? Or are we the cure that seeks to heal the ailing Church?

The diversity and dynamism of the Church today prove that the Reformation was not a cancer but a cure. Before the Reformation, the Church was going the wrong direction and was slowly moving away from the apostolic faith with its misconception of the catholicity of the Church as moving

toward Babel—a hierarchical Church that provides “interpretive Babel.”<sup>20</sup> Moreover, the Church had embraced a misguided unity that seeks to provide uniformity for every church around the world under one head (the Pope), with one language (Latin), with a vision of becoming an empire in the world (the one Roman church).

*Sola Scriptura* provides the Church the way to becoming the Church of Christ—one, holy, apostolic, and catholic community that truly welcomes diversity. *Sola Scriptura* and its interpretive diversity provided an opportunity toward Biblical catholicity. As catholic, the Church though many is one.<sup>21</sup> It is a unity in diversity—the very fulfillment of God’s covenant with Abraham inclusive of the promise that Abraham would be the father of many nations.

Today, we stand as the reformed catholic Church with many members called to be one. This call is penned by Paul in Ephesians 4:3–6 (NIV),  
 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

As such let us today as one body with many members (Roman Catholics, Protestant/Evangelical churches, Eastern Orthodox Church, and the many independent churches), together make the confession in the spirit of *sola Scriptura* that we are “one, holy, apostolic, and catholic Church,” indeed, in spirit and in truth.

### Conclusion

While some have grown cold to the Reformation and doubted its contributions to the Church, the fact remains that the Church is changed. The Church will never be the same again as it was in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. For sure, we all, as the body of Christ, have learned lessons from the Reformation toward maturity and stability. One thing, however, stands tall among the

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<sup>20</sup> See Kevin Vanhoozer, *Biblical Interpretation*, x. He uses “interpretive Babel” as descriptive of the church and its attempt to control and manipulate Bible interpretation for its own sake and survival.

<sup>21</sup> See Jason Valeriano Hallig, *We Are Catholic: Catholic, Catholicity, and Catholicization* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2016), 86–109.

many lasting contributions of the Reformation—the principle of *sola Scriptura*—Reformation’s ecclesial legacy.

With *sola Scriptura*, the Church has been true to its marks or notes as one, holy, apostolic, and catholic Church. This is true to Roman Catholics, Protestants/Evangelical churches, Eastern Orthodox Church and even to many independent churches. We all have recognized the primacy of the Scripture notwithstanding the supplemental roles of tradition, reason, and experience.

Today, we cannot remain divided or fragmented. We must overcome our differences and embrace our diversity as the one body of Christ. We must heed the words of John Stott,

Today, however, many of us evangelical Christians acquiesce too readily in our pathological tendency to fragment. We take refuge in our conviction about the invisible unity of the church, as if its visible manifestation did not matter. In consequence, the devil has been hugely successful in his old strategy to “divide and conquer.”

Our disunity remains a major hindrance to our evangelism.<sup>22</sup>

We cannot afford not to live out the prayer of Jesus our Lord for his Church to be one (John 17:11), and also we cannot ignore the exhortation of the apostle Paul for all of us to keep the unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3). John Stott writes, “So truth, holiness, *unity* and mission belong together and cannot be separated.”<sup>23</sup> The Reformation was an event of the Church, and a movement for the catholic Church today. Hence, we must pray for a new Reformation, but this time back to the catholic Church—many but one.

The end of everything, however, must be to another *sola* of the Reformation—*soli Deo gloria*. The Reformation and any reformation works today vis-à-vis *sola Scriptura* must give the glory not to humans but to God alone. Let us let Luther himself speak the last words:

When I first took upon me the defense of the Gospel, I remember a worthy man saying to me, “I like it, this doctrine you preach, because it gives glory and everything else to God alone, and nothing to man, for we cannot attribute too much glory, goodness, mercy, and so on to God.” This greatly comforted and confirmed

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<sup>22</sup> John Stott, *Evangelical Truth: A Personal Plea for Unity* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1999), 141.

<sup>23</sup> Reeves and Stott, *Reformation*, 53.

me. And it is true that the doctrine of the Gospel removes from mankind all glory, wisdom, righteousness, and so on and gives it solely to the Creator, who made everything out of nothing (Hebrews 11:3).<sup>24</sup>

*Soli Deo gloria!*

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<sup>24</sup> Martin Luther, *Galatians*, Crossway Classic Commentaries 58 (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 1998), cited from <http://reasonablechristian.blogspot.com/2012/03/martin-luther-soli-deo-gloria-to-god.html> [accessed on October 13, 2017].

## Response to “*Sola Scriptura*—Reformation’s Ecclesial Legacy”\*

Dick O. Eugenio, PhD

One of Martin Luther’s major contributions to the Church is his initiation of the return to constructive theology in dialogue with the Scripture. After the rigorous theological constructivism of the early church, culminating in the solidification of the creeds, the succeeding centuries were characterized by theological stagnation. Although Scholasticism and the philosophical theologians of the Medieval era produced numerous theological treatises, most of these writings were only a strengthening of the already affirmed dogma. Medieval theology perfectly exemplified Anselm’s *fides quaerens intellectum*.\*\* Theologians deepened their understanding of already conceived doctrines, often overstressing them and their implications to absurd proportions. (One example is the Medieval doctrine of grace which led to the official affirmation of correlated doctrines of merit, penance, and indulgences. In short, theological deepening resulted in awry theological affirmations.) Moreover, in the search for the deep, theologians neglected the broad. Perhaps unintentionally, the other important themes of the Scripture that are outside the already existing system of doctrinal affirmations were ignored.

Luther’s constructive theology came because of his re-discovery of the Scriptures. His Reformation cry *sola Scriptura* was not only defensive and polemic in nature against the [Roman] Catholic Church. Rather, he passionately affirmed *sola Scriptura* because he saw things there that filled the missing holes in the Catholic dogma. His ardent commitment to the Word in the Diet of Worms shows that he was no longer convinced by mere tradition-utterances. The Scriptures are and must be the sole authority for Christian doctrine and life.

However, Luther’s re-discovery of the Scriptures and the hermeneutical

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\* This paper is a response to Dr. Jason Valeriano Hallig’s Reformation celebration address, “*Sola Scriptura*—Reformation’s Ecclesial Legacy,” pages 1–14, above.

\*\* *Fides quaerens intellectum*: faith seeking understanding.

freedom he assumed and promoted was the first falling piece of the domino that triggered something quite dangerous. Since Luther's open and successful revolt against the established church, and the honoring we ascribe to his schismatic Protestant movement, the unity of Christianity was left in a precarious state. Although I agree that there are benefits to the hermeneutical freedom that Luther re-initiated and exemplified, the Reformation (1) spirit of excessive cynicism towards tradition, (2) wanton rejection of magisterial doctrines, and (3) cruel trashing of ecclesial leaders and official dogma that were inherited by the Protestant churches have left devastating consequences on the unity of the church. The idea that one man can challenge the whole Church, be successful, and even be celebrated left a lasting impression among post-Medieval intellectuals and commoners alike. Coupled with the rise of Rene Descartes's influential philosophy of doubt and modern science's proposed empirical tools of verification, a so-called "hermeneutic of suspicion" firmly rooted itself particularly among Protestant thinkers. The majority of succeeding Protestant scholars of Europe, capitalizing on these Reformation sentiments, generously contributed to a plethora of competing voices within Christianity that threatened to collapse the Church from within.

Hermeneutical freedom towards the Scripture has been blown out of proportion since Luther's time. It is not difficult to connect the dots between Luther's attitude of hermeneutical and theological prerogative and the attitude of most Protestant scholars concerning the authority of the church and the Scriptures during the eighteenth century, especially at the peak of the Enlightenment. Luther became the saint patron of cynicism towards the church's truth claims and "traditional" interpretative procedures. The emphasis shifted from a more communal interpretation to individual prerogative. Moreover, the hype seems to lean towards the more un-traditional (or un-ecclesial) modes of thinking and interpretation. For instance, what gathered support were the individualistic interpretations of Herman Reimarus and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, who proposed that the New Testament writers wrote to serve their selfish religious and political ends; of David Strauss (1808–1874), who suspected the historicity of the gospel narratives and blatantly branded them as myths; and of Johannes Weiss (1863–1914), who argued that Jesus was misrepresented by the gospel writers as the incarnate God when He was only a mere human revolutionary. These are just a few

examples.

Moreover, as made evident by many church splits, it would appear that Protestants have truly inherited the Reformers' acclaimed hermeneutical freedom that led ultimately to the Catholic-Protestant split. It is intriguing that many church schisms are the result of doctrinal differences on particular topics, influenced by personal hermeneutical procedures and biases. The sheer number of denominations and so-called "independent churches" illustrate the danger posed by individualistic hermeneutical freedom. To be fair to the Reformers, they certainly never intended for their future Protestant followers to feel unconstrained in using the Bible to promote doctrinal diversity and legitimize schisms and splits. The problems arise when the priesthood of all believers is stretched to mean freedom of expression at the expense of humility and at the cost of unity. Whether we dare to admit or not, hermeneutical freedom may be abused by some to promote their own understanding and advance their own little kingdoms.

Finally, hermeneutical freedom can also be used to promote and advocate an unbridled pluralism. This is already happening. John Hick's unorthodox interpretation and semantic arguments have led to a unique form of Christianity. Interpretations of Jesus' person, life, and work influenced by previous commitments to world religions have produced bewildering Christ-reconstructions that are almost Scripturally unrecognizable. In the Philippines alone, the hermeneutics of Felix Manalo and Apollo Quiboloy gave birth to two heretical Christian sects. Basically, if everyone is an equally self-authenticating interpreter, the consequence is not really unity within one Christianity. Rather, the result is a multiplicity of Christianities. It would be delightful if the points of contention are doctrinal non-essentials, but what if the various interpretations are mutually exclusive and are about Christology, pneumatology, and even soteriology? As history reveals, the most logical consequence of difference is to split, something that Luther's Reformation exemplified.

What I want to affirm is Luther's advocacy to scriptural fidelity. Ruthless self-criticism of our own theological traditions is a must. We must always bring our own understanding and traditions subject to the Word. Otherwise, our lack of self-introspection might lead to faithfulness to tradition

at the expense of the Scripture's message (see Matt 15:3). Luther exemplified what it means to be ready to reform one's own tradition from within. It is not our role to criticize other traditions of their supposed doctrinal errors and failures. Rather, like Luther, we must serve as prophets to our own denominations and groups. But our hermeneutical freedom must not lead to creating further schisms to an already divided body of Christ. What value is there in advocating the truth while sowing seeds of discontent and contempt against our leaders and the church? Yes, we must learn from and imitate Luther's courage and unyielding faithfulness to the Scriptures. But we must also recognize and un-learn his impulsivity, unconstrained speech, and Protestantism. What we must ask ourselves is this: Is there a way for us to advocate hermeneutical freedom and still remain humble, submissive to the church, and tolerant of divergent opinions? Only when we find the answer to this question can we be certain that our differences of opinion and hermeneutical results does not endanger the catholicity of the church.



**To Present Everyone Perfect in Christ:  
On the Integration of All Curriculum**

August 29, 2017\*

Clark Armstrong, Ed.D.

I feel like I was called into the ministry in 1888 when my grandfather was born. His name was Clark David Armstrong. He served as an inter-denominational missionary with the American Sunday School Union. He was one of Dwight Moody's first students in Chicago at the newly formed Moody Bible Institute. He worked with the other great evangelists of that era, such as Billy Sunday and J. Wilbur Chapman. He was 21 when Chapman was sent out on a crusade to Asia. (You will hear more about that later in this service because it goes along with the two songs I have chosen for us to sing).

My grandfather's job was to go to places in the world where no Christian churches yet existed and to establish Sunday schools in those states, provinces, or towns. When he would come back to visit those towns in six months or a year after he left, he would ask them if they wanted to become a church. If they did, he would try to find a ministerial student to come and be their pastor. Whatever denomination the willing student was from, then that was the kind of church they became, and that young person had the joy of planting the church by starting with the core group from the healthy Sunday school.

I was three and a half years old when my grandfather passed away, and people came from all over the world to his funeral. My parents sat me on the front pew of the church and I watched all the people walk by his casket, shake hands, and hug my grandmother and the other big people in my family. They all spoke in hushed tones and said wonderful things about my grandfather and what a great man and minister and missionary he had been. He was a gentle, quiet, and very humble man, yet they told about the thousands of churches he had started, the people he had influenced for Christ, the real-life example of Jesus that he had lived before them, and the personal

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\* This paper was presented by Dr. Armstrong on the occasion of his installation as Assistant (now Associate) Professor of Christian Education and Pastoral Ministry at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary.

friend that he was to them.

One of my aunts came over to check on me after a long time, and I remember sincerely asking her, “Who will ever take grandpa’s place?” She said, “Maybe you will. You have his same name.” My name is actually Clark Gilbert Armstrong, but I don’t think she knew that. Actually, when she said that statement, I couldn’t help laughing, so she told me to stay quiet. In my mind I was thinking, “That’s ridiculous. I am only three and a half. How is a kid my age going to be able to take his place?”

Today it is 2017 (nearly 130 years after he was born). I am being installed as a professor of Pastoral Ministry and Christian Education here at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary. God did call me into the ministry (we pastored 32 years) and into education for many years at the same time (Sunday school was my grandfather’s version of Christian education in his time), and into missions. Even as this is happening, I stand in awe of what God has done. And I say with Plato, “I am the wisest man alive, for I know one thing, and that is that I know nothing.”<sup>1</sup>

I felt the clear call of God to go into fulltime ministry when I was 15. At that time I read an article that said, “A call to preach is a call to prepare.”<sup>2</sup> So I went to a Christian college and received a liberal arts degree with a major in religion and a minor in Greek. The liberal arts education gave me a broad education in all of the disciplines, and I still had a focus on the skills needed for pastoring with the supplemental knowledge I would need in one of the Biblical languages.

Bear with me to tell a bit more of my personal journey of preparation because it is very important to the topic I want to speak about today. I stayed one year longer at that school to work on an M.Th. in Theology, but I transferred all my work there (when I was only a few hours from finishing) to my seminary to work on an M.Div. I did two years in the M.Div. program, but the degree was not as important to me as the preparation for a lifetime

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<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Republic*, trans. G. M. A. Grube, rev. C. D. C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1992), 44.

<sup>2</sup> The writer was Fletcher Spruce. The periodical was *Herald of Holiness*, printed in Kansas City, MO. The year was around 1973. I have the clipping, but did not keep the complete citation. (John Wesley is reported to have said that if he had ten years to serve the Lord, he would spend five of them preparing.)

of service.

I was noticing how practical the classes in Christian education were for understanding people (children, youth, and adults), spiritual growth and holistic development, discipleship and disciple-making, small groups, leadership development, and understanding the specific programs and ministries in the church. I felt that God had fully equipped me with the M.Div.-type knowledge and skills I needed for pastoring and ministry during my college years and the first two years of seminary, so I switched my major to include M.R.E. The integration of Pastoral Ministry and Christian Education for me was complete, as well as my view of the integration of all of the disciplines.

This came out when I wrote my final Philosophy of Ministry and of Christian Education. I chose Colossians 1:24–29 as a centering passage for me. I want to speak to you for a few moments from that scripture on my topic, “To Present Everyone Perfect in Christ: On the Integration of All Curriculum.”

Colossians 1:24–29 (NIV)

Paul’s Labor for the Church

<sup>24</sup> Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ’s afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. <sup>25</sup> I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— <sup>26</sup> the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people. <sup>27</sup> To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

<sup>28</sup> He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup> To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

This scripture gives to us a full set of the eight keys of a musical scale (do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti, do) on the integration of all curriculum.

1. The motive (do)

*To fill up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions*

It is our motive to complete the work of Christ on earth. Ministry is not an

easy path. We follow a way of suffering and we follow a teacher who was a Man of Sorrows. And while we know that He could do it without us, it is His chosen way to do it through us. He gave the Great Commission to his disciples and then he ascended into heaven. But on the Day of Pentecost, he returned to indwell His fully consecrated and surrendered followers through his Holy Spirit. In this way, He empowered them to go out and complete His reconciling work on earth. What he suffered in the flesh to show everybody God's love and to bring the way of salvation through cross-type love, he continues through His body, the church. This has become our motive and motivation for ministry. Phillips Brooks said, "Feed on Christ, and then go and live your life, and it is Christ in you that lives your life, that helps the poor, that tells the truth, that fights the battle, and that wins the crown."<sup>3</sup>

2. The missive (re)

*To present the word of God in its fullness*

This passage is the Great Commission for Christian educators. As such, many feel that it is a more complete explanation of what it means to make disciples in Matthew 28:18–19. The English word for "present" appears twice in the NIV translation of this passage (here in verse 25 and in verse 28, where it says *to present everyone perfect in Christ*). This verse shows our "missive" which means our communique, epistle, or content. It is imperative that even a high school math teacher, a mom with a preschool child, a chaplain in the military, a Sunday school teacher, or a pastor—as well as a professor at a seminary—would all be centered on the fact that our missive, no matter what our role as a teacher, is to present the word of God in its fullness. This is far more than just the written word. It includes the living word (in fact, the word used in v. 25 is *logon* from *logos*<sup>4</sup>), or if you will, the lived word. And "in its fullness" is packed with meaning, which definitely includes Old Testament as well as New Testament; principles as

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<sup>3</sup> It is a quote by Phillips Brooks (1835–1893), American minister and author. Alexander V. G. Allen, ed., *Life and Letters of Phillips Brooks* (London: Macmillan, 1900), 2:655. Compare it with William Scarlett, ed., *Phillips Brooks: Selected Sermons* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1949), 352.

<sup>4</sup> *Logos* is the Greek word used in the first chapter of John's Gospel meaning "the Living Word" referring to Jesus Christ as a part of the eternal Godhead. The emphasis in that passage is on "the Word became flesh and lived among us" (John 1:14).

well as precepts; the prescriptive and also the descriptive passages. I am reminded at this point of 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NASB): “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

3. The mystery or the main message (mi)

*Christ in you the hope of glory*

The main message of the missive summed up in one phrase is this one: *Christ in you the hope of glory*. It is a mystery, but it is a glorious one. According to Hebrews 1:1–4, Jesus Christ is the summation of all of God’s progressive revelation. Romans 1–3 lays out first that all persons have *creation* to speak to them about a Creator (1:18–32), secondly that most people have a *conscience* to guide them to the path of righteousness (2:1–16), thirdly that some people such as the Jews have had the *covenant and the written code* of God’s laws to show them the way (2:17–3:20), yet all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. But finally, the writer shows that Jesus *Christ* is God’s totally satisfactory solution to the sin problem for the whole world (3:21–26). Christ in you is your hope of salvation. He is our hope of sanctification and the renewal of His image within us. He is the hope of glorification and He is the hope of the complete reconciliation of all things to God. Christ in you is, in fact, the dynamic of even your ministry (according to the context of this passage).

4. The members (fa)

*Christ’s body, the church, the saints, the Gentiles, everyone*

There are three things necessary in any educational encounter: a teacher, a student, and the curriculum.<sup>5</sup> Up to this point the passage has been addressing the curriculum, but now it names the recipients or the pupils who would be served, facilitated, or mentored. It starts with a narrower focus on the saints, Christ’s body, also referred to as “the church.” We could call these the members. But to be clear, it makes known that it is meant for the nations (*ethnē*) and in its highest form, it uses the word “everyone,” which should draw the circle as large as John Wesley did when he said, “The world

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<sup>5</sup> J. Omar Brubaker Diagram on Instructional Methodology for Adults in Roy B. Zuck and Gene Getz, *Adult Education in the Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), 119. See the Appendix for the diagram.

is my parish.”<sup>6</sup>

When I was a bi-vocational pastor for two and a half years, I was an insurance representative or salesman. Connie would laugh at me as I would drive past the neighborhoods and say, “This whole subdivision needs my insurance. How will I find the time to get to all the neighborhoods and bring them the good news?” But that mentality came naturally to me because I already had the heartbeat of God for evangelism and discipleship ingrained in me as a minister, and I was just transferring my lifestyle to include another realm, too.

5. The manifesto or mandate (so)

*To present everyone perfect in Christ*

Our mandate according to verse 28 is indubitably clear; it is *to present everyone perfect in Christ*. I look on everyone I meet and even all those that I have not yet met with a singular goal. It is *to present everyone perfect in Christ*. It is the clarion call of holiness. Wesley built his faith in the possibility of entire sanctification on four foundation stones: (1) promises of perfection, (2) prayers for perfection, (3) commands to perfection, and (4) examples of perfection in Scripture.<sup>7</sup>

We follow a Wesleyan-Arminian *ordo salutis*.<sup>8</sup> For those who are not yet Christians, we purpose to partner with the Christ in us to work along with His prevenient grace to move them forward to know God’s marvelous saving grace, and to move those who have experienced God’s saving grace on to His wonderful sanctifying grace, and move those who testify to His sanctifying work on to the blessed full maturity in the total measure of Christ-likeness, toward the end goal that I would present everyone (*teleos*) complete, whole, mature, or perfect in Him.

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<sup>6</sup> *The Works of John Wesley*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., vol. 2 (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1979), Journals from December 2, 1745 to May 5, 1760.

<sup>7</sup> H. Ray Dunning and Neil B. Wiseman, eds., *Biblical Resources for Holiness Preaching: From Text to Sermon* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1990), 27.

<sup>8</sup> *Ordo salutis* (Latin: “order of salvation”) refers to a series of conceptual steps within the Christian doctrine of salvation. It has been defined as, “a technical term of Protestant dogmatics to designate the consecutive steps in the work of the Holy Spirit in the appropriation of salvation.” ‘Ordo Salutis’ Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge <http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/encyc/encyc08/htm/ii.vii.htm#ii.vii>. Accessed on August 23, 2017.

## 6. The method or means (1a)

*Proclaiming, admonishing, and teaching with all wisdom*

It is probably just me, but I see in this passage the integration of all three parts of Christ's ministry. It says in Matthew's Gospel (4:23, 9:35) that He went about doing good: preaching, teaching, and healing. At APNTS, I have the unbelievable privilege to teach classes in preaching, leadership, pastoral ministries or care, evangelism, and education. The writer lays out the methodology as one of proclaiming, which comes forth in the preaching and in the evangelism classes; it is also one of admonishing, which emphasizes pastoral ministries or care, counseling, and leadership responsibilities; and finally, it includes teaching, which most comes through in my Christian education classes. The "what" to do of methodology is finished with a tempering phrase on "how" to do it: do it "with all wisdom." In that one small phrase the *sophia*<sup>9</sup> of the Greek philosophers (Western thinking), the proverbial insights of Solomon (the Middle-Eastern mindset),<sup>10</sup> and the Tao of Lao-Tzu<sup>11</sup> and his follower, Confucius,<sup>12</sup> (Eastern ways) are united.

## 7. The might (ti)

*With the energizing of Christ so powerfully at work in me*

If "Christ in you the hope of glory" is the mystery, then this is the secret. The reader needs not ask further than the book of Acts to see that the *energeia* of Christ that is at work in us is the dynamic of the Holy Spirit. I say dynamic, which is also in the context here, because he also uses *dunamis* (the word for power). The only secret to the fruit-bearing Christian is the one who abides in the Vine (John 15:1-8). The only power to stand against temptation comes from the abiding Holy Spirit in us. Effective preaching comes from the anointing of the Holy Spirit. When we are weary in ministry, we lean back into the fact that we can do all things assigned to us

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<sup>9</sup> Sophia is the Greek word for wisdom and since this passage was written in Koine Greek is the word used here in verse 28.

<sup>10</sup> There are five books in a section of the Old Testament known as the Wisdom literature. Three of them are credited to King Solomon (ruled Israel from about 960 to 922 B.C.) as being the author. The largest and most well-known of these is called the Book of Proverbs.

<sup>11</sup> Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching: A Book About The Way and The Power of the Way*, trans. Ursula K. LeGuin (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1998), 3.

<sup>12</sup> Confucius, *The Analects*, trans. D. C. Lau (London: Penguin Books, 1979), 11.

through Christ who gives us the strength. We cannot live a holy life apart from being a Spirit-filled and Spirit-controlled Christian. The only chance we have of ever even presenting ourselves perfect in Christ—let alone achieving such a lofty goal as presenting everyone else perfect in Christ—is with the energizing (*energeia*) of Christ and His Holy Spirit, which so powerfully (*dunamis*) works (*energeō*) in me.

The “in me” is not to be overlooked. It is not a passive, but an active phrase, Paul having used earlier in this sentence the starting verb phrase, “I labor, striving” or “I strenuously contend.” There is always a cooperation or a synergism involved with our relationship with God, even if the “energizing” is from Him. The energizing activates *as* I begin to strenuously labor (somewhat like the body and physical exercise). Students: Christ is at work in you, fully energizing you. Do not doubt that. But nothing happens on your requirements until you get started. Note: I am pretty sure it is that belief that makes me Wesleyan-Arminian and not just Arminian.

#### 8. The minister or mentor (do)

*Paul, we, I, the commissioned one, missionary to the Gentiles, servant*

Who is the mentor or evangelist/educator in this passage? He identifies himself as Paul, “I,” and as a missionary to the nations (*ethnē*) or Gentiles. But in one case, he uses “we” to include an unnamed rank and file of those with a similar calling. Once he refers to this minister or mentor as “the commissioned one” and once just as “a servant” (*diakonos*—same word as for minister). All God-called *ministers* carry out this *mandate* (to present everyone perfect in Christ) by the God-given *missive* (presenting the word of God in its fullness) about the marvelous *mystery* (Christ in you the hope of glory) which is our *main message* through the *means* and *methods* of proclaiming, admonishing and teaching with all wisdom to the *members* and future *members* of God’s kingdom with the *motive* of fully completing Christ’s reconciling work on earth by laboring with all the *might* of Christ which is at work in them regardless of their discipline. This is the *manifesto* (*ephanerōthē*, v. 26) for all of us. We are united in one purpose; to present everyone perfect in Christ is the integration of all curriculum.

Think, if you will, of the seminary curriculum in terms of theology: Concerning Progressive Revelation—it says that it is “the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people.”



For Ecclesiology—it speaks of “His body, which is the church.”  
For Christology—it speaks clearly of “the glorious riches of Christ.”  
In relation to Hamartiology—it mentions “what is lacking in the flesh” which is a phrase that could be debated for quite some length in that field.  
On Soteriology—it is simply “Christ in you.”  
And Eschatology—it is “the hope of glory.”  
For Missiology—here is the commission to proclaim to the Gentiles, to the nations, to everyone.  
In Epistemology—the goal is to make *known* the mystery.  
For Hermeneutics/Bibliology—it is “the word of God in its fullness.”  
On Pneumatology—the *energeia* working in me is arguably the Holy Spirit.  
And in Anthropology—the goal for every person (*anthrōpos*) is “until all are presented fully mature” in Christ.  
In terms of Church History—it is accurately presenting the creeds and records of the Lord’s people and their attempts to complete Christ’s work on earth.  
In terms of the Philosophy of Religion—it is the greatest mystery ever investigated or discussed.  
In terms of Spiritual Formation—it is Christ being formed *in* you as your hope of glory.<sup>13</sup>  
In terms of Christian Communication—it is the challenge to make known this mystery by all means possible to everyone.  
In terms of the English Department and the Librarians—it is a call to make it possible so that everyone can receive the word of God in all its fullness. The same goes for Biblical Literature—only turn it up five notches (with an emphasis on taking us deeper into all the fullness of God’s word).  
In terms of the Doctrine of Holiness—it is Christian perfection.  
For Leadership—it is servanthood with the goal of full maturity in Christ for everyone. (And perhaps if you are the President, it may mean raising some of those “glorious riches.”)  
For Preaching and Evangelism—it is proclaiming with all wisdom (and it is

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<sup>13</sup> Horace Bushnell said, “And thus a long process of forming and reforming must go on, till the Christ of the head becomes as catholic as the Christ of the heart. Horace Bushnell, *Christian Nurture*, with an introduction by Luther Weigle (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1888, 1916), 113.

the goal of full maturity for everyone).

In terms of Pastoral Ministries, Pastoral Counseling and Pastoral Care—it is admonishing with all wisdom (and it is the goal of full maturity in Christ for everyone).

In terms of Christian Education—it is by teaching with all wisdom (and it is the goal of full maturity for everyone).

In terms of Holistic Child Development—did you have a hearing problem when I said “everyone”? It means every One, even (or especially) the children.

And for the Music and Worship Department—it means helping all of us to sing all eight notes on the scale in perfect harmony.

### Conclusion

Haim G. Ginott said, “I’ve come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It’s my personal approach that creates the climate. It’s my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized.”<sup>14</sup>

I have often taught in Curriculum Theory and Analysis class or in other Christian Education classes that “the Teacher is the Final Curriculum.” Here are the reasons why I have made that statement.

1. *The teacher is the last stop in the delivery system of education.* There may be national policy making groups, regional or local administrators giving guidelines or even mandates, and there may be curriculum writers from some far away location providing the best books or means of delivery. But the teacher is the one it is filtered through on any given day when the lesson is actually taught.

2. *How something is taught is as critical as what is taught.* The teacher selects the methods, strategies and media that are utilized. This is an essential principle from our Instructional Methods and Technology class. A lesson can be heightened or lessened in its effectiveness or even in its content by how it is taught and that choice usually falls on the teacher.

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<sup>14</sup> Haim Ginott, *Teacher and Child* (New York: Macmillan, 1972).

3. *We can make this statement due to the importance of creating the environment for education*—e.g. the guided experience curriculum of John Dewey,<sup>15</sup> Montessori schools, etc. There may be things about the building or *resources*, etc. that are outside the control of the teacher. But in the end, a teacher creates the environment for learning at least in an affective sense. And in every other sense, the Montessori Method<sup>16</sup> has shown that the student can be led through a guided learning experience all the while making their own choices based on their own unique interests and directives (Foundations of Christian Education class). Concerning a guided experience curriculum, this quote may be relevant: “If you want to be an archaeologist, you need to get out of the library.” It was by Indiana Jones.<sup>17</sup>

4. *We can say the teacher is the final curriculum also because of the educational philosophy of theorists such as Albert Bandura with his emphasis on socialization, and particularly on imitation and modeling.*<sup>18</sup> Students are *more* likely to imitate or model themselves after a mentor than to be shaped by a content-based lesson. We can borrow what we have learned from the field of communication. One of its basic premises is the well-known statement of Marshall McLuhan—“The medium is the message.”<sup>19</sup> Karl Menninger has said, “What the teacher is, is more important than what he [or she] teaches”<sup>20</sup> (Theories of Learning class).

5. *Affective goals are the most over-looked and most important part of the curriculum.* The affective objectives represent feelings, attitudes, and values related to learning, and these are largely communicated by the teacher (Measurement and Evaluation class).

<sup>15</sup> John Dewey, *The Child and the Curriculum: The School and Society*, with an introduction by Leonard Carmichael (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1902), 18–31.

<sup>16</sup> Maria Montessori, *The Montessori Method* (New York: Schocken, 1964), 15.

<sup>17</sup> Movie: “Indiana Jones and the Crystal Skull.” Viewed on 27 August 2017.

<sup>18</sup> Albert Bandura, *Social Learning Theory* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977). A brief summation of his theory can be found in Dale H. Schunk, *Learning Theories: An Educational Perspective*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008), Ch. 3, especially 82–88.

<sup>19</sup> Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1994), 7.

<sup>20</sup> Karl Menninger, *Whatever Became of Sin?* (New York: Hawthorn, 1973), 108–109.

6. *The implemented curriculum is the only real curriculum* (Curriculum Theory and Analysis class). If there are three choices in the curriculum writers' application or assessment portion of the end of a Sunday school lesson or of a chapter in a school textbook, it is the teacher who decides which one gets implemented. If there are time restraints on a lesson or a unit, it is the teacher who makes the choices as to what gets left out. Even when everything is taught, one teacher may emphasize certain parts more strongly than another.

7. One of the most advanced theories for boards of education philosophies is called Understanding by Design (UbD). It is only about fifteen years new. A benchmark of the philosophy behind UbD is that we do not teach subjects. We teach students.<sup>21</sup> UbD teachers when asked, "What do you teach?" will not answer, "Math, Science, Social Studies" or one of the other subjects; they will answer, "I teach Stephanie and Carlos and Kim and Xin Mai." A Chinese proverb says, "If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people."<sup>22</sup>

8. In natural *education* (such as the theories of Rousseau)<sup>23</sup> or in purely exploratory learning that is self-guided, the student becomes his or her own teacher in a sense. But even in that sense, the teacher (student) is led by his or her own interests and follows his or her own (sometimes more loosely

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<sup>21</sup> Christine Dialing, "The Impact of Understanding by Design® Framework (UbD®) in Four Selected High Schools in the Philippines" a Master's Thesis (M.A.R.E. thesis, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2016), 129. UbD came after Outcomes-Based Education (OBE). It was founded by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins in 1998. This design is embedded in the Philippine education system of DepEd. The USA has followed up OBE with several other emphases, the later ones being No Child Left Behind and then the Common Core programs. Only a few states have partially implemented UbD into their curriculum.

<sup>22</sup> Public Domain. <http://www.quotes.net/quote/9105> Accessed on August 23, 2017. Chinese Proverb: Family of languages comprising one of the two branches of Sino-Tibetan. They are spoken by about 95% of the inhabitants of China and by many communities of Chinese immigrants elsewhere.

<sup>23</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1788), *Emile or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979). Also cross-reference Gerald L. Gutek, *Pestalozzi and Education* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1968), Chapter 4, 80-100 on "The Theory of Natural Education."

designed) path. In the end, self-guided students will likely need to find a teacher to help them learn what they want to know. It may mean exploring the internet, enrolling in a class, going to a library or to see an expert in a certain field. In the end, “Teaching is the one profession that creates all other professions.”<sup>24</sup>

9. St. Augustine: “Augustine did contend that all truth is God’s truth. He further taught that God was truly *the inward teacher or magister interior*.”<sup>25</sup> John 14:26 says, “But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (NIV).

With this philosophy of the nature of knowledge and of education, then all education unavoidably is in some sense religious education.<sup>26</sup> Alfred North Whitehead is correct in saying that it is. “The essence of education is that it be religious. Pray, what is religious education? A religious education is an education which inculcates duty and reverence.”<sup>27</sup> Whitehead is also the one who stressed that “there is only one subject-matter for education, and that is Life in all its manifestations.”<sup>28</sup> Dewey is reported to have said, “Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.”<sup>29</sup>

Knowledge should not be broken down into that which is sacred (doctrine, Bible stories, spiritual formation, ethics, etc.) and that which is secular (math, grammar, science, literature, history, etc.). So for Augustine and

<sup>24</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 89.

<sup>25</sup> St. Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. John K. Ryan (New York: Doubleday, 1960), 11:8:10. Also, cross-reference 4:1:1 and 11:9:11 of the *Confessions*.

<sup>26</sup> Wilfredo Manaois wrote that religious education is Christian education that “seeks to transmit the Christian gospel in such a way as to induce evangelical change in all learners.” “Moral Education Strategies for Philippine Schools: Iloilo, A Case in Point” (Doct. diss., West Visayas State College, 1982), 12.

<sup>27</sup> Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays* (New York: Free Press, 1929, 1957), 14.

<sup>28</sup> Whitehead, *The Aims of Education*, 6–7.

<sup>29</sup> Martin S. Dworken, *Dewey on Education: Selections*, Classics in Education 3 (New York: Teacher’s College, 1959), 22. This quote is in Dewey’s “My Pedagogic Creed” which is in this collection by Dworken. In the primary source, the literal quote is “I believe that education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living.”

many other Christian educators, all of life is seen as sacred.<sup>30</sup>

Even when “life” itself teaches us lessons, they are guided by a divine hand with both an internal as well as an external locus of control. This is where we come back to Colossians 1:24–29.

*10. THE teacher is the final curriculum—because, after all, THE teacher is Jesus!* There *never* has been nor is there any better model of a teacher than our peripatetic rabbi. He taught from life. He taught by parables and stories. His example was the message. He taught with a heart of love. He has given us His Holy Spirit who is actively guiding us into all truth. The curriculum and the teacher are united in one missive—a living logos Word, and in the mentor is the Master wherever learning takes place (secular or sacred). The integration of all the curriculum is the wonderful mystery of Christ in you the hope of glory and the end goal is to present everyone perfect in Him.

Pope Francis (the current Pope) has said, “I believe in God—not in a Catholic God; there is no Catholic God. There is God, and I believe in Jesus Christ, his incarnation. Jesus is my teacher and my pastor, but God, the Father, Abba, is the light and the Creator. This is my Being.”<sup>31</sup> The ground of his ontology is Christ who is the blend of both pastor and of teacher. That speaks for who today I am as well and who I seek to be.

One of our midterm exam questions for Foundations of Christian Education class is a multiple-choice question that comes from one of our textbooks.<sup>32</sup> We discuss the goals of education in terms of “to be,” “to know,” and “to do.” The question asks:

<sup>30</sup> Clark Armstrong, “Choosing a Path: A Study of the Theories of Christian Conversion and Christian Nurture in the Confessions of St. Augustine and in Christian Nurture by Horace Bushnell” (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Publishing/ProQuest, 2010), 286. Doctoral Dissertation from the University of Kansas.

<sup>31</sup> Visit to the Philippines in 2015, Speech at Quirino Grandstand in Luneta Park, 18 January. Quote found at: [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/p/popefrancis571226.html?src=t\\_teacher](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/p/popefrancis571226.html?src=t_teacher), accessed on 24 August 2017. Documentation at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope\\_Francis%27s\\_visit\\_to\\_the\\_Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Francis%27s_visit_to_the_Philippines), accessed on 27 August 2017.

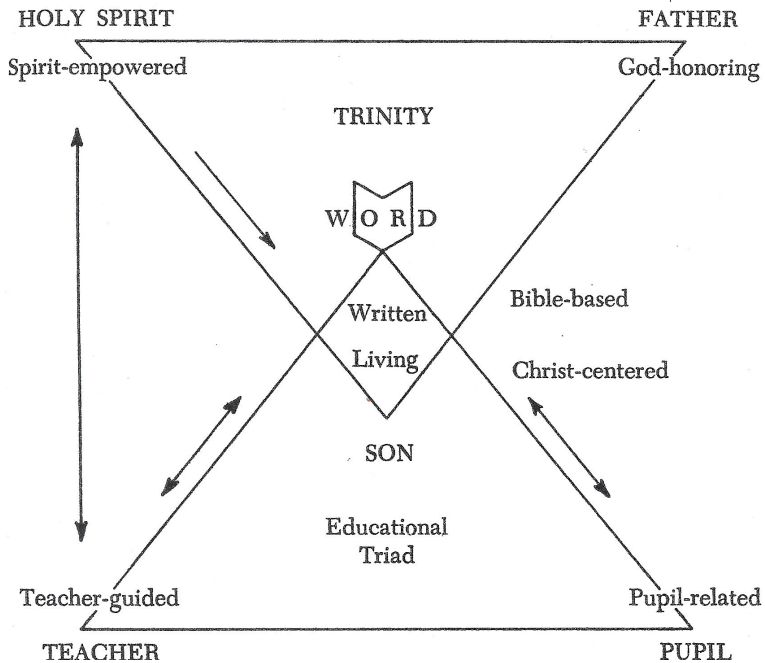
<sup>32</sup> Robert W. Pazmino, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997), 241.

1. How can teachers teach others “to be”? (Titus 2:1-15)
  - A. By relying on the grace of God (which not only saves, but teaches and trains persons in sober and godly living).
  - B. By being himself or herself an example.
  - C. By teaching in accord with truth and in love.
  - D. All of the above.

The answer is D.

### Appendix<sup>33</sup>

We therefore look at the educational triad (teacher, lesson, pupil) from the perspective of the overshadowing divine Trinity. “Since the Creator-Redeemer is Lord of life, implicit throughout Scripture are His ways of working, as well as His thoughts. Action is always carried out by means of some method. If we aren’t doing His work in the Spirit by His methods, we’re doing it in the flesh by our own methods. The Lord’s work done in the Lord’s way will have the Lord’s supply.”<sup>33</sup>



<sup>33</sup> J. Omar Brubaker, “Diagram on Instructional Methodology for Adults” in Roy B. Zuck and Gene Getz, *Adult Education in the Church* (Chicago: Moody, 1970), 119.





**Seeking Christian Community:  
Choices for Following the Path of Christ**

March 6, 2017\*

Peggy Oldham, Ed.D.

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear.

.....

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference. (Frost)

This excerpt from the writing of the late poet Robert Frost (1951) entitled *The Road Not Taken* is familiar to nearly every American student of English literature, and perhaps to many of you. Although its true message has been debated by scholars, it famously outlines an age-old dilemma. Making choices. We make choices each second of every day. They can be as simple as deciding what clothing to wear to class, or as challenging as deciding the vocation you will pursue. Some choices require diligent thought, wisdom, discipline, and prayer, while others are made on a whim. Whether small or large, perceived to be important or inconsequential, life is a matter of

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\* This paper was presented by Dr. P. Oldham on the occasion of her installation as Assistant Professor of Leadership at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary.

choices. John Wooden, the famed American college basketball coach who was named six times as coach of the year, coined this inspirational phrase: “There is a choice you have to make in everything you do. So keep in mind that in the end, the choice you make, makes you” (Staneart 2015). C. S. Lewis (1952) wrote about the complexity of choices in his book *Mere Christianity* stating, “Every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different than it was before.... You are slowly turning either into a creature that is in harmony with God, and with other creatures, and with itself, or else into one that is in a state of war and hatred with God, and with its fellow creatures, and with itself” (92). Our choices can have serious eternal consequences, and the roads they take us down can make “all the difference” in the life we ultimately live.

As a person who has studied psychology in both my bachelor and master’s program, the choices people make and the effects of those choices are of significant interest to me. I have spent the last twenty-seven years in Christian higher education, and in doing so have become a “student of students,” questioning, observing, and researching what young adults do, why they do it, and to what effect. Much of that focus in the four Nazarene universities and seminary in which I have served has been in the area of student development within a “Christian community.” This focus includes the choices students have made to live, survive, and thrive together in their daily walk.

Henri Nouwen (1996) describes Christian community as “a quality of the heart. It grows from the spiritual knowledge that we are alive not for ourselves but for one another” (23). Community can be where two or more are gathered, but God’s communion within community starts with the flame of His fire burning within one individual and the choices that individual makes. In order to fully understand the driving force of choices in the life of a Christian and, in particular, within the context of a Christian community, we first look to Jesus, the “author and perfecter of our faith” (Heb 12:2 NASB). Christ’s ministry, teaching, and instruction perfectly paralleled his choices. His life was marked with passion and purpose. His resolute walk modeled his core convictions. His message was congruent with

his actions, which stemmed from disciplined choices of the will, mind, emotions, spirit, and body. In his walk, meaningful decisions were never made from mere whim, for he knew the path to take and what the consequences of that path would ultimately be.

### Possessing Purpose

There are five areas of Jesus's intentionality of purposeful interaction with his Father and his world that I believe provide examples of choices for us to emulate in our lives within the context of community.

This first is that Jesus left both his heavenly and earthly home in search of his ministry. In doing so, he chose to trade the familiar for the purposeful. He left comfort for the calling of being involved with the lost of the world to fulfill His Father's business.

This choice of leaving the familiar for the purposeful might seem at first glance to be an easy one to check off your list. Many of you have come many kilometers from home to study at an international seminary. You have chosen a path not traveled by many, coming great distances, both literally and figuratively, to study and prepare for God's calling in your life. But trading the familiar for the purposeful goes well beyond leaving the borders of your city or country. When you work and live with people who are different from yourself, you must make a choice to learn new ways of doing things, new ways of being, acknowledging different customs and cultures, and embracing those who function differently from your familiar way of life.

These experiences can create what Mezirow (1991) calls "disorienting dilemmas." You are now forced to view the world differently. You have been faced with the decision of whether to trade what you have known as "community" for something that may look, sound, and be totally different—with people who may or may not look, act, and think like you do. Jesus most certainly encountered this as he left the confines of his hometown of Nazareth. His community became stretched to include greater parts of the Judean world. Even within the context of Judaism he encountered both the humble and the proud, the righteous and the pious, the poor in search of a Savior, and the un-needy and unaccepting. What should have been a united "community" of God, willing to accept the message of a Messiah, was in-

stead greatly divided. Writing about the realities of division within communities, James Emery White (2011) believes that “community is not something encountered; it is something that is constructed. It’s built life by life, and the building is often very hard work—particularly because so much of the work involves people who are difficult to work with” (129). How you choose to respond to the varied communities in which you will find yourself, both here and when you leave APNTS, will be greatly influenced by how you choose to accept or refuse fellowship with those around you even now. Jesus could have been distracted by a less than accepting community, but he maintained his focus on his purpose. You have the choice every day to purposefully do the same.

### Physically Dwelling

This leads us to a second choice of Jesus: choosing to physically dwell among humans. While it is true that Jesus as part of the triune God chose to “dwell” among us when he came to earth in human flesh, once he got here and saw how depraved we really were and humanly had the cognitive, mental, emotional, and spiritual ability to discern what was happening in this world, he didn’t *really* have to “dwell” among us. He could have isolated himself in a monk-like fashion, choosing to pray to his Father in heaven for release from the oppression of this world. But he didn’t. Instead, he chose to live with and among us.

Being with people—physically dwelling with them—is necessary for human physical and emotional health. Dozens of studies have supported research findings that “social isolation of otherwise healthy, well-functioning individuals eventually results in psychological and physical disintegration, and even death” (Umberson and Montez 2010). Additionally, “adults who are more socially connected are healthier and live longer than their more isolated peers” (Umberson and Montez 2010). This information alone should be enough to ensure that no APNTS student ever complain about having a roommate! Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1954), a German pastor, lecturer, and author who was executed in a Nazi prison camp in 1945, wrote about the complex need for human interaction nine years prior to his wrongful incarceration. He wrote that:

The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer. Man [*sic*] was created a body, and the Son of God appeared on earth in the body, he was raised in the body, in the sacrament the believer receives the Lord Christ in the body, and the resurrection of the dead will bring about the perfected fellowship of God's spiritual-physical creatures. The prisoner, the sick person, the Christian in exile see in the companionship of a fellow Christian a physical sign of the gracious presence of the triune God. (19–20)

So, the question now posed is, Are you living within the gracious presence of God by dwelling with his believers? Dr. Jeren Rowell, president of Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, U.S.A., states that “the essence of pastoring after the pattern of Jesus is intimate engagement with people in the basic structures of life. It is walking with them, eating with them, listening, teaching, correcting, comforting, sending, and more” (32). When we live within the context of a seminary, within close proximity of our brothers and sisters in Christ, we can actually still choose whether or not to “dwell” among our fellow believers. We can choose to insulate and isolate ourselves even within a small space, limiting the time and energy we devote to being with others. This is sometimes a natural tendency for those of us who are introverts, as we need to retreat at times to regain our own emotional and spiritual energy by being alone. The words of Bonhoeffer (1954), however, encourage us to remain vigilant not just to dwell, but to rejoice in the act of dwelling; to see the presence of another Christian, even those who may be noisy when you are attempting to sleep, or irritating as they study late into the evening with the lights on, or demanding of your time as they question their life's calling—to see these moments as equaling the “gracious presence of the triune God” (20).

### Participating by Being Present

Jesus's choosing to dwell was a physical act of being. But he also chose to be present. Being fully present is an emotional, affective decision of the will. Jesus was present when he sought people in need and, just as important, when he allowed those in need to seek Him. He chose to be present. He chose to jump into the fray of human existence, which is messy and raw.

He chose to get his hands dirty and have his human energy drained for the sake of others.

Are you practicing being present? In this age of social media, it has become tougher than ever to be emotionally and mentally present, truly experiencing life in the moment. According to research conducted by Killingsworth and Gilbert (2010), 46.9 percent of people spend much of their waking hours thinking about something other than what they are doing. Their research included 2,250 participants, aged 18–88, who responded to survey questions on an iPhone app; 26 percent, or 585 participants, were non-Americans. One conclusion of their study, as reported in *Science Magazine* and the *Harvard Gazette*, was that “a human mind is a wandering mind, and a wandering mind is an unhappy mind. The ability to think about what is not happening”—including what others are doing that you are not, what you might be missing, or where you would rather be—“is a cognitive achievement that comes at an emotional cost” (932). The authors noted, “Many philosophical and religious traditions teach that happiness is to be found by living in the moment,” living in the here and now. They found that people were “happiest when interacting with others, being present, including being engaged in person-to-person conversation” (932). In our time, being present for others may be quickly becoming that “road less traveled.”

Here is a well-known secret: being present is a choice! In case you have not noticed, here is another reality: being present is difficult. From the perspective of a counselor, I want you to know that choosing to be present with people you minister to can cost you a lot. There is sacrifice involved. You must be vulnerable to seeing the needs of others, seeing them in yourself, and letting others see your vulnerabilities. Quoting again from the writing of James Emory White (2011), there are many “emotional hits” in ministry, and they can include the stress of finances, church member and staff departures, criticism from those you minister to, and a “torrent of expectations” (21) for both you and your family. In his book entitled *What They Didn't Teach You in Seminary*, White outlines a number of ways to help avoid the emotional pitfalls of being present. These include some simple but profound suggestions, such as serving within the primary areas of your giftedness and pursuing “emotionally replenishing experiences” that will both

honor God and refill your emotional tank. There are boundaries to be set, whether you are pastoring a church, teaching in a Christian school, or running an NGO. Study to understand your gifts, your temperament, your personality strengths and weaknesses, and then be present and appropriately vulnerable in the best way God created you.

### Practicing Abundant Generosity

Walter Brueggemann (2011), a world-renowned Old Testament scholar and prolific author, writes that “filled with God’s generosity, Jesus went around to people suffering from scarcity—of health, of acceptance, of power, of understanding—and replaced it with a gift of abundance” (2). And his giving abundantly was a choice. John 10:10 (NASB) records these words of Jesus: “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” According to Brueggemann, this practice of abundance in Jesus did not start with his official ministry. It stemmed from a lifetime of practicing generosity within the context of his community. Brueggemann continues by describing that while living as a boy in Nazareth, Jesus probably heard his mother, Mary, often sing words of the Magnificat, such as, “He has filled the hungry with good things” (Luke 1:53). Brueggemann speculates that:

Jesus remembered the songs of Mary—songs of God’s generosity toward those in need. Jesus is well-schooled in the transformative generosity of God. He is also well-schooled in the conviction that if you share your bread with the neighbor, the world will be made new. He knows that generosity isn’t something you just think about, it was something you do. (2)

Jesus, in his ministry on earth, abundantly fed the five thousand, as is recorded in all four Gospels; he abundantly turned water into wine; through the abundance of the Spirit he healed the lame, the blind, a much-loved daughter; and he raised a brother from the dead. You may say, “But I can’t work such miracles! And I don’t have resources to abundantly give. How can I make a difference within my community?” I would invite you to consider that Jesus, through God’s Spirit, abundantly spoke words of encouragement and peace. He calmed fears. He broke bread. He cooked a breakfast

of fish for the hungry disciplines along the seashore. Because of his faith, Jesus assured a dying thief of his eternal home in heaven. Luke 6:45 (BLB) states, “The good [person] out of the good treasure of [the] heart brings forth that which is good.... For out of the abundance of [the] heart [the] mouth speaks.” And these words and actions of abundance come only at the expense of your heart and time. So, the question that is posed to you as you journey within Christian community is this: Is your abundance showing in what you choose to speak and do?

#### Working in a Team

Another choice for Jesus was to work in a team. One of the most dreaded assignments I can ever give a class is for them to work together in groups. Most students I have taught would prefer to do their own work, at their own pace, taking the consequences for their own academic decisions without having to worry about how the work of a team member could potentially threaten their chance for receiving an “A.” I remind my students that Ecclesiastes 4 states, “Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up.... Two people can resist an attack that would defeat one person alone. A rope made of three cords is hard to break” (4:9–12 GNT). Jesus could have ministered alone and still gathered throngs of followers, but he did not. Instead, he formed a ministry team of disciples. He lived, laughed, ate with, and ministered to His world alongside this group of rough and largely uneducated men. He chose to empower and mentor mere men, trusting them with the keys to the kingdom of God. Who are you choosing to mentor? Who are you allowing to mentor you? Who are you devoting time to in order to more effectively bring the kingdom of God to earth?

#### Conclusion

Jesus was fully God *and* fully human. And these outlined choices for Jesus, in his humanness, were all deliberately modeled acts—choices of the will, mind, emotions, spirit, and body. Being purposeful often meant going against the grain of society. Dwelling with others often led to conflict and pain. Being present meant continually laying aside personal comfort and emotional strength. Practicing abundance meant giving fully and freely of the power of the Spirit living within Him. Mentoring others required the



patience and love that comes with choosing to guide, encourage, and support. None of these are necessarily the “first choice” of our human nature but are actions that kingdom seekers will choose through God’s strength to model Christ within the communities where we live, study, and work.

In his book, *A Love Worth Giving*, author Max Lucado (2002) poses rhetorical questions to his readers regarding the choices Jesus made. He asks:

If you knew that only a few would care that you came, would you still come? If you knew that those you loved would laugh in your face, would you still care? If you knew that the tongues you made would mock you, the mouths you made would spit at you, the hands you made would crucify you, would you still make them? Christ did.... He went from commanding angels to sleeping in the straw. From holding stars to clutching Mary’s finger. The palm that held the universe took the nail of a soldier. Why? Because that’s what love does. (58)

And we too, as Christ’s followers, must decide each day how we will respond through our choices, submitting our mind, body, spirit, and emotions to His calling, all in response to His love for us and His lost world. Community can be where two or more are gathered, but God’s communion within community starts with the flame of His holy fire of love burning within one. We must choose community. And so the question becomes, Will you be that one?

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood.

.....

I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference. (Frost)

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### 2018 APNTS Thesis and Dissertation Abstracts

**Lustaña, Ingrid Bella Kiper. “A Graphic Way of Purification: Understanding and Contextualizing the Day of Atonement for Filipino Millennials through Sequential Art.” M.S.T. thesis, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2018.**

This thesis focused on the study, translation, and interpretation of the Day of Atonement as described in Leviticus 16:11–28. The goal of the study was for Filipino millennials to understand the rituals of the holy ceremony. The purpose was to test which medium accomplished this goal. Therefore, the researcher first created an English translation from an exegesis of the passage in its Hebrew texts through the Hermeneutical Spiral. The researcher then used the Praxis Model of Contextual Theology and asked the assistance of Filipino millennials to help her create a sequential art that would be comprehensible for the target audience. She had Filipino millennials read two documents, the translation and production, and assessed for reading comprehension. The researcher found that the Filipinos who assessed the sequential art not only enjoyed the production, but they found connections to their lives more than those who had assessed the translation. Therefore, the researcher can conclude that a contextualize sequential art is more effective in theological education than just a simple reading of the Bible.

**Lustaña, Terence D. “The Relationship between Intimacy and Mediated Communication among Adolescents at Taytay First Church of the Nazarene in Rizal, Philippines.” M.A.C.C. thesis, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2018.**

This thesis investigated the relationship between computer-mediated communication (CMC) and perceived level of intimacy (PLI) of adolescents of Taytay First Church of the Nazarene (TFCN), Taytay, Rizal, Philippines. The researcher used a survey questionnaire adopted from Natalie Pennington’s “Building and Maintaining Relationships in the Digital Age: Using Social Penetration Theory to Explore Communication through Social Networking Sites” (Pennington, 2015). Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient was utilized to examine the relationship between the TFCN adolescents’ age and

PLI, gender and PLI; perceived type of relationship and PLI; depth and breadth of communication and PLI; and the use of other communication forms and PLI. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived levels of intimacy in CMC among adolescents in Taytay, Rizal, First Church of the Nazarene, Philippines.

The study was quantitative in approach. The researcher conducted a survey for measuring the PLI between 60 respondents and their CMC friends. This research asked the respondents to choose a CMC friend (person with whom they communicate on a daily basis using CMC) and investigated the respondents' PLI via CMC. Summarizing the research findings, respondents' PLI had no correlation with the respondents' age, depth of communication, or breadth of communication. Meanwhile, the respondents' PLI correlated with the respondents' gender, respondents' perceived type of relationship, and the use of CMC and other forms of communication. Based on the findings, the thesis suggested that TFCN should consider CMC as a platform for adolescents to express themselves and at the same time continue to encourage face-to-face meetings and interactions such as cell groups, Bible study groups, and accountability partners.

**Obedoza, Mark Joshua M. "Factors Contributing to Generation Congregation (GenCon) Young People Deciding to Become Members of Taytay First Church of the Nazarene." M.A.R.E. thesis, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2018.**

This study sought to identify and describe factors contributing to Generation Congregation (GenCon) young people deciding to become members of Taytay First Church of the Nazarene. This research is significant because it showed the factors which led to the decision of GenCon young people to become members of Taytay First Church of the Nazarene. The study may also help the church evaluate all the programs and strategies they have for retaining the young people who attend their youth group. The findings of this study will also help other youth organizations in the local congregation of the Church of the Nazarene and other denominations in the Philippines and globally.

The researcher used purposive nonprobability sampling for the quantitative survey, wherein the respondents were selected from the target population on the basis of their fit with the purpose of the study. In this study

the members of Taytay First Church of the Nazarene who were previously and currently attending the GenCon service were identified. Two youth leaders were involved in identifying the members. The surveys were administered in three services, *Tagalog*, English, and GenCon of Taytay Church of the Nazarene. The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Test was used to treat the data.

Null hypothesis one says, "There is no significant comparative difference between the answers of GenCon attenders regarding factors that led them to initially attend GenCon and factors that led them to join in membership with Taytay First Church of the Nazarene." This null hypothesis was accepted. Although the factors that led people to first attend GenCon, and the factors that led attenders to join the church could be identified and ranked, it showed no significant comparative difference. Overall findings of the scores did not show a significant difference above the mark of 0.05. However, a notable comparative finding in this study was that both the number one factor why respondents attended for the first time and the number one reason why they became members was because "they want to know and grow in the Lord." This led the researcher to a conclusion that GenCon young people are longing to grow in knowledge and faith in God.

Null hypothesis two says, "There is no significant comparative difference between the answers of GenCon attenders regarding their level of spiritual commitment while attending GenCon and them becoming a member of Taytay First Church of the Nazarene, in regards to their spiritual habits and involvement in the ministry." This null hypothesis was rejected. All of the respondents scored a positive growth in their spiritual commitment. All of the respondents grew in the two areas tested, their spiritual habits and involvement in the ministry. Growing in their spiritual habits and involvement in the ministry is also the fruit of their desire to know and grow in the Lord, which was the number one factor in their attending for the first time and also their becoming a member of Taytay First Church of the Nazarene.

Recommendations were identified for the enhancement of the GenCon youth ministry: (a) continue to introduce new and interesting ways of teaching the Word of God to the new generation; (b) create a separate list of the membership roll which comes from GenCon, aside from the general membership list of the church, for easy evaluation of the growth of GenCon in terms of their commitment to become a member; and (c) conduct further

research into factors contributing to young peoples' decision to drop out of GenCon service. This will balance the current study.

**Oh Suoh. "An Evaluation of the God Image of Selected Third Culture Kids (TCKs) from Faith Academy in Rizal, Philippines." M.A.R.E. thesis, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2018.**

This study was conducted to explore the God Image of Third Culture Kids (TCKs) at Faith Academy located in Rizal Province of the Philippines. These were students who were between 16 to 19 years old. Specific demographic factors were investigated to explore the relationship between their demographic characteristics and their God Image. There were 106 respondents for this study. Criterion-type purposive sampling was used to choose the respondents.

This research was designed as a descriptive study using quantitative methodology. The respondents were given a survey in a questionnaire format which was invented by Richard Lawrence in 1997 to assess their God Image. Along with it was given a demographic questionnaire as well. The God Image Scale (GIS) Questionnaire was based on three main issues with two sub-categories under each: the Sense of Belonging (Presence and Challenge), Goodness (Acceptance and Benevolence), and Control (Influence and Providence for Control). Eight items were examined for their demographic characteristic data. The statistical data was analyzed with the use of the one-way ANOVA and t-test. The statistical treatment was conducted by a software program, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Based on the statistical analysis, the following conclusions were drawn according to the null hypotheses. The first null hypothesis ("There would be no statistical significance between the Sense of Belonging and the God Image within TCKs") was rejected. The result showed that the selected TCKs agree with the Sense of Belonging with God. The second null hypothesis ("There would be no statistical significance between the Goodness of God and the God Image within TCKs") was rejected. The result was identified that the selected TCKs agree with the Goodness of God. The third null hypothesis ("There would be no statistical significance between Control and the God Image within TCKs") was rejected. The result meant that TCKs agree with their sense of Control with God. Thus, it was found that

the respondents who were TCKs generally have a positive God Image. Finally, the fourth null hypothesis (“There would be no statistical significance between the demographic characteristics of TCKs and the God Image”) was rejected. It was found that four demographic factors of the selected TCKs do affect their God Image. The four factors were: 1) gender, 2) number of years living abroad, 3) the number of countries that TCKs have lived, and 4) frequency of attending church. There were no statistical significances among the rest of the demographic items.

Finally, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were identified to the ministers, parents, educators, and caregivers of TCKs, as well as for further study. The caregivers should be reminded of the possibility of a negative or unhealthy God Image of TCKs. The caregivers need to carefully consider the students’ God Image and may attempt to apply God Image improvement programs, mentoring, or counseling. Further, the caregivers should be careful about the students’ specific demographic factors which may affect their God Image. For further study, the researcher recommends: a) a qualitative research study in this area, b) a more thorough explanation about the concept of God Image, such as delivering a script along with administration, c) extended studies related to counseling TCKs, and d) more studies regarding TCKs and their spirituality as Christians.

**Sancho, Apple P. “An Analytic Induction Study of the English Reading Comprehension of the Selected Pastors of Metro Manila District Church of the Nazarene and Their Preaching Tasks.” M.A.R.E. thesis, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2018.**

This study examines the English reading comprehension of selected pastors of the Metro Manila District (MMD) Church of the Nazarene and their preaching tasks. There are 33 respondents in the study who are the pastors of MMD Church of the Nazarene. The English reading comprehension skill of the pastors was assessed to determine the deviant cases for the process of Analytic induction. Analytic Induction is the methodology of the study to solve the statement of the problem: What can be learned about the English reading comprehension of the selected pastors of Metro Manila District Church of the Nazarene and their preaching tasks.

This research was a combination of quantitative and descriptive approaches. A quantitative approach was used to assess the level of the pastors' English reading comprehension and a qualitative approach was used to assess the sermon preparation of the pastors.

In terms of two hypotheses of the study, both hypotheses were reformulated. The first hypothesis states that, Poor English reading comprehension skills will result in poorer practice of two skills that are a part of the preaching task, namely Biblical exegesis and sermon preparation in the sample group. This hypothesis was revised to, Poor English reading comprehension skills will result in poorer practice of two skills that are a part of the preaching task, namely Biblical exegesis and sermon preparation in the sample group, unless the pastor will spend more time in the sermon preparation and Biblical exegesis. The basis of the reformulation was because there was another factor that strongly influenced sermon preparation of the pastors between the score of their English reading.

**Tadesse, Aweke Solomon. "The Joy and Burden of Caring for Orphans and Vulnerable Children: A Case Study on the Wellbeing of Primary Caregivers in Food for the Hungry, Ethiopia Child Development Program."**

**Ph.D. dissertation, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2018.**

This dissertation is an understanding and investigation about the joy and burden of caring for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) in Food for the Hungry Ethiopia Zeway Child Development Program. The study explored the factors that affect the wellbeing of OVC primary caregivers, their caring and nurturing role towards the OVC. The study provided understanding of the theoretical framework of family-based care and an assessment of its significance for childcare. It also described the theories that directly contributed and related to the wellbeing of OVC primary caregivers, and projects the logical thoughts that direct how to improve and secure the wellbeing status of the family.

The study examined a basic scientific framework for child character development and the role of primary caregivers. It gave a brief description of the scientific character and identity formation of children and the place of the caregiver or parental role in the process. The descriptions included specifics on the connection between the mental development (thinking facili-



ties), character, identity, and social development. The content also gave description of holistic learning theories and principles for effective childcare implementation and argued that the interactive skill-based learning approach has the potential to sharpen the child's mind and thought processes in dealing with practical life experiences.

The study analyzed and presented the place of a supportive community or the need of care and support for OVC primary caregivers as a key and back up those caregivers who are in extreme poverty and living with considerable wellbeing defects. Following this thought, the study argued that there has been a considerable emphasis on the immediate losses and material needs of the OVC and yet the wellbeing, caring, and parental role and burden of their immediate interventionist or primary caregivers are often significantly overlooked. The effectiveness and sustainable nature of child development programs are directly related to the quality of support provided to primary caregivers, which in turn are passed on to growth in the wellbeing of the OVC.

The study found that there is a direct relation between the quality of care and support provided to primary caregivers and maintaining healthy and quality care and support to the vulnerable child. As part of the child holistic care and nurture strategy, the study provided Biblical and theological precepts for caregivers, parents, and the faith community. This included instances and views from early church tradition, as well. The research used a case study method in which the data were collected using a mixed-method approach.

The quantitatively structured questionnaires measured the wellbeing of primary caregivers and ascertained issues that need to be given more attention. As a dependent variable, the condition of wellbeing depends on the status of different domains. The method is used as probing tool to move sequentially from the general investigation to the in-depth and specific study, which was set up through the qualitative tools. Through the qualitative means, multiple data collection methods such as focus group interviews, individual interviews, and informal individual interviews were carried out. These tools helped in investigating and discovering the underlying causes and effects of the caregivers' burden and sense of joy in relation to their caring and nurturing role towards the orphan and vulnerable child.

The research also looked into some other important themes affecting

the wellbeing condition of caregivers, such as relationships with supportive communities and worries for the future. These understanding and exploration of the study led to the identification of recommendations for the improvement of the care and support approach, which in turn would benefit the process of the OVC holistic care and support provided to the direct beneficiaries.

The study hoped to enable Food for the Hungry (FH) Ethiopia to identify the factors that directly affect the wellbeing of primary caregivers and indirectly the OVC through the exploration of the wellbeing domain score and through analyzing the burden and sense of joy that the OVC primary caregivers experience as they act out their role. Furthermore, the study recommended that the organization and the professionals need to develop a methodology and tools that can enable valid and sustainable intervention, which improves the wellbeing of the caregiver and enhances the holistic growth of the OVC as well as the effectiveness of the program and performance of the professional engaged as a strategy developer walking with the caregiver as social worker.

**Villarosa, Eloisa P. "Second Language Acquisition Error Analysis on the Newsletter Writing of the Ninth Batch Frontier Missionary Trainees of the Paul Mission, Inc." M.A.R.E. thesis, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2018.**

This study explored how second language acquisition (SLA) error analysis could help in the improvement of newsletter writing of the ninth batch Frontier Missionary Trainees (FMTs) of The Paul Mission, Inc. SLA error analysis is the analysis of errors in the second language writing of English learners. It was established by Stephen Pit Corder with other colleagues based on the assumption that second language errors are outcomes of first language and second language transfer. SLA error analysis is important for teachers, learners, and researchers because it shows the learners' progress that helps the teachers know what more to teach to the learners. It also helps the researchers understand more the dynamics of language learning and provides them evidence of how the language is acquired. The procedure that was used in this SLA error analysis were error identification, description, explanation, evaluation, discussion, and recommendation. Corder gave four categories of errors, namely: omission, selection, addition, and ordering.

This study tested the null hypothesis that the FMTs will not have significant improvement of 0.05 through the use of SLA error analysis and the designed treatment for their newsletter writing skills over the designated period of two months. The result rejected the null hypothesis on the basis that the FMTs as a group had an improvement of 0.61 or 6.1%. This study also explored several factors that influence the second language learning which could have contributed to the errors committed by the FMTs, namely, context of learning, interlingual transfer, and intralingual transfer.

In this research, second language acquisition error analysis was used to figure out the most frequent errors in the newsletter writing of the ninth batch Frontier Missionary Trainees of The Paul Mission, Inc. It was found that in their first writing, the most frequent errors committed were morphological selection, followed by syntactical omission. These most frequent errors were used to make a form-focused instruction (FFI) that served as a treatment designed for the particular need of the FMTs in improving their newsletter writing. Eight classes were spent by the researcher with the FMTs using the FFI, as well as a one-on-one meeting with each of them to explain the errors committed and how they could improve from committing those errors for a period of two months. Their writing in the second stage and their final writing were also analyzed. Comparing all three writings that were analyzed, the FMTs had a significant decline of errors in their writings. It was observed that the most committed errors were local errors and not global errors.

The researcher calculated the result of their writings by getting the z-score to test whether the FMTs passed the conventional critical value of  $z=1.65$  that corresponds to the testing standard of 0.05. The result was that two of them did not advance, four of them experienced some improvement (but under the 1.65 critical value), and five of them advanced significantly. All of these findings were presented using a 1-tailed test standard normal curve. The FMTs' scores were also tested as a group and the result was that they had a significant improvement of 0.61, greater than the standard  $\alpha=0.05$ . Therefore, the conclusion of this study was that second language acquisition (SLA) error analysis with form-focused instruction (FFI) helped the FMTs to have a significant improvement in their English newsletter writing.

**Yanchick, Sarah Kathleen. "Parental Involvement and Advocacy for Children with Special Needs: A Comparative Study of Three Schools Cross-Culturally." M.A.R.E. thesis, Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2018.**

This thesis entails a comparative study of parental involvement and parental advocacy for their children with special needs in three cross-cultural settings. The purpose of this study was to learn how parents of children with special needs get involved according to Joyce Epstein's Six Types of Parental Involvement and at what levels they were empowered to exhibit advocacy as shown through the Family Empowerment Scale (FES). Epstein's parenting types include: (a) Parenting, (b) Learning at Home, (c) Communicating, (d) Decision-Making, (e) Volunteering, and (f) Collaborating with Community.

This study also sought to discover if there was any significant statistical difference between the responses of three sets of parents in three cultural settings according to Joyce Epstein's Six Levels of Involvement using the Kruskal-Wallis Test (Non-parametric ANOVA). There was a total of 73 respondents, which consisted of mothers and fathers of students with special needs in three schools: Golden Faith Academy in Taytay, Rizal, Philippines; Mirada de Amor in Valparaiso, Chile; and Another Choice Virtual Charter School (ACVS) in Nampa, Idaho, U.S.A.

The study concluded that parents of children with special needs on average are often involved and feel empowered. In comparing the three respondent groups it was concluded that there was an identifiable statistical difference among the parental responses cross-culturally in the three special education school settings where the FES was administered concerning the parenting types (b) Learning at Home, (c) Communication, (e) Volunteering, and (f) Collaborating with Community, while there was no identifiable statistical difference among the responses in the categories of (a) Parenting, and (d) Decision-Making.

## Call for Papers

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1. Please submit all proposed articles to the editor (dland@apnts.edu.ph) in electronic form (Microsoft Word is preferable). Please put “Mediator Submission” in the subject line.
2. Articles must be written in standard international English.
3. Authors must provide complete bibliographical information either in citations or in a bibliography at the end. Citation style may be either parenthetical or footnote style, but must be consistent within each article. If used, format as footnotes rather than endnotes. Use shortened form for subsequent citations rather than *Ibid*.
4. Articles must conform to the latest edition of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*.
5. Papers may be of any length, although authors may be asked to condense longer papers.
6. A list of non-standard abbreviations should be provided.



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## *The Mediator*

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