

## **A History of Spiritual Formation in Evangelical Theological Education**

Spiritual formation has almost always been a strength of the evangelical tradition. This is true as to intention, that we have generally stated discipleship to be the greatest objective in theological education, and as to delivery in that there is a strong history of missionary and ministry preparation which has worked to produce godly missionaries and ministers because we regard them as the most effective for the Kingdom. However, if someone were to set out to track the history of this emphasis, he or she would find very little to help in the extant literature. This essay therefore is exploratory. It is akin to the building of the first huts on the banks of the river, in the hope that it will encourage others to join the task of inhabiting the territory, taking the study further.

I propose a threefold root to evangelical thinking and practice, and then seek to describe how the roots of our tradition are expressed in the diverse contemporary scene. The first root is the Reformation itself and, rather than take an early text in this respect, I have chosen to examine B.B. Warfield's essay on the subject as representative of this line of the tradition. A second root is the Pietist tradition and I have chosen to look at the *Pia Desideria* by Philip Jacob Spener. A third root is the revival/revivalist tradition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and I have chosen to examine the address on the training of missionaries by Grattan Guinness to the Exeter conference. Finally, I will look at the contemporary scene as it is influenced by the evangelical accrediting movement, a re-discovery by evangelicals of traditional western spirituality through such writers as Merton and Nouwen, recent post-modern attitudes to spirituality, the Pentecostal/charismatic movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, what can be described as the "care for the student" movement leading to counselling and mentoring provision and a broadening among evangelicals of the definitions of both ministry and mission.

### **Root One - The Reformation tradition**

The mainline Reformations in Europe were led by learned men, usually with university connections and generally with renaissance credentials. The 95 theses were nailed to the door of the university church in Wittenberg. Calvin's first publication was a commentary on Seneca's *De Clementia* and the Reformation in England could be said to begin not in Henry VIII's bedroom, but in a room in the White Horse Inn just behind Jesus College in Cambridge University.

And yet the medieval unity of faith and theological work remained alive in the reformers' writings and practice. They would all have wholeheartedly approved of Bonaventura's introduction to the *Soul's Journey into God* which says

"First therefore, I invite the reader to the groans of prayer through Christ crucified, through whose blood we are cleansed from the filth of vice – so that he not believe

that reading is sufficient without unction, speculation without devotion, investigation without wonder, observation without joy, work without piety, knowledge without love, understanding without humility endeavour without divine grace, reflection... without divinely inspired wisdom.<sup>1</sup>

Luther famously said that the three things which make a theologian are meditation, temptation and prayer. Calvin devotes a whole section of his Institutes to the issue of self-denial by the Christian. Cranmer's collects have been an expression of spirituality for generations of Christians.

B. B. Warfield gave an address to students at the autumn conference at Princeton Theological Seminary on October 4<sup>th</sup> 1911.<sup>2</sup> I chose this text not only for its interpretation and application of Reformation attitudes but also because of its significant use and influence among evangelical theological educators today. Warfield acknowledges Luther and Calvin as his mentors and consciously expounds and applies the Reformation doctrine of "vocation", developing it for the theological student.

He begins by acknowledging that the ministry is a "learned profession" and so good learning for those who are apt to teach is essential, "but before and above being learned, a minister must be godly".<sup>4</sup> These two requirements are not antagonistic to each other, but their relationship can be described in three main ways.

Firstly, there must be a genuine seeking of both. A soldier needs both legs.<sup>5</sup> Secondly, there is a connection related to our duty. For this, Warfield employs the Reformation concept of vocation (which he opposes to Roman Catholic conceptions), that we are all given by God a calling and our spirituality is expressed in fulfilling that duty willingly and enthusiastically for God's glory. He says to the students then, "your vocation is to study theology".<sup>6</sup>

However, thirdly, Warfield refuses to accept that the study of theology itself will create godliness. It is quite possible to study theology as we study any other subject. But this option is not possible for someone studying the things of God. We need, in addition, to study theology as a religious exercise. To so put one's Christian heart into the studies means that;

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<sup>1</sup>Bonaventure *The Soul's Journey Into God*, in *Classics of Western Spirituality*; Bonaventure Ed. Ewert Cousins New Jersey; Paulist Press, 1978, pp51ff.

<sup>2</sup> The most accessible version is that published as a booklet; Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Religious Life of Theological Students*, Philipsburg, New Jersey; Puritan and Reformed, n.d. Also in *Selected Shorter Writing; Benjamin B. Warfield* vol. 1. Ed. John E. Meeter, Grand Rapids; Puritan and Reformed, 1970, pp411-425.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p2.

<sup>5</sup> Loc. Cit.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p3.

“They bring you daily and hourly into the very presence of God; his ways, his dealing with men, the infinite majesty of his Being form their very subject matter. Put the shoes from of your feet in his holy presence!”<sup>7</sup>

In addition to his dealing with the relationship between academic study and spiritual formation, he requires of the student specific religious exercises. Worship and prayer as a community, he sees as essential for the seminary on a daily basis – something which Bonhoeffer will later echo but which is so difficult to accomplish today.

“In my own mind, I am quite clear that in an institution like this the whole body of students should come together, both morning and evening, every day, for common prayer”<sup>8</sup>

But “the foundation stone of your piety” as a student is found in “your private religious exercises, and in your intimate religious aspirations”<sup>9</sup> in the creation of a personal “devout life”. For, he says, “There is no mistake more terrible than to suppose that activity in Christian work can take the place of depth of Christian affections.”<sup>10</sup>

Warfield’s rich and thoughtful application of the Reformation tradition is typical of the best of the protestant seminaries of the last century which have influenced the way we do theological education today.

## **Root Two - The Pietist Tradition**

First-generation pietists reacted against the Protestant scholasticism of the late 16<sup>th</sup> century in Germany subsequent to the Formula of Concord in 1580. They re-emphasised personal renewal, individual growth in holiness and religious experience. Building on the work of Johann Arndt and a number of reform groups, in 1675 Philip Jacob Spener published the Pietist’s fundamental treatise, *Pia Desideria; or Heartfelt desires for a God-pleasing Improvement of the true Protestant Church*. One section is especially directed to the training of ministers.<sup>11</sup> A number of key issues have influenced evangelical theological education.

Firstly, Spener asserts a priority of Spirituality over doctrinal exactitude and debate. The enemy of true spirituality, he argues, is arid theological debate without a spiritual intention, so not all theological disputation is “praiseworthy and useful”.<sup>12</sup> Theology is a “practical

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p6.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p9.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p12.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p14.

<sup>11</sup> The most accessible translation of much of the book is in Peter C. Erb (Ed.) *Pietists: Selected Writings (Classics of Western Spirituality)*, New York; Paulist Press, 2003, which is the edition referenced in this chapter. For very useful analysis and full translation into English, see Allen C. Deeter, “An Historical and Theological Introduction to Philip Jakob Spener’s *Pia Desideria*: A Study in Early German Pietism”; Ph. D. Princeton University, 1963.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p39.

discipline” and so “everything must be directed to the practice of the spiritual life”.<sup>13</sup> The “diligent use of the Word of God” and clear faith in true theology is important, but it is nothing without the practice of love.<sup>14</sup>

Secondly, for the church to be renewed, ministers must be godly men, and so their training must emphasise spiritual formation. It is the role of the professor to see that this happens in the ministry student’s life. He should see the spiritual life of his students as being in his care. “The professors could accomplish a great deal by their example”<sup>15</sup> but they should do more; they should exercise good discipline, they should impress upon their students that a holy life is fundamental<sup>16</sup>, put good devotional books in their hands<sup>17</sup>, and undertake spiritual exercises with them.<sup>18</sup> Eventually, the professors should make judgments about the spiritual life of individual students and this information conveyed to those who will eventually employ them in ministry.

Thirdly, in this respect, Spener takes up a suggestion he has already made for churches, that groups of Christians should meet to read scripture and discuss their spiritual lives. In the seminary, it is the professor who should gather small groups together to study the word for spiritual profit. “Such confidence and friendship should be established among the students that they not only admonish one another to put what they have heard into practice but also to enquire, each for himself, where they may have failed to observe the rules of conduct and try at once to put them into practice.”<sup>19</sup> The practice of small meetings for mutual edification was taken up by the Moravians, was used by Wesley, found its way into Methodism, and has a modern expression in evangelical theological education in the “fellowship” or “tutor” groups of the contemporary evangelical college.

Bernhard Ott chronicles the influence of pietism on theological education in German speaking colleges.<sup>20</sup> He notes that the original intention of early pietists was to renew existing provision by the presence of pietist minded professors in the universities and church and state institutions. However, this was increasingly difficult to achieve with the rise of the enlightenment university and study centres of a pietistic orientation were then established in university towns to support pietistic students. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century separate pietistic seminaries were founded operating at university level but separate and independent from state universities, abandoning the idea of renewing existing theological education from within and establishing a separate pietist-rooted, evangelical tradition, free to emphasise their evangelical views on scripture and their tradition of

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p42.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. pp36 & 40.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p41

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. pp41-43.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. p44.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p45.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p46.

<sup>20</sup> Bernhard Ott, *Beyond Fragmentation: Integrating Mission and Theological Education*, Oxford; Regnum, 2001.

spiritual formation.<sup>21</sup> Their overall attitude to the fundamental nature of spiritual formation in preparation for Christian ministry has permeated the whole of evangelicalism.

### **Root Three - Revival/Revivalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

Around the year 1859, a significant revival of evangelical religion commenced in America and the United Kingdom. Its characteristics were the establishment of large prayer meetings, usually (though not exclusively) in an urban setting, leading to a great number of people becoming concerned about their spiritual state, then finding peace through repentance and faith in Christ. J. Edwin Orr, the main historian of the Revival, named it “the second evangelical awakening”.<sup>22</sup> Developing from this came the great evangelistic campaigns of D. L. Moody.

Parsons draws a distinction between a Revival and Revivalism. Revival in Protestant tradition is spontaneous and unstructured, “an outpouring of God’s Spirit upon a community whose only preparation was a period of intense and persistent prayer”.<sup>23</sup> Revivalism is the organised meeting, or set of meetings, usually in urban settings, with posters, hymn-books and so on. Prayer, then, is “no longer that revival may come” but “that the revival would be a success”.<sup>24</sup> Moody’s revivalism fed off the revivals and together, through them, God awakened a large number of “ordinary” men and women who longed to serve God in mission at home and abroad.

The Faith Mission movement, initiated by Hudson Taylor and others, developed as the mechanism to make this possible. Many of those who eventually went as missionaries with CIM and the Faith Missions were converted in the Revival or under D.L. Moody.<sup>25</sup> Hudson Taylor returned to London in 1860 knowing that “the revival has reached London and hundreds are being converted”.<sup>26</sup> He stayed five years. Marshall Broomhall says that “the Revival then in progress was a revelation in the homeland of God’s power to bless, whilst a million a month dying in China without God was its appalling contrast”.<sup>27</sup>

It was out of this inter-related bundle of the activities of God’s Spirit that the Bible College movement was formed. It began in the UK, spread quickly to North America, linked up with

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid. pp45 & 46.

<sup>22</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *The Second Evangelical Awakening: An Account of the Second Worldwide Evangelical Revival Beginning in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*, London; Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1949 (edition consulted 1955).

<sup>23</sup> Gerald Parsons, “Emotion and Piety: Revivalism in Victorian Christianity” in Gerald Parsons (Ed.), *Religion in Victorian Britain: Volume 1 Traditions*, Manchester; Manchester University Press, 1988, p214.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. pp215f.

<sup>25</sup> Orr, op.cit. p228.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p226.

<sup>27</sup> Qtd. ibid. p227.

similar colleges in Europe, especially those arising out of the Pietist movement, and seeded itself across Africa, Asia, Latin America and many other locations, as missionaries, trained in the Bible colleges and Bible institutes of the developed world, founded similar institutions in the developing world.

The first key figure in this movement was Grattan Guinness, a powerful preacher in the revival in Ireland – which included preaching temperance in Dublin to the embarrassment of others of his family, who owned the brewery of the same name. After the heady days of the revival were past, Guinness drew together a small group of young men whom he began to instruct. He invited Hudson Taylor to Dublin and, while Taylor was there, he and his wife Fanny offered themselves as missionaries for China. Taylor asked them instead to “train me the men and women”<sup>28</sup> for mission. A few years later, in 1872, the first Bible college, the East London Institute for Home and Foreign Mission was born and the ideas began to spread. In 1888 at the General Missionary Conference at Exeter Hall in London,<sup>29</sup> Guinness set out the Bible college ethos which has shaped subsequent evangelical theological education.

Guinness discusses missionary calling and preparation. He begins by affirming that it is the call of God and the work of the spirit which makes a missionary, not our training. But, where this is present, good training can do a lot to prepare such a person for ministry.<sup>30</sup> What are the aims of that training? Firstly and pre-eminently, it must be spiritual formation.

Hence it is evident that the development of *spiritual life* is the great thing to be aimed at in missionary training. Woe to the Church if she neglects *this*, or gives it a secondary place! Her messengers will be of little use, for unspiritual agents can never accomplish spiritual work. Are we not building up a spiritual temple? Must not each stone of it be a living stone, seeing the house is to be the habitation of God through the Spirit? If, then, the end in view be spiritual, so must the means and methods be – we must follow the example of Christ. [Only this leads to the great requirement,] spiritual power.<sup>31</sup>

This is to be done by helping the student draw closer to Christ and, for this, although teaching is useful, it is not enough.

We *educate* abundantly, and education is undoubtedly a good thing, but it is a poor substitute for *grace exercised* and *spiritual gifts strengthened by use*, for habits of practical devotion and self-denying labour *formed* and *established*.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of the Faith Missions*, Oxford; Regnum, 1994, p86.

<sup>29</sup> The text of this address was first published in *Regions Beyond*, August 1888. A copy can be found on [www.theologicaleducation.org/resources](http://www.theologicaleducation.org/resources) Accessed August 2009. It is the web copy which is referenced in this chapter.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. p2.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. pp4 & 5, emphasis in original.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p5, emphasis in the original.

The Bible, the Word of God, read for spiritual profit above all, is the great tool in this process. The missionary must be a man of good general intelligence and wide knowledge of many things, but

Is not Bible study in our colleges apt to be too cramped, and too merely critical? We teach our students to dissect the Scriptures, but are they taught to dissect their own hearts, to understand themselves? We teach them the letter of Scripture, but do we lay due stress upon the possession of its spirit? We teach them to judge the Book, but they should be taught to let it judge them, and by its light to judge of all things. Is not God's Word a fire, and a hammer?<sup>33</sup>

The thoughtful practice of evangelism at home prepares the students for mission but, far from it being a separate activity, it is another fundamental tool for spiritual formation.

The reality of the missionary's devotedness is best proved and developed by hard and humble work among the ignorant, the prejudiced, the poor, the degraded at home. If a man objects to, or slurs labour among *them*, as beneath his dignity or disagreeable to his tastes, it is useless to send him forth as a missionary. Selfishness may make a good student, natural ability an acceptable speaker, but only distasteful service puts to the proof a man's *grace*, his sense of duty and strength of principle.<sup>34</sup>

Finally, it is within the community and work of the college that the graces of the Christian life and the firm moral character of the future servant of God is developed - and "thoroughly tested and carefully trained".<sup>35</sup> It was not without cause that some of the early Bible colleges were called missionary training and testing homes, and, unlike for most of us today, the drop-out rate was an indication the colleges were doing their job.

It was this bundle of ideas, packaged and re-packaged in various forms which formed the most influential patterning for the spiritual formation of the student in a large part of our theological education provision in the last 100 years. Later, the denominational theological colleges and the seminaries drew also from this well of fresh water, as evangelical theological educators wrote, spoke and met together.

### **The contemporary scene**

One of the greatest influences on how evangelicals promote spiritual formation in our colleges and seminaries has been the rise of academic involvement, especially since the Second World War. Evangelicals between the wars had largely withdrawn from academic theology and generally did not see their work as part of the academic enterprise of society. They were influenced towards this marginalisation by a very personal idea of ethics and spirituality, a widespread belief in the immanent pre-millennial return of Christ and a fear of

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid. p8.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p5.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. p10.

liberal theology in the universities, many seminaries, and theological colleges. Since the 1940s, however, evangelicals have grown in confidence and theological depth. This has led to a reapproachment with general academic society.<sup>36</sup> Evangelicals now teach in secular university settings, and evangelical colleges are often affiliated with universities or accredited by government agencies to award degrees. At an evangelical seminary, the ordinary lecturer in, say, Old Testament, is a professional academic at home in the subject, reading the journals and attending the conferences along with all others working in his area, Christian or not.

It is now widely realised across the spectrum of theological education that this fast developing academisation has impeded the spiritual formation objective in our colleges.<sup>37</sup> The colleges, in striving for a higher intellectual level – the big thing for them at this time - have put less effort into their students' lives; there has been less space in a busy timetable for spiritual activities; the nature of many degree and post graduate programmes does not require all students to be in at all times of the week and so daily chapel is harder to arrange; and the sense of importance of spiritual formation has often declined. More subtly, in drawing closer to the enlightenment attitudes of global academia, we have found it hard to cope with the secular model of higher education it promotes.

Enlightenment principles have definitely crumbled at the edges under the assault of postmodernity. McGrath sees this crumbling as a justification for a place for evangelicals at society's academic table.<sup>38</sup> Yet, by and large, we are still under the influence of this model which pulls us away from the historical tradition of the church - of theology as faith seeking understanding and being some sort of inadequate farce without that faith. It has too often led us to teach church history without reference to providence, to study biblical texts in a way akin to studying a Beethoven sonata by taking apart the piano, to deal with theology as a set of philosophical constructs which can be understood equally well by those with and without the Holy Spirit. Once this happens, spiritual formation becomes an add-on to the academic programme, such as chapel and a number of modules on spirituality, rather than an integrated quest for God and his truth.

One of the great concerns which led to the evangelical accrediting movement was to counter this problem by providing an alternative model of theological education which required rigorous academics but also an integrated model which brings together academic, ministerial and spiritual formation in the seminary and the life of the student. It believed

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<sup>36</sup> This has been chronicled in a number of sources, for instance, see David Bebbington, "Evangelicalism in its settings: the British and American Movements since 1940" in Mark Noll, David Bebbington and George Rawlyk (Eds.), *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles and Beyond 1700 - 1990*, Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1994, pp365-388.

<sup>37</sup> See, for instance, some of the sources cited in chapter "What we can learn from other traditions".

<sup>38</sup> Alister McGrath, *A Passion for Truth*, Leicester; IVP, 1996, pp242-244.

that there was “too high a price to pay”<sup>39</sup> for an evangelical college entering an affiliation with a secular body and that price was both the influence of liberal theology and the influence of the secular model of education. Its manifesto, first issued in 1983, states:

Our programs of theological education must combine spiritual and practical with academic objectives in one holistic integrated educational approach. We are at fault that we do often focus educational requirements narrowly on cognitive attainments, while we hope for student growth in other dimensions but leave it largely to chance. Our programs must be designed to attend to the growth and equipping of the whole man of God.

This means, firstly, that our educational programs must deliberately seek and expect the spiritual formation of the student. We must look for a spiritual development centered in total commitment to the lordship of Christ, progressively worked outward by the power of the Spirit into every department of life. We must devote as much time and care and structural designing to facilitate this type of growth as we readily and rightly provide for cognitive growth.<sup>40</sup>

The influence of this movement on evangelical theological education, and its attitudes to spiritual formation, in a day when academic formation has become so overwhelming that Lesslie Newbigin has spoken of the “Babylonian captivity of theological education”<sup>41</sup> by academia. However, in many parts of the world today, where secular accreditation has been possible, evangelical colleges have chosen this route for the advantages it confers as they live and work in their own society. In such circumstances, dual accreditation or, more usually, fraternal connections with the accrediting agencies, have been the means of spreading and affirming the integrative model which the agencies stand for. We should note also that, from the 1970s onwards, evangelical seminaries in North America increasingly gave up their academic isolation and joined the Association of Theological Schools, a peer accreditation movement consisting of liberal, catholic and evangelical schools. They therefore partook of the programme of re-assessing the role of academics and spiritual formation which was pursued by the ATS in the 70s and 80s.<sup>42</sup>

With the growing confidence of the evangelical movement in the latter half of the twentieth century, a number of writers, such as Bloesch<sup>43</sup> and Webber<sup>44</sup> began to insist on its catholic

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<sup>39</sup> Paul Bowers, “Accreditation as a Catalyst for Renewal in Theological Education” in *Evangelical Theological Education Today* 2, pp31,38.

<sup>40</sup> Manifesto on the Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education. First issued 1983, *Theological Education Today*, 16.2, April – June, 1984. Re-issued with a new introduction in 1990 by ICAA/WEF, 1990 re-issue printed in *Evangelical Review of Theology*, 19:3, July 1995, pp 307-313.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in David Heywood “A New Paradigm for Theological Education?” *Anvil*, vol. 17 No. 1 2000, pp19 - 27, p19.

<sup>42</sup> See chapter “What we can learn from other traditions”.

<sup>43</sup> Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology, Vol.1*, New York; Harper and Row, 1978, pp9-13 & *Vol 2* pp278-283.

<sup>44</sup> Robert Webber, *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail*, Texas; Word, 1985.

heritage, that we have a right to the history of the Church prior to the Reformation - it is also our history - and this is a justification for using its riches. Many evangelicals began to be introduced to the traditions of western Christian spirituality by reading Thomas Merton and Henri Nouwen and some colleges introduced courses in the subject, although there were circles in which this was resisted. Seminars on Ignatius appeared and á Kempis's *On the Imitation of Christ* was dusted down and recommended as spiritual reading – unconsciously echoing Spener's advice to the seminaries of his day.

Nouwen--a Dutch catholic priest who taught in Yale and Harvard, and ended his days in L'Arche community--in particular seemed to have much to say to theological educators, and some evangelicals listened. He demonstrated the absurdity of studying theology as any other academic study, without faith and love, and asked colleges to balance their excessively wordy world with silence and prayer. In such ways, evangelical theological education was enriched by the ancient church tradition.<sup>45</sup>

The rise of postmodernity as an epistemology has engendered much debate in evangelical circles and has certainly influenced our hermeneutics. But it is the spreading postmodern cultural attitudes brought into our colleges and seminaries by the (usually) young people who are our students which has influenced spiritual formation the most. The greater acceptance of diversity within community and within our personal "doctrine bundles" has reinforced the trend to listen to wider sources already mentioned above, and to be suspicious of party lines--whether they be denominational confessions or a college insisting on a particular form of the Christian life as if it were for them to choose this for the student. This idea of pushing all students into a pre-concieved college mould of "a spiritual person" has now widely given way to the concept of a spiritual journey. Students are diverse when they come into college, they have different roads to tread while in college, and hopefully they will go out not as products of an evangelical sausage machine but as different as God makes them.<sup>46</sup>

All of this has implications for college community. The strongly structured life of the college of the inter-war period with its long list of precise rules is giving way, under this mechanism and others, to an approach which seeks to foster self-discipline. College authorities have often agreed that less prescription and greater pastoral care is a more suitable way than lecturers of one generation telling young Christians of another generation precisely how to live. There is, of course, a wide range of response to this phenomenon among the evangelical colleges and seminaries today.

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<sup>45</sup> Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*, Glasgow; Collins, 1976, and *The Way of the Heart*, London; Darton, Longman and Todd, 1981, are particularly useful for his understanding of theological education.

<sup>46</sup> For the contrast between "moulding" or "imitation" and "Journeying" or "integration" as motifs in spiritual formation in theological education see Schuth, Katarina, *Reason for the Hope: the Future of Catholic Theologates*, Wilmington, Delaware; Michael Glazier, 1989. Although her research was conducted within Roman Catholic colleges, it provides a descriptive structure for evangelical colleges also.

The Pentecostal and charismatic movements have not always integrated well with the more traditional evangelical seminaries and colleges. Suspicion from the established colleges has been one factor. On the other hand, the belief held by Pentecostals and charismatics that they are part of something new that God is doing today has often led them to seek their own training schemes rather than the colleges which belong, as they see it, to the old order. However, more and more there has been an integration of these two streams and where, increasingly, they do theological education together, Pentecostal and charismatic ideas and attitudes have enriched the spirituality of Evangelical colleges.<sup>47</sup> This has worked in a number of ways. A new attention to the necessary work of the Holy Spirit as the partner for the Word of God has developed our theology of the Christian life. A re-discovery that emotions and actions are parts of our humanity that can enter our worship and enliven it has enriched many chapel services, along with a sense of immediacy in our relationship with God in worship. As Ward has pointed out, the form of worship and the content of the songs have often shifted, under this influence, from classical structured worship based on hymns full of theology to an emphasis on “transactional” singing, involving expressions of love and devotion.<sup>48</sup>

Perhaps the greatest influence, however, has been that these new forces have given a strong push to the idea that we are all variously gifted and our task, at college, is to identify our gift or gifts and develop and use them for God. This has partnered with a general widening of the concept of ministry among evangelicals. It is not the pastor/teacher alone who ministers but it is for all the body of Christ to be involved in the “ministry” of the church for which the pastor/teacher equips them. The coming together of these two emphases has prompted the colleges to see as part of the spiritual growth of the students a deeper self-understanding as to gifting and character. Myers-Briggs personality testing, programmes and advice on discovery of gifts are now common in much theological education.

This leads us to another area of change. As students have come into our college from society where families are increasingly broken and personal problems abound, and as they share the increasing assumption of this generation that others should be available to work with them on personal problems, the pastoral care and counselling of students has become a larger part of our development of them personally. There has been a shift from the assumption that prayer and a good relationship with God will make personal problems insignificant in a Christian, or give them “victory” over these things in their lives, to structured provision for hurting students of “amateur” help from their personal tutors and referrals on to professional counselling where needed.

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<sup>47</sup> See David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, London; Unwin Hyman, 1989, pp227-248 and Ian Randall, *Educating Evangelicalism: The Origins, Development and Impact of London Bible College*, Carlisle; Paternoster, 2000, pp153-167.

<sup>48</sup> Pete Ward, *Evangelical: Youth Work and the Making of a Subculture*, London; SPCK, 1998, pp107-142 for his analysis of the songs young people sing in worship.

Combining this with an increasing interest in the spiritual direction of all students (rather than merely counselling those with personal problems) has seen the rise of the concept of “mentoring” – a significant programme of care and development of students in small groups, sometimes the fellowship group of all those assigned to a particular tutor, and individually.<sup>49</sup> This has been pioneered by Denver seminary in the USA but a form of mentoring programme was active since the 1970s in All Nations Christian College<sup>50</sup> and others. This can be seen as part of the movement away from the idea that lecturing is the chief duty of the teacher and which asks that he fill the bottles from the tap one by one rather than simply throw a bucket of water over them all together.

Finally, since Lausanne in 1974, evangelicals have been re-discovering, what they temporarily ignored in reaction to the “social Gospel”, that mission is, in the words of John Stott, “Everything that the church is sent into the world to do”<sup>51</sup>, and have generally welcomed again into their spirituality their historical emphasis on social and compassionate action.<sup>52</sup>

### **In conclusion**

We are left with the perennial question of how to handle our tradition in the light of the newness of today. Not all traditions are to be worshipped and followed – that attitude has often stifled spiritual life in our churches. Yet the core of our tradition as evangelicals, which is to place as central the spiritual formation of our students, accords well with the concerns of Christ for his disciples and the many utterances of Paul on the fundamental importance of godliness in ministry. The pressures not to concentrate on this today are immense, yet there is, today, a re-discovery of this imperative, not least under pressure from the churches we serve. We also have the happy but difficult task of allowing the rich roots of our tradition as evangelicals to evaluate the directions in which we have been blown by contemporary movements outlined above so that our contextualisation is always thoughtful.

One issue that remains is what sort of spirituality we are promoting, from which era of our history? For instance, in Reformation times, although there was more interest in mission than classically asserted, the current view of godliness was a far cry from the Bible college movement’s insistence that dedication to Christ is indicated by engagement with world mission. And the reaction away from social responsibility and insistence on personal piety as defining spirituality--which we encounter between the wars--is an inexcusable narrowing of the 19<sup>th</sup> century concept of discipleship epitomised by Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> The literature is growing but a useful introduction can be found in Keith R. Anderson & Randy D. Reese *Spiritual Mentoring: a Guide for Seeking and Giving Direction*, Guilford, Surrey; Eagle, 2000, especially the appendices.

<sup>50</sup> C. David Harley, *Missionary Training: The History of All Nations Christian College and its Predecessors (1911-1981)*, Utrecht; Boekencentrum, 2000, pp172-174.

<sup>51</sup> John R. W. Stott *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, London; Falcon Books, 1977, p30.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Jacob Thomas *From Lausanne to Manila: Evangelical Social Thought*, Delhi; ISPCK, 2003.

<sup>53</sup> David Smith *Transforming the World?*, Carlisle; Paternoster, 1998, pp76-80. Cf. Bebbington *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*. pp18,19.

In a re-discovery of our tradition about the place and importance of spiritual formation, we need to assert a wide and holistic concept of discipleship as embracing all our deeds, all our thoughts, all our service and ministry – in other words, to allow the traditions and eras to complement each other.

There is a current caricature of evangelical spirituality that it is simplistic and inadequate - useful perhaps for bringing people to faith, but something deeper and better thought out is needed for them to grow up in Christ. Doubtless this is true of the spirituality of some evangelicals, but what has been said above shows that, in the matter of spiritual formation in our seminaries and colleges, this is historically untrue and in the contemporary scene, is uninformed. The project of the spiritual formation of our students has been enriched and enlivened generation by generation with the newness of the work of the Spirit. At its best, our contemporary practice is rich, deep and thoughtful, complicated in its conception and yet fundamentally simple in its intent – helping our students, like any other Christians, to love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul mind and strength and their neighbours as themselves. We need no less and no more than that.