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# Annotated Bibliography: Faith, Learning and Christian Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century

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# Annotated Bibliography:

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## Faith, Learning and Christian Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century



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The integration of faith and learning has long been a concern of many Christian colleges and universities, but especially so in the last two decades. This pursuit has been set against the backdrop of what George Marsden in the “Concluding Unscientific Postscript” to *The Soul of the American University* (1994) claimed was the dominant American university outlook toward expressions of religious perspective; namely that they were either inappropriate or offensive. That same year, Mark Noll famously claimed in his controversial work, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (1994) that the “scandal of the evangelical mind is that there is not much of an evangelical mind” (p. 3). Since that line was penned more than two decades ago, many Christian colleges and universities have seen remarkable growth. The past two decades have born witness to an increased focus among many Christian institutions of higher education on both teaching and scholarship. The intensity with which many Christian colleges and universities have begun to pursue the meaningful integration of faith and knowledge is significant, and the accompanying rise in publications concerning the integration of faith and learning, testify to an increased focus.

Changes are also afoot in colleges and universities that do not identify as religious. Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen in *The American University in a Postsecular Age* (2008) argue that contemporary college and university students are increasingly bringing religious and spiritual questions to campus and, in turn, pushing college and university leaders to begin exploring anew the relationship between religion and higher education. The findings of Marsden, Noll and, Jacobsen and Jacobsen highlight a deep ambivalence across American higher education concerning the role of faith and learning while revealing exciting potential for how the work that Christian colleges and universities have been doing to pursue faith and knowledge may find use across the wider spectrum of institutions of higher education. It is to this scholarship, that focusing on the integration of faith and learning inside institutions of higher education that this article will focus.

This bibliography seeks to highlight significant works published in the last decade (since 2005) that deal explicitly with the theory and/or praxis of the integration of faith and learning inside the context of higher education.

Beers, S. J. (Ed.). (2008). *The soul of a Christian university: A field guide for educators*. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press.

The ten chapters comprising this book are largely drawn from Vice Presidents and Deans at a variety of Christian colleges and universities. The content is grouped around the core responsibilities of a college or university (student learning and scholarship) and the practical issues of work and life within these academic communities. Significantly, this collection offers a baseline understanding of what a world-view oriented integration of faith and learning is (and is not), and provides an outline for the practical integration of the components of a Christian worldview into various disciplinary boundaries.

David, J. C., & Ryken, P. G. (Eds.). (2012). *Liberal arts for the Christian life*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

This collection of 26 essays, featuring the likes of Philip Ryken, Jeffrey Davis, Duane Litfin, John Walford, Alan Jacobs, and Jim Wilhoit are rooted in Leland Ryken's 1984 address "The Student's Calling," and is both a defense of the liberal arts and, specifically, the liberal arts in connection to the Christian faith. The essays are organized into five parts: terminology and background, theological convictions, habits and virtues, divisional areas of study, and the end of the liberal arts.

Dockery, D. (Ed.). (2012). *Faith and learning: A handbook for Christian higher education*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing.

Written by 25 professors and administrators from a variety of evangelical colleges and universities, this volume seeks to explore what the integration of faith and learning means for the various departments, programs and disciplinary scholarship found on the campus of a Christian institution of higher education in the twenty-first century. Importantly, the volume treats the campus in a holistic way ensuring coverage of the academic, vocational, instructional and communal aspects in its nearly 550 pages.

Henry, D.V., & Beaty, M. D. (Eds.). (2006). *Christianity and the soul of the university: Faith as a foundation for intellectual community*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing.

Springing from a 2004 conference at Baylor University, this book explores the role that reflective, Christian faith can play in bringing intellectual unity to the life of the university. Specifically, how reflection about the relationship between Christian faith and the church-related university might be the basis for intellectual community. The book's ten chapters are organized around critical issues related to Christian intellectual community and the range of practices integral to realizing such a community. Among the contributors are Jean Bethke Elshtain, Richard Hays, John Polkinghorne, Joel Carpenter, and David Lyle Jeffrey.

Ostrander, R. (2013). *Why college matters to God: An introduction to the Christian college* (Revised ed.). Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press.

Ostrander offers an updated alternative to Authur Holmes' important book, *The Idea of a Christian College* (1975) in which he lays out a distinctly Christian philosophy of higher education that is suitable for the typical freshman. His target audience is not, however, confined to undergraduates but the book aims to provide those interested in how a Christian worldview can be woven into the fabric of an institution of higher education, including its academic life. This text is a revised and updated version of Ostrander's 2009 title *Why college matters to God: Academic faithfulness and Christian higher education*.

Ream, T. C., & Glanzer, P. L. (2013). *The idea of a Christian college: A reexamination for today's university*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books.

Ream and Glanzer, like Ostrander, seek to offer an updated alternative to Authur Holmes', *The Idea of a Christian College* (1975), but they do not seek, per se, to provide a Christian philosophy of higher education. Rather, they offer a reexamination of the idea of a Christian college in light of the increased importance placed upon the role of worship and the church, the rise of scholarly attention regarding, "What does it mean to be fully human?," and the transformation of many Christian colleges into universities with the attendant levels of scholarly engagement, growth in budget, and spike in facilities and students. The authors believe that the best Christian universities are shaped by the grand narratives of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration which provides a unifying (and by extension, strengthening) vision that the modern university lacks. They insist that a truly Christian university creates a rare and refreshing counter-culture to the damaging characteristics of the modern multiversity.

Ream, T. C., Pattengale, J., & Riggs, D. L. (Eds.). (2012). *Beyond integration: Inter/disciplinary possibilities for the future of Christian higher education*. Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press.

The editors have pulled together a collection of essays rooted in the conviction that Christian institutions must go beyond the traditional model of integration (i.e. faith and learning) and embrace the possibilities offered through a model of unity (i.e. faith-learning). These include the holistic and interdisciplinary opportunities made available by such a shift in paradigm with essays focusing on scholarship in contemporary politics, sociology, history, psychology, science and theology. Contributors include John Wilson, James K.A. Smith, Timothy Larson, John W. Wright, and Henry L. Smith.

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