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Towards a Holistic Practice of Christian Formation: How Ignatian Spirituality Can Help Evangelicalism

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

TOWARDS A HOLISTIC PRACTICE OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION:
HOW IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY CAN HELP EVANGELICALISM

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
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BY

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

DMin Dissertation

This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

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has been approved by
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for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Spiritual Formation.

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ABSTRACT

Evangelical Christianity has a history of cultivating a predominantly cognitive focus to Christian formation leading to shortcomings for the emotive and ethical aspects of our lives. Ignatian Spirituality offers an alternative to the limits of cognition through its holistic approach to Christian formation. The Ignatian formational practices of Scripture reading, prayer practices of the Examen or imaginative contemplation and *The Spiritual Exercises* foster a fully embodied experience with Jesus. This is accomplished through engaging our head, heart, and hands to ever growing levels of awareness and thereby responsiveness to God's presence in the everyday moments of our lives. Through exploring key practices of Ignatian formation, this dissertation is an effort to enable evangelicals to appreciate and experience the integrated approach of Ignatian Christian Formation, helping evangelicals move from a predominately rational formation process, to one that fosters relational intimacy with Christ engaging the cognitive, emotive, and ethical aspects of life in a unified way.

SECTION 1: THE PROBLEM

Caroline's Story

“God . . . I miss you.” These four words keep pulsing through Caroline’s soul as she sits in the quiet of her small, orderly room at a Jesuit retreat center. This expression has been in the recesses of her daily life for some time now but this is the first time she has let herself express these words before God, by way of her journal. As she reverently begins to reflect on these four words written before her, Caroline begins to realize how the way she has been approaching her faith and life has been very compartmentalized and hurried. She’s kept this heart felt expression of longing at bay by keeping busy with the day to day demands of life and the seemingly never ending Bible studies and service projects her church offers, but there seems to be little connection between them.

Caroline is beginning to find here, at the retreat center, a way of life that expects and looks for “God in all things,” the phrase she has heard the retreat leader say many times during the weekend. With the hope of discerning words for how she feels, Caroline journals to remember what the retreat leader read from Ignatius of Loyola:

We were created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to experience salvation. All things on earth are created for us and to help us praise, reverence, and serve God. We are to use them as much as they help us in this service, and ought to rid ourselves of anything that hinders our service. For this it is necessary that we become indifferent to all created things so that, on our part, we want not health rather than sickness, riches rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, long rather than short life, and so in all the rest; desiring and choosing only what helps us praise, reverence, and serve God. This detachment comes only if we have a stronger attachment; therefore our one dominating desire and fundamental choice must be to live in the loving presence and wisdom of Christ, our Savior.¹

¹ James L. Wakefield and Ignatius, *Sacred Listening: Discovering the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006), Kindle Loc. 2566-2572.

Even now Caroline can feel how this holistic expectation for life and faith captured her attention and shot a spark of hope and excitement into her soul. She knows that what she had been doing wasn't wrong, but she is becoming aware of a different "way of proceeding" (another favorite phrase of the retreat leader) that unifies all aspects of her life and faith. She is discerning a path that naturally engages her head to her heart to her hands, all in cooperation and service with Christ.

As Caroline closes her journal on this day, she does so with determination to have this weekend be a catalyst to move beyond the words of the Bible to a transformational following of the Living Word's invitation to us all:

The Father has given me all these things to do and say . . . No one knows the Son the way the Father does, nor the Father the way the Son does. But I'm not keeping it to myself; I'm ready to go over it line by line with anyone willing to listen. Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.²

Far too many people find themselves in the same situation that Caroline and Jesus describe - missing God and being burned out on religion. Through the practices of Ignatian Spirituality, the remainder of this dissertation leads into a way of Christian formation that counters these feelings of isolation and fatigue, leading spiritual pilgrims into experiencing the unforced rhythms of grace described by Jesus.

History

² Matthew 11:27-30 (MSG).

This story is a reflection of my own journey. While on a much-needed pastoral sabbatical I found myself at a Jesuit retreat center for my first of eventually three different Jesuit retreat experiences. On my first night I penned those four words into my journal, “God, I miss you.” During each retreat and the weeks that followed, I began to be revived as I found a new “way of proceeding” as I blended more and more Ignatian Christian formation practices with my evangelical heritage.³

Growing up in an independent Bible Church, on the conservative side of evangelicalism,⁴ we took pride in the axiom, “Bible is our middle name.” A lot can be shared in a name and in this instance, it communicates what the church was about—the Bible. The primary goal of going to church was to know the information in the Bible so we could believe the right things about God and Jesus in order to end up in the proper place at the end of our lives. A secondary goal in “knowing the Bible” was so one could prove God was on one’s side by giving the correct answer to questions only those inside the church asked.

It is not that the church leaders of the tradition I grew up in neglected to talk about Jesus, they did, but it was the *way* they talked about Jesus. Consider this, I could tell a

³ The term “way of proceeding” was one of Ignatius of Loyola’s favorite terms to describe the Jesuits overall approach to life and faith. John W. O’Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 8.

⁴ To help clarify the nebulous term “evangelical” I will use the summary found on the *National Association of Evangelicals* website sharing historian David Bebbington’s four primary distinctives:

- Conversionism: the belief that lives need to be transformed through a “born-again” experience and a life long process of following Jesus.
- Activism: the expression and demonstration of the gospel in missionary and social reform effort.
- Biblicism: a high regard for and obedience to the Bible as the ultimate authority.
- Crucicentrism: a stress on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as making possible the redemption of humanity.

“What is An Evangelical?”, National Association of Evangelicals, accessed September 16, 2014, <http://www.nae.net/church-and-faith-partners/what-is-an-evangelical>.

friend of mine an enormous amount of *information about* my wife but there is nothing like *being with* my wife personally to help one discover who she is and what she is like. Without being with Linda, my friend would never be able to catch the nuances of her humor, or her smile or how she acknowledges another's presence with her dimpled smirk. My friend would miss the heart connection Linda creates that draws others into an intimate embrace from which they are in turn lovingly compelled to serve also. The same can be said of my faith tradition growing up. We learned a lot of information about Jesus, without learning how to grow in intimacy *with* Jesus. In many ways, we loved the Bible more than we loved Jesus. This type of thinking is much like that which the Pharisees are called to task by Jesus in John 5: "You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life."⁵

Earle Cairns, author of *Christianity through the Centuries*, clarifies how the seeds of an "informationally-focused" Christian faith began cropping up shortly after the Reformation. Cairns writes, "Unfortunately, during the seventeenth century, Protestantism developed a system of orthodox dogma that one accepted intellectually. This system brought about a new Scholasticism"⁶ This started with the rise of scholarship fueled by a desire for the study of the Scriptures in their original languages. The extent to which the Reformers took this can be found in Tim Grass's observation of one of the key Reformers, "Zwingli's strong emphasis on the need to understand the original languages lead one Anabaptist, the former priest and trained theologian,

⁵ John 5:39-40 (NLT).

⁶ Earle Edwin Cairns, *Christianity through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981), 373.

Balthasar Hübmaier, to complain with some justification that the Reformers had replaced the papacy with the rule of trained scholars.”⁷

Following the historical trail through the influences and tensions of the Enlightenment into the early nineteenth century, my evangelical tradition’s seeds took root and germinated during the sparks of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversies. Theology professor and founder of the Institute for Worship Studies, Dr. Robert Webber explains that this time “was characterized by a rigorous foundationalism—an intellectual frame of reference that adhered to the scientific method of empiricism and to the ability of the mind to arrive at factual propositional truth.”⁸ As a result of the infamous “Scopes Monkey Trial” a new fundamentalism was framed with the distinction of being known as much for what it was against, as to what it was for. Webber explains, “First it was against an intellectual engagement with new thought. Second, it was a time during which the fundamentalists vocally separated, from what they perceived as ‘liberal’ mainline denominations and began their own independent coalitions.”⁹ One of the coalitions was the Bible church movement that is part of my Christian heritage. George Marsden continues to help us understand some of the nuances of this shade of early evangelicalism when he writes, “Some of the most extreme fundamentalists separated into their own denominations or into independent churches. These were mainly dispensationalists for

⁷ Tim Grass, “Bible, Church and Tradition in the 16th Century Reformation.” *Journal of European Baptist Studies* 3, no. 2 (January 2003): 27.

⁸ Robert Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002), 25.

⁹ Ibid., 26.

whom strict separation was an article of faith. By about 1960, this wing of the movement was the only one that still chose to wear the badge of ‘fundamentalist.’”¹⁰

In the wake of this era of evangelicalism,¹¹ “knowing” Jesus became defined as knowing how to prove one belonged in our group by his or her view of the gospel and the atonement. It is therefore beneficial to this study to quote Dallas Willard at length on this point, as he brings us to the crux of the matter by explaining the divisive subtleties characteristic of this branch of evangelicalism:

Ryrie comments, with reference to the use of “gospel” in the Gospels of Mark and Luke, “Our Lord is the central theme of the good news.” And this is certainly right. But he and many others see no distinction between saying that and saying, “The Gospel is the good news about the death and resurrection of Christ”—or that it claims an *arrangement* for forgiveness of sin has been made that leaves Christ, the now living person, simply irrelevant to our present existence.

The sensed irrelevance of what God is doing to what makes up our lives is the foundational flaw in the existence of multitudes of professing Christians. They have been led to believe that God, for some unfathomable reason just thinks it appropriate to transfer credit from Christ’s merit account to ours, and to wipe out our sin debt, upon inspecting our mind and finding that we believe a particular theory of the atonement to be true—even if we trust everything but God in all other matters that concern us.

When all is said and done, “the gospel” for Ryrie, MacArthur and others on the theological right is that Christ made “the arrangement” that can get us into heaven. In the Gospels, by contrast, “the gospel” is the good news of the presence and availability of life in the kingdom, now and forever, through reliance on Jesus the Anointed.

¹⁰ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), Kindle Loc., 196.

¹¹ Through the last century the substance of the terms evangelical and fundamentalist have reshaped multiple times. For a helpful following of this history see section five of George Marsden’s book *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, where he notes, “. . . the operational distinction between simply being an evangelical and being what I am calling a fundamentalistic evangelical involves their relative degrees of militancy in support of conservative doctrinal, ecclesiastical, and/or cultural issues. ‘Evangelical’ is broadly defined to include those in traditions that emphasize the Bible as the highest religious authority, the necessity of being ‘born again’ or regenerated through the atoning work of Christ on the cross, pietistic devotions and morals, and the necessity of sharing the Gospel through evangelism and missions” (235).

Accordingly, the only description of eternal life found in the words we have from Jesus is “This is eternal life, that they [his disciples] may know you, the only real God and Jesus the anointed whom you have sent” (John 17:3). This may sound to us like “mere head knowledge.” But the biblical “know” always refers to an intimate, personal, interactive relationship.¹²

It is in developing this personal and interactive “knowing” relationship where I believe the holistic approach of Ignatian Christian formation will help evangelicals move from a formation process as described above, where informational knowledge has traditionally been the focus, to one that fosters a relational intimacy with Christ engaging the cognitive, emotive, and ethical aspects of our lives—a true knowing in the biblical sense of the word.¹³ The Ignatian Christian formational approach to discernment, Scripture, prayer, and the use of their renowned *Spiritual Exercises*, foster this holistic intimacy with Jesus through engaging the cognitive, emotive, and ethical aspects of our faith to ever growing levels of awareness and responsiveness to God’s presence in the ordinary moments of life.

Christian Formation

The first time I came across the term “spiritual formation” was when reading the title of Robert Mulholland’s book, *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*. To say the least, I was intrigued. The term, *spiritual formation*, itself captured my attention and interest. Upon reading further, I found that one of the most influential elements was Mulholland’s definition of spiritual formation: “The process of being

¹² Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998), 49.

¹³ In light of Willard’s comments it is helpful to have an awareness that some forms of evangelicalism are more experientially oriented than others. Willard’s comments are reflective of the conservative side of the evangelical spectrum of which is my heritage.

conformed into the image of Christ for the sake of others.”¹⁴ Over the years I have shared this definition many times and have found two refinements helpful. My first refinement is with attending to the adjectives placed before the word, “formation” to communicate the meaning as effectively as possible. I prefer “Christian formation” over that of “spiritual formation”. Currently, *spiritual* takes on eclectic meaning having little to do with Christianity or Jesus, for that matter. In contrast to the numerous *spiritualities* in our culture, I want to firmly establish myself, and those I serve, within the larger Christian context, with a persistent Christocentric focus.

In addition, Mulholland’s definition can easily be read from an individualistic perspective, however this endeavor of Christian formation cannot be fully realized except in the context of the larger Christian faith community. This process I hope to invite others into is not meant for practice in isolation for the benefit of the individual. God has designed us to be in community and it will be in community that this process will find the greatest scope and breadth. This cooperative and communal engagement will also be another key facet where Ignatian formation can play a vital role as Jesuit priest and author, David Fleming, describes: “Jesuit ministry, and the ministry of others formed in Ignatian spirituality, has always been formulated in a spirit of collaboration.”¹⁵ Collaboration is built into the very structure of the Spiritual Exercises . . .”¹⁶ Fleming

¹⁴ M. Robert Mulholland, *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 12.

¹⁵ For a further understanding of Jesuit ministry see Ignatian Spirituality on p. 11 ff.

¹⁶ David L. Fleming, *What Is Ignatian Spirituality?* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2008), Kindle Loc. 626.

goes on to emphasize that Ignatian formation is built on Jesus' promise that where two or three are gathered Christ too will be close at hand.

It is important to note that when the term, "faith community" is used throughout this study, the term is intended to reach beyond one's own Christian tradition and encapsulate the Church throughout the ages. This differentiation is critical because without a view of the past, one loses the rich history and perspective each Christian stream¹⁷ demonstrates of how God's people have experienced and expressed God's kingdom here on earth. Evangelicals have not always been successful at this, as Scot McKnight humbly admits, "Evangelicalism has its strengths and its weaknesses; one of its weaknesses is its decision to hack off nearly 1,500 years of Church history" ¹⁸

In the discussion about Christian formation here, we are talking about areas of one's life that cannot be changed by one's direct efforts—aspects that only God can change. It is where the Holy Spirit has a primary role in conforming one into God's image. Our role is to create space for God, allowing the Spirit access to shape and transform us from the inside out. Creating space is facilitated through the many formational practices the Church has deemed important and necessary, and practices that Jesus used, as well, to create space, to hear and follow the Father's leading.

Even in a society of quick fixes, no instant fix exists to one's becoming more like Jesus; it is a journey. Christian formation is a journey that happens over the course of

¹⁷ The term "stream" is used here in reference to Richard Foster's work, *Streams of Living Water: Essential Practices from the Six Great Traditions of Christian Faith* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001). Foster synthesizes six great traditions of Christian spiritual practice: contemplative, holiness, charismatic, social justice, evangelical, and incarnational. Foster traces each stream to Jesus as its source, encouraging readers to drink from each for a fully realized faith practice in the way of Christ.

¹⁸ Scot McKnight, "From Wheaton to Rome: why evangelicals become Roman Catholic." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 45, no. 3 (September 1, 2002): 457.

years using the grist of life made up of joys, sorrows, surprises, tragedies, and especially the mundane. It is a journey that is not linear but circuitous, being shaped by each decision made. The journey God has for us is to be transformed into the image of Christ, individually and corporately reflecting Jesus in all we do “here and now” in the world while our lives are becoming one with Jesus, as Jesus is one with the Father. Thereby we seek to abide with Jesus first and foremost for this transformation to come about. It is always powerful to reflect on this aspect of Mulholland’s definition, and consequently, has become one of the greatest lessons and desires in this researcher’s own formation.

One of the key distinctions of evangelicalism, especially of the independent Bible church movement, is to know the Bible; to know the right information, in order to receive the proper response from God, and to spend eternity in the desired place. Doctrine and worship is focused on information, as opposed to transformation. However, the author of this paper has come to believe the process of transformation into the image of Christ is not primarily about getting out of hell and into heaven through obtaining the right information, rather followers of Jesus are being transformed for the benefit of this world. Worship is about becoming the body of Christ *here and now*, living as ambassadors of Christ’s self-sacrificial kingdom wherever one finds himself or herself. Living accordingly, one makes visible the kingdom life and invites others into this life through expressions of love and faith.

Ignatian Christian Formation

Practically speaking, Ignatian Christian formation enables one’s transformation into Christlikeness to happen in a way that consistently encompasses the whole person. Through this dissertation and accompanying *iBook*, the intent is to be a resource and

catalyst for a church, small group, family or individual to find approachable experiential resources for an integrated life that is being transformed into the image of Christ. This is a central practice of Ignatian Christian formation as David Lonsdale writes, “Ignatius’ approach ... is to try to move toward a balanced, discerning integration of prayer, and life or ministry, such that one leads into the other and vice versa, and there is mutual nourishment and enrichment between the two.”¹⁹

There is no clearer place to see this “discerning integration of prayer and life” than in Ignatius’ *Spiritual Exercises*. Jesuit historian, John O’Malley, provides an explanation as to why this is so:

[*The Exercises*] supplied the design for the basic course or movement the Jesuits wanted to make operative in whatever they did—a movement that in its first instance entailed turning to God in a new and more profound way, which brought with it a process of spiritual growth and an increasing recognition of God’s activity in everything in the world.²⁰

There is little possibility that Ignatius of Loyola would have imagined his *Spiritual Exercises*, written in the mid-sixteenth century, would still carry influence and be published on average, at least once a month for the past four hundred years.²¹ Ignatius of Loyola was born as a Spanish nobleman and took advantage of all the opportunities that life could afford both in virtue and vice. During a military campaign against the French, his leg was severely shattered by a cannonball, which lead to a long and pain

¹⁹ David Lonsdale, *Eyes to See, Ears to Hear: An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 124.

²⁰ O’Malley, 89.

²¹ George W. Traub, *An Ignatian Spirituality Reader* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2008), 9.

filled recovery.²² While sequestered in his father's castle, Ignatius began to read the only books he could find, *The Life of Christ* and *The Flowers of the Saints*.²³ Twenty-six years later, the spiritual seeds that began to take root during a pain-filled recovery, blossomed into what we now know as *The Spiritual Exercises*.²⁴

The Exercises grew out of Ignatius's own reflections concerning his spiritual journey. During his convalescence, he found meditating upon the Scriptures in his acutely, reflective way to be transformative.²⁵ He continued to refine the process, encapsulating it into a four-week retreat experience; therefore, from the beginning, *The Exercises* were not meant to be simply read but were to be experienced communally.²⁶

When Ignatius went back to school in mid-life to receive an education as a priest, he began to share *The Exercises* with his closest friends and companions. Ironically, as a result of the religious teaching he conducted in the form of *The Exercises*, Ignatius himself was arrested and acquitted twice by the Spanish Inquisition.²⁷ In spite of this resistance, his closest followers during this time demonstrated his ongoing influence and the veracity of *The Exercises*. These followers included: "Pierre Lefevre 'tenderest of all the disciples'; Francois Xavier, the philosopher and missionary; Diego Lainez, scholar and theologian; Salmeron also a profound theologian; Roderiguez, impulsive and gifted

²² Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 346.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises and Selected Works*, ed. George E. Ganss (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 50.

²⁵ John R. Tyson, *Invitation to Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Anthology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 245.

²⁶ Ganss, 50.

²⁷ Lindberg, 347.

in speech.”²⁸ This keenly, passionate and lively group, would be the nucleus of what would become a new order in the Catholic church—The Society of Jesus—the Jesuits.

As the growth of the Jesuits spread across Europe and beyond, so did the transformative teaching of *The Exercises*, which was imbedded into the Jesuit constitution. “In terms of this apostolate of service, Ignatius broke ruthlessly with the monastic and mendicant tradition of the medieval church. His Society would be unique for its mobility and agility, for its freedom from the ascetical presuppositions of the past. It would be ordered to do concretely the work of the Church throughout the world.”²⁹ It is interesting to note that *The Exercises* were not intentionally developed to be an offensive strategy of the Counter-Reformation, yet this is what happened. Lindberg, claims that, “In response to the Reformation, the Jesuits sought to extirpate heresy and win Protestants back to Rome by means of political influence and effective education.”³⁰ Lindberg goes on to explain how Ignatius’s distinct commitment to the Catholic Church is seen in how “[a Jesuit] not only took the three regular vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience but also a fourth vow: a special vow of obedience to the pope.”³¹ As a result, the *Society of Jesus* became the main offensive agency of the Counter-Reformation.

Ignatius is undeniably Catholic, thereby the reason *The Exercises* and Ignatian Christian formation are largely unknown to conservative evangelical communities which tend to have a myopic perspective of the Church. As a result, McKnight implores those

²⁸ Henry Bradford Washburn, “Ignatius Loyola,” *Anglican Theological Review* 7, no. 3 (December 1, 1924): 258.

²⁹ Robert Edwin McNally, “The Council of Trent, The Spiritual Exercises and The Catholic Reform,” *Church History* 34, no. 1 (March 1, 1965): 45.

³⁰ Lindberg, 350.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 349.

who desire to understand more fully and to move toward adopting Ignatian Christian Formation to consider a charitable approach while seeking to find common ground from which to learn from each other's Christian traditions:

. . . I know that at the same time my fellow evangelical apologists depict the apologists and leaders of the RCC [Roman Catholic Church], (I have heard barbarous words about Ignatius, Irenaeus, Augustine, St. Thomas, and that is without mentioning what has been said about popes) as warlords at times. How one group depicts another group, especially its leaders, is part of the conversion process of learning a rhetoric and an attribution theory that enable the convert to adopt a language that explains and categorizes past faith and other faiths. If such language is inevitable, it needs also to be held in check whenever possible and chastened with charity.³²

With McKnight's encouragement, we begin an overview seeking to bridge the powerfully, holistic approach of Ignatian Christian formation to evangelicals. Liberally referencing Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, we place ourselves at many of the transformative scenes of God's redemptive story, thus providing a profound psychological impact and a new orientation to life. One's whole self is invited into the experience of *The Exercises*. As such, *The Exercises* will have a natural affinity for evangelicals as *The Exercises* force Christ followers into the pages of Scripture. Yet unlike many evangelical Bible studies, the goal is not to accumulate information and glean the right answer, rather it is to foster a cooperative intimacy with Jesus. This fostering takes place as one journeys through four distinct sections called "weeks" and the accompanying themes. Alongside the "weekly" themes one finds parables for reflection, exercises for discernment, and contemplations for rumination, each designed to enhance and intensify the theme of the week. In addition, each week contains an accompanying *grace*. "If the theme focuses one's head, then the grace focuses one's

³² McKnight, "From Wheaton to Rome: Why Evangelicals Become Roman Catholic," 458.

heart. In this context, a grace is a gift that we seek from God.”³³ Notice here the leading and joining of head and heart, the cognitive and emotive, in the arrangement of the theme and gift of grace requested.

The “Principle and Foundation,”³⁴ at the beginning of the First Week of *The Exercises*, plays an important introductory role as Katherine Dyckman, Mary Garvin and Elizabeth Liebert explain:

The *Spiritual Exercises* can be likened to a symphony in which the opening movement (the Principle and Foundation) presents various themes. Subsequent movements then develop them through repetition and variation, with everything culminating in a final grand movement that unites all in a sweep of sound and passion. In essence, the Principle and Foundation establishes the basis and contains, in highly compressed form, the themes and dynamics of the entire *Exercises*.³⁵

In the opening movement one is challenged with the ultimate purpose of life and all creation, enabling those entering into *The Exercises* to consider the goal of life as to live and partner with God beginning now and into eternity. Thereby we seek to leverage all of life towards growing in discernment, seeking to make each decision in light of whether it will lead towards greater fulfillment and engagement with God’s way of life.

As a direct outcome of now three, four-day Ignatian retreats, discernment is seen as a way of life drawing our hearts to union with the heart of God and not something believers simply do when needing or wanting God’s direction. Here in the opening of *The Exercises*, Ignatius describes this way of life, “For just as strolling, walking, and running

³³ Wakefield, Loc. 431-433.

³⁴ See Appendix A for Ignatius’s original version of the “Principle and Foundation” and a contemporary rendition by Protestant pastor and author James Wakefield.

³⁵ Katherine Marie Dyckman, Mary Garvin, and Elizabeth Liebert, *The Spiritual Exercises Reclaimed: Uncovering Liberating Possibilities for Women* (New York: Paulist Press, 2001), Kindle Loc. 955-957.

are exercises for the body, so ‘spiritual exercises’ is the name given to every way of preparing and making ready to get rid of all disordered affections so that once rid of them, one might seek and find the divine will in regard to the disposition of one’s life for the salvation of the soul.”³⁶ As is already apparent, one does not have to journey far into Ignatian formation before coming across reflections on discernment. Lonsdale provides a helpful definition of discernment, “... that art of appreciating the gifts that God has given us and discovering how we might best respond to that love in daily life.”³⁷ Rather than an add-on for Ignatius, discernment was a driving passion and desire, woven into the very fabric of his understanding of how we cooperate with God in life. As noted above, this is clearly seen in what could be considered the mission statement of Ignatian Christian formation, *The Principle and Foundation*. For these reasons, throughout the course of this discussion, reflection will be made on how discernment is encouraged and experienced in different ways in Ignatian formation. One will find the benefit of seeing how discernment is a natural bridge to bringing together Ignatian formation and the evangelical community.

The Four Weeks of *The Exercises*

The first week of *The Exercises* follows with reflections about the seriousness and consequences of sin and the destructive wake it leaves in the individual and in society. In contrast, the first week focuses “on God’s constant love, and on the urgency of turning

³⁶ Michael Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises: Text and Commentary; a Handbook for Retreat Directors* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1998), 1.

³⁷ Lonsdale, 91.

from one's old ways and attitudes towards a more devout life filled with gratitude and love."³⁸

The personal love of Christ, which is the grace of the Second Week, is a love that transforms and refocuses the whole person. It is a love by which we willingly allow Christ to take over our lives, to lead us along his way of life as ours, transforming us in the process. The Second Week begins with one's personal call by God to join with Christ's presence and service in the world. The Two Standards³⁹ reflection addresses the human struggle between conflicting values and seeks to understand the mind of Christ: poor, vulnerably transparent, humble. The Three Classes of Persons addresses two common ways we may be hindered in choosing Christ contrasted with a total commitment to Christ: the postponer, the compromiser who takes half measures, and the one open to do whatever it takes. The Three Modes of Humility, or practically stated, three levels of self-giving love, considers what price one is willing to pay for love. Each of these reflections requires progressive self-awareness and discernment; thereby Ignatius presents rules for making personal decisions through listening to one's total person: body, mind, and spirit.⁴⁰

The Third Week presents Christ's suffering in love and our growth in compassionate love for the Living Christ. John English notes,

³⁸ Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph*, trans. Louis J. Puhl, (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1951), Kindle Loc. 252.

³⁹ Contemporary readers will have a better understanding of the imagery used in the Two Standards if they picture the 16th century use of *standards*—the banners or flags that proclaimed whose allegiance a community was pledged.

⁴⁰ Puhl, Loc. 542.

The contemplations of the Third Week are intended to help us escape our narrow selves...Therefore, Ignatius has those making *The Exercises* seek the grace of ‘sorrow with Christ in sorrow, anguish with Christ in anguish, tears and deep grief because of the great affliction Christ endures for me.’ They ask for the grace to be drawn beyond themselves.

In dying to ourselves through union with Christ suffering, we gain strength and courage, freedom and conviction – all those graces that are necessary to do the desire of God.⁴¹

From death to ourselves with Christ, we are resurrected and follow Christ into the world. In evangelical terms we are “born again.” The Fourth Week places us at Christ’s appearances after his resurrection. One seeks to celebrate Christ’s triumph over sin and death and entrance into resurrected life. At this point, we are encouraged to follow Christ, in active love. The “Contemplation to Attain Love” is the closing contemplation of *The Exercises* and “presents in the form of a contemplative paradigm the spirituality of finding and loving God in all things which is the last outcome of *The Exercises*.”⁴² We will spend more time on this pivotal contemplation in corresponding sections ahead. For now we consider Roger Haight’s observation of where the journey of this aspect of Ignatian Christian formation leads us,

The Contemplation [to attain love] should not lead to a peak experience that will be followed by the let-down of ordinary life. It provides a path by which one finds God in the world, in ordinary life, ‘in all things.’ This goal is more than incidental in Ignatius of Loyola; this signature idea led to his being called a ‘contemplative in action,’ and he holds that out to all.⁴³

Not to be missed is how each week of *The Exercises* reflects the classic Unitive Way of Christian formation, lending *The Exercises* their inherent transformative

⁴¹ John English, *Spiritual Freedom: From an Experience of the Ignatian Exercises to the Art of Spiritual Guidance*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1995), 219.

⁴² Ivens, 169.

⁴³ Roger Haight. *Christian Spirituality for Seekers: Reflections of The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), Kindle Loc., 277-278.

quality.⁴⁴ Week One with its purging of sin follows the Purgative Way. Week Two leads into the Illuminative Way, as one seeks to aspire to the virtues as one chooses to follow in the way of Christ. Week Three and Week Four promote reflections leading into the Unitive Way where one is encouraged to seek unparalleled love and union with God.⁴⁵ This will be another piece of wider Christian formation that is traditionally unknown to conservative evangelicals yet has its variations in Protestantism.⁴⁶ Yet, as we continually seek to strengthen the bridge between Ignatian Christian formation and the evangelical world we can do so by noting how this same process is reflected not only in Church history but also in the Scriptures, specifically John 15 and Romans 12.

Growing up in the conservative, evangelical community as I did, we were very concerned with “knowing” and doing the “will of God.” John 15 and the opening of Romans 12 have long been foundational passages for me that also reflect the heart and personality of the Ignatian “way of proceeding.”⁴⁷ In both passages,⁴⁸ there is a desire and an encouragement to surrender all of one’s life to God. In John 15, Jesus enjoins us to “abide,” “join with,” or “remain,” in him.⁴⁹ “To be connected to the vine means that the life of Jesus is flowing through us, and this leads to fruitfulness. Fruitfulness will be the

⁴⁴ Ganss, 51.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 53.

⁴⁶ This pattern can be found in the historic Protestant tradition in Wesley and even in Calvin. Referred to as “justification, sanctification, perfection” (Wesley) or “glorification,” Calvin (though reserved for heaven). But even Calvin spoke repeatedly of “union with Christ.”

⁴⁷ O’Malley, 8.

⁴⁸ See Appendix B for comparison of John 15 and Romans 12 from the NIV and *The Message*.

⁴⁹ NRSV, MSG, NIV, respectively.

inevitable outcome of an interior spiritual life with Jesus.”⁵⁰ Moving beyond head knowledge, as followers of Jesus we desire to have our actions proceed from our life with Jesus. This fruitfulness, however, is not without cost, for to be even more fruitful, God, the Master Gardener, prunes us so we may bear even more fruit. As we enter into abiding with Jesus, we do so in loving submission knowing that the pruning taking place is for our good and God’s glory. The result of this loving pruning is that we are truly becoming friends of Jesus. Gary Burge summarizes this well as it relates to our focus on the Unitive Way,

This title [of friendship] is unusual and speaks of the highest relationship possible between God and a human being ... Where true friendship exists, true disclosure (or revelation) accompanies it (15:15b). Disciples possess the word of Jesus ... and they will receive the ongoing revelations of Jesus ... Disciples thus know “God’s heart.” When they therefore pray, their desires and God’s will harmonize, making them participants in God’s efforts in the world.⁵¹

The Apostle Paul continues expanding this way of life with Jesus by framing it with an impassioned plea to, “Take [our] everyday, ordinary life—[our] sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering.”⁵² The NIV states it in the more traditionally known encouragement, “to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice . . .”⁵³ To bring a startling potency to the mind of his hearers, Paul uses the vivid analogy of sacrifice. A sacrifice is one life spent on behalf of another, with nothing held back. Paul leads us to a place of complete surrender and submission. A

⁵⁰ Gary M. Burge, John: *The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 418.

⁵¹ Burge, 420.

⁵² Romans 12:1 (MSG).

⁵³ Romans 12:1 (NIV).

place where in the state of humble submission to the Spirit's leading, we are transformed from the world's way of life and perspective, to being transformed and having our minds renewed by the Spirit's work in our life to "test and approve what God's will is - [God's] good, pleasing and perfect will."⁵⁴

Summary

As is evident by this short overview, "The Exercises are indeed far more than an exercise in logic; but there is a logical sequence of ideas which runs through them all and links them together . . . [the] sequence of exercises has produced a powerful psychological impact and has given [many] a new orientation of life."⁵⁵ Thereby as we proceed in our endeavor to move from an informationally focused formation practice to a more robust and holistic one, we will use *The Exercises* as a platform to draw from and illustrate the key ideas of Ignatian Christian formation.

At this point the obvious question that is begging to be asked is, "How is this actually lived?" How do we abide with Jesus as a way of life? How do we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice? Or to use Eugene Peterson's expression of Romans 12, in the form of a question, "How do we take our everyday, ordinary life—our sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering?"⁵⁶ We find one answer towards a holistic Christian formation experience sixteen centuries after the Apostle Paul, as Ignatius of Loyola echoes these biblical ideas and begins his most influential work by proclaiming,

⁵⁴ Romans 12:2 (NIV).

⁵⁵ Ganss, 53.

⁵⁶ Romans 12:2 (MSG).

We were created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to experience salvation. All things on earth are created for us and to help us praise, reverence, and serve God. We are to use them as much as they help us in this service, and ought to rid ourselves of anything that hinders our service. For this it is necessary that we become indifferent to all created things⁵⁷ so that, on our part, we want not health rather than sickness, riches rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, long rather than short life, and so in all the rest; desiring and choosing only what helps us praise, reverence, and serve God. This detachment comes only if we have a stronger attachment; therefore our one dominating desire and fundamental choice must be to live in the loving presence and wisdom of Christ, our Savior.⁵⁸

This is what Ignatian Christian formation addresses well and why it is such a helpful bridge in bringing a more holistic Christian formation approach to evangelical faith communities.

⁵⁷ Ignatius describes *indifference* as being “free from any disordered attachment” (Ivens, 139). Therefore, as we become more and more indifferent, we stop clinging to people, possessions, and position and grow into living open-handedly towards God alone. See page 61 for a fuller explanation.

⁵⁸ Wakefield, Loc. 2566-2572.

SECTION 2: OTHER PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Introduction

Although Ignatian Christian formation has shown itself to be helpful in growing holistic intimacy with Jesus for over five hundred years, many being shaped and influenced by evangelical history, as discussed in the previous chapter, have difficulty entering into these practices due to the contemplative, Catholic origins. A cursory survey of popular evangelical publishers such as Zondervan, IVP, Tyndale House, Moody, and Thomas Nelson demonstrates no shortage of Christian formation resources available, with many organizations publishing materials for evangelicals. Staying within the scope of this study, three organizations have been chosen that are widely recognized and respected in the body of evangelicals: Bible Study Fellowship International (BSF), Renovaré and World Vision. Each organization is representative of a genre of ministries whose resources and activities help evangelicals engage in Christian formation by concentrating on cognitive (BSF), emotive (Renovaré) or ethical practices (World Vision). Towards this end, an exploration will be made of how these three ministries may or may not be helpful in cultivating a holistic way of life of following Jesus wherein the cognitive, emotive and ethical are harmoniously engaged. Simultaneously, Section Two intends to show how each one can take on a more holistic quality as it coalesces with Ignatian Christian formation.

Bible Study Fellowship (BSF)

The review of Alternative Solutions for growing in intimacy with Christ begins with a ministry that many evangelicals have a natural affinity for due to their love and reverence for the Scriptures, Bible Study Fellowship (BSF).⁵⁹ BSF has over 1,000 classes in thirty-eight countries.⁶⁰ BSF's vision is to see "Worldwide training centers teaching the Bible to produce in all participants a vibrant relationship with God, and, in as many as are called, a passion to commit without reservation to lead in the cause of Christ in the world."⁶¹ To accomplish this vision BSF seeks to bring "clarity to study of the Bible, producing life change as one applies God's truth" by following these four steps:

1. Answer daily lesson questions on one's own.
2. Discuss insights in a conversation with members of one's discussion group.
3. Listen to a lecture that explains the passage, key principles from the lesson and the relevance of the Bible's truth to today's world.
4. Read lesson notes that further elaborate on the passage.⁶²

Just as the name indicates, BSF is all about Bible study. Based on the lessons provided, the vast majority of the questions lead one on a quest for gathering information where according to their vision helps to, "produce a vibrant relationship with God."⁶³ Theologian and author Greg Boyd clarifies how more than mere "information" about

⁵⁹ Bible Study Fellowship will be referred to by its common reference BSF.

⁶⁰ "Who we are," BSF International, accessed March 24, 2015, <https://www.bsfinternational.org/about>.

⁶¹ "Vision, core and aims," BSF International, accessed March 24, 2015, <https://www.bsfinternational.org/bsf-distinctives>.

⁶² "Our Approach," BSF International, accessed March 24, 2015, <https://www.bsfinternational.org/four-fold-approach>.

⁶³ "Vision, core and aims," BSF International, accessed March 24, 2015, <https://www.bsfinternational.org/bsf-distinctives>.

God learned in a Bible study is needed if one truly seeks to embrace one's faith, satisfy one's soul and transform his or her life:

It's a wonderful thing to know that God is love (e.g., 1 John 4:16), but this information will not significantly impact us until we can intimately grasp and savor the truth that God loves us individually. So too it's a wonderful thing to know that Jesus died for the world (e.g., 2 Cor. 5:14–15; 1 John 2:2), but this information will not significantly impact the way we experience ourselves and the world until it becomes vivid, experiential, and personalized. I need to be able to savor in a concrete way the truth that Jesus died for me, that he loves me to this unfathomable degree, and that I am completely forgiven. And all of this clearly involves the sanctified use of our imagination.⁶⁴

Centuries earlier Ignatius directed followers of Christ to consider the same ideals as Boyd, "It is not knowing a lot but grasping things intimately and savoring them that fills and satisfies the soul."⁶⁵ As happens in much of evangelicalism, we seek the information and then move on to accomplish and "master" the next *quest-ion*. The Christian formation of our lives is a process that takes time and is more in line with cultivating a garden than that of an assembly line process. What is missing from BSF is the *savoring* aspect of the Scriptures. Much like Martha in the gospels who needs to accomplish the task, where what is needed is a time to sit at the feet of Jesus and simply listen.⁶⁶

BSF does lead Christ followers into the Scriptures, which is good and critically necessary for Christian formation. Yet, the overwhelming focus on information gathering leaves one seeking answers to the most basic levels of questions. As an authority and

⁶⁴ Gregory A. Boyd, *Seeing Is Believing: Experience Jesus through Imaginative Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), Kindle Loc., 71.

⁶⁵ Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, trans. Joseph Tetlow (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 43.

⁶⁶ See Luke 10:38-42.

specialist in instructional design Dr. Leslie Owen Wilson, describes the five basic types of questions as follows,

1. Factual – Soliciting reasonably simple, straight forward answers based on obvious facts or awareness.
2. Convergent – Answers to these types of questions are usually within a very finite range of acceptable accuracy.
3. Divergent – These questions allow students to explore different avenues and create many different variations and alternative answers or scenarios.
4. Evaluative – These types of questions usually require sophisticated levels of cognitive and/or emotional (affective) judgment.
5. Combinations – These are questions that blend any combination of the above.⁶⁷

A survey of the study of Moses available on BSF's website revealed that 56 percent of the questions were of the two lowest categories to fully engage cognitive and affective processes with only one percent being from the highest.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ This is based on the work of professor and instructional designer, Dr. Leslie Owen Wilson's, "Five Basic Types of Questions," The Second Principle, accessed April 22, 2015, <http://thesecondprinciple.com/teaching-essentials/five-basic-types-questions/>:

1. Factual – Soliciting reasonably simple, straight forward answers based on obvious facts or awareness. These are usually at the lowest level of cognitive (thinking) or affective (feeling) processes and answers are frequently either right or wrong.
2. Convergent – Answers to these types of questions are usually within a very finite range of acceptable accuracy. These may be at several different levels of cognition—comprehension, application, analysis, or ones where the answerer makes inferences or conjectures based on personal awareness, or on material read, presented or known.
3. Divergent – These questions allow students to explore different avenues and create many different variations and alternative answers or scenarios. Correctness may be based on logical projections, may be contextual, or arrived at through basic knowledge, conjecture, inference, projection, creation, intuition, or imagination. These types of questions often require students to analyze, evaluate, or synthesize a knowledge base and then project or predict different outcomes. Answering these types of questions may be aided by higher levels of affective thinking as well — such as valuing, organization, or characterization.
4. Evaluative – These types of questions usually require sophisticated levels of cognitive and/or emotional (affective) judgment. In attempting to answer these types of questions, students may be combining multiple cognitive and/or affective processes or levels, frequently in comparative frameworks. Often an answer is analyzed at multiple levels and from different perspectives before the answerer arrives at newly synthesized information or conclusions.
5. Combinations – These are questions that blend any combination of the above.

⁶⁸ A summary of the results are as follows: Total Questions = 345; Factual - 124 (36%), Convergent - 69 (20%), Divergent - 148 (43%), Evaluative - 4 (1%), Combination - 0.

As we will expound on in the next section of this dissertation, seeking information as a primary means of engagement with the Bible grows a relationship with the Bible as opposed to growing a relationship with the God of the Bible, in the way Ignatian Christian formation seeks to stimulate. Boyd spurs us forward in understanding that to “mistakenly assume that information automatically translates into transformation”⁶⁹ is one of the most pervasive problems in Western Christianity, “We tend to have a naive conviction that if only we read another book or get involved in another Bible study, our lives will be significantly changed.”⁷⁰

Renovaré

If BSF is representative of a genre of materials focused on the cognitive, then Renovaré is representative of those resources that focus on the heart. “Renovaré is a community of Christians seeking continual spiritual renewal in Christ.”⁷¹ Renovaré “advocates intentional living through spiritual formation among Christians wanting a deeper connection with God.”⁷² Such intention for a deeper connection is described in the phraseology and sequence of Renovaré’s core ideas.

Through *personal relationships*, conferences and retreats, written and web-based resources, church consultations, and other means, Renovaré pursues the following core ideas:

⁶⁹ Boyd, 71.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ “What is Renovaré?,” Renovaré, accessed April 1, 2015, <http://www.renovare.org/about>.

⁷² “What we do,” Renovaré, accessed April 1, 2015, <http://www.renovare.org/what-we-do>.

- *Life with God*

The aim of God in history is the creation of an *all-inclusive community of loving persons with God himself* at the center of this community as its prime Sustainer and most glorious Inhabitant.

- *The Availability of God's Kingdom*

We can *experience* genuine, substantive life in God's kingdom *through Jesus Christ*, beginning now and continuing through all eternity.

- *The Necessity of Grace*

We are *utterly dependent upon Jesus Christ*, our ever-living Savior, Teacher, Lord, and Friend for genuine spiritual transformation.⁷³

- *The Means of Grace*

Amongst the variety of ways God has given *for us to be open to his transforming grace*, we recognize the crucial importance of intentional spiritual practices and disciplines (such as prayer, service, or fasting).

- *A Balanced Vision of Life in Christ*

We seek to *embrace the abundant life of Jesus in all its fullness*: contemplative, holiness, charismatic, social justice, evangelical, and incarnational.

- *A Practical Strategy for Spiritual Formation*

We encourage the creation of Spiritual Formation Groups and other forms of *spiritual friendship* as solid foundations for *mutual support and nurture*.

- *The Centrality of Scripture*

We *immerse ourselves in the Bible*: it is the great revelation of God's purposes in history, a sure guide for growth into Christlikeness, and a rich resource for our spiritual formation.

- *The Value of the Christian Tradition*

We are *engaged in the historical "Great Conversation"* on Spiritual Formation developed from Scripture by the Church's classical spiritual writings.⁷⁴

Equal to how BSF maintains a focused, orientation of the mind seeking information, Renovaré has a relational, heart orientation concerned with developing and experiencing loving, relational community with God and others.⁷⁵

⁷³ "What is Renovaré?," Renovaré, accessed April 1, 2015, <http://www.renovare.org/about>; emphasis added.

⁷⁴ Ibid., emphasis added.

Reflecting their intensive focus on the Scriptures, BSF and others of that genre, place Scripture statements in a predominant position and express it in creedal language: “We believe that the 66 books of Holy Scripture as originally given are in their entirety the Word of God verbally inspired and wholly without error in all that they declare and, therefore, are the supreme and final authority of faith and life.”⁷⁶ When contrasted to the phraseology of Renovaré’s statement on Scripture, “We immerse ourselves in the Bible a sure guide for growth into Christlikeness, and a rich resource for our spiritual formation,”⁷⁷ one sees that Renovaré’s goal is for Christ followers to *experience personally* the Bible, not simply know it intellectually. The information in the Bible is not an end in itself, but leads one to become more than he or she is now. Likewise, Renovaré’s Statement of faith is not a series of Bible verses but the Apostles’ and Nicene creed; reflective of their concern for a personal, communal and perennial connection to the Church as opposed to a cognitive and transpersonal doctrinal statement.⁷⁸

Renovaré’s emphasis on the heart is inherited through the teachings of its founder, Richard Foster who writes, “The most important, the most real, the most lasting work is accomplished in the depths of our hearts.”⁷⁹ “The fundamental transformation of the self begins with the work of God upon the heart - and for good reason, for the heart is the

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ “Statement of Faith,” BSF International, accessed March 24, 2015, <https://www.bsfindernational.org/statement-of-faith>.

⁷⁷ “What is Renovaré?,” Renovaré, accessed March 24, 2015, <http://www.renovare.org/about>.

⁷⁸ “Statement of Faith,” Renovaré, accessed April 1, 2015, <http://www.renovare.org/about/statement-of-faith>.

⁷⁹ Richard J. Foster, “Salvation is for life.” *Theology Today* 61, no. 3: 301.

wellspring of human action.”⁸⁰ Foster goes on to share the effectual transformation that a Trinitarian, relational, community has on the heart, “Of primary significance is our vital union with God, our “new creation” in Christ, our immersion in the Holy Spirit. It is this “life” that purifies the heart.”⁸¹

Renovaré is an advocate for and reflects the direction encouraged throughout this work, and proves to be a great aid toward a holistic Christian formation experience in many evangelical churches. What hinders Renovaré from making headway in more conservative evangelical churches are fear based perspectives of being drawn into heresy, new age practices and the occult. With condescending statements such as, “Spiritual formation is the process of *apparent* spiritual development . . .”⁸² and describing spiritual formation as “*superficially* similar to discipleship”⁸³ conservative Christian “watchdog” groups such as the Christian Research Network (CRN) have nothing but negative things to say about Renovaré and founder Richard Foster. The following excerpt is from one of CRN’s network members Aspiring Ministries:

As a result of [Richard Foster’s] unbiblical routes and disregard for the meaning of Scripture, it should not surprise us that Foster has become a Pied Piper leading multitudes away from biblical Christianity. From the vantage point of twenty-six years since the publication of *Celebration of Discipline* we see just how far astray Foster has taken his followers. These include:

- Subjective leading of God as being the norm.
- Journaling and prayer as ways that God speaks to us.
- The contemplative prayer movement which has taken many to the foothills of Eastern mysticism.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 300.

⁸¹ Ibid., 301.

⁸² RESEARCH: SPIRITUAL FORMATION, Christian Research Network, accessed November 18, 2015, <http://christianresearchnetwork.org/topic/spiritual-formation/>, emphasis added.

⁸³ Ibid., emphasis added.

- Centering prayer in which one moves to the center of God or self—an Eastern mystical practice.
- An unbiblical use of imagination which leads to occultic visualization.
- Receptivity to all the charismatic gifts including tongues, visions, revelations and prophecy.
- Use of rosaries and prayer wheels.
- Embracing of psychological views such as self-fulfillment, self-actualization, loving ourselves, mutual submission, and healing of inner wounds.
- Propagation of the Roman Catholic view of confession, penitence and spiritual directives.
- Promoting charismatic patterns of worship, including calling for the presence of God and holy laughter.

Overall Foster's book is an encyclopedia of unbiblical teaching, which leads the unsuspecting reader away from Christ and into mysticism or worse. It is a telltale sign of the state of the church to find how accepted Foster's teachings are.⁸⁴

As can be seen by the above collection of ideas, many conservative evangelicals seem to have deep reservations concerning what Renovaré practices. For this reason, in this project, we are expounding on a way of proceeding⁸⁵ that leverages the common affinities between Ignatian Christian formation and evangelicalism—Scripture, prayer, and service. In addition, this will be done a way that encourages adaptability and customization based on the local sensitivities of a particular evangelical context. As a result, a new way of approaching these common affinities will be shared, leveraging the inherent passion evangelicals have for Scripture, prayer and service with adequate common ground to go forward in an instructive and fruitful way.

⁸⁴ Ken Silva, "'Celebration of Discipline' By Richard Foster, An Encyclopedia of Theological Error, Aspiring Ministries," accessed November 18, 2015, <http://apprising.org/2008/09/22/celebration-of-discipline-by-richard-foster-an-encyclopedia-of-theological-error/>.

⁸⁵ O'Malley, 8. The term "way of proceeding" was one of Ignatius of Loyola's favorite terms to describe the Jesuits' overall approach to life and faith.

World Vision

If BSF is representative of the cognitive or head knowledge of Jesus, and Renovaré focuses us on the heart, then World Vision is representative of the ethical aspect of Christian formation, engaging one's hands in his or her faith. For consideration here, World Vision represents another whole genre of similar alternative possibilities that predominately lead outward while engaging Christ followers in faith-filled action. In 2007 World Vision first promoted Faith in Action Sunday, to encourage churches, ministries, and small groups to meet practical needs in their local communities.⁸⁶ This is a prime example of World Vision living out their mission, as found on their well resourced website:

World Vision is an international partnership of Christians whose mission is to follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice, and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God.

We pursue this mission through integrated, holistic commitment to:

- Transformational development that is community-based and sustainable, focused especially on the needs of children
- Emergency relief that assists people afflicted by conflict or disaster
- Promotion of justice that seeks to change unjust structures affecting the poor among whom we work
- Partnerships with churches to contribute to spiritual and social transformation
- Public awareness that leads to informed understanding, giving, involvement, and prayer
- Witness to Jesus Christ by life, deed, word, and sign that encourages people to respond to the Gospel⁸⁷

Richard Stearns, president of World Vision notes in his book, *The Hole in Our Gospel*, "We have, in fact, reduced the gospel to a mere transaction involving the right

⁸⁶ Joseph Slife, "The Church Has Left the Building," *World Magazine*, June 2014, accessed April 8, 2015, http://www.worldmag.com/2014/06/the_church_has_left_the_building.

⁸⁷ "Who We Are," *World Vision*, accessed April 8, 2015, <http://www.worldvision.org/about-us/who-we-are>.

beliefs rather than seeing in it the power to change the world.”⁸⁸ World Vision helps to bridge this gap from the theoretical and cognitive, to engaging the heart and emotions with a love for God; thus giving a means to live that love out practically, by way of a myriad of opportunities throughout the world.

If not tempered with active discernment to seek God’s direction, presence and timing, however, evangelical church leaders might very well find themselves pushing their church into doing too much. Whether it is due to the tendency of evangelicals to use business models to gauge success where more, larger and faster is a sign of significance, evangelicals are far too often like the gospel’s hurried, worried and upset Martha,⁸⁹ finding themselves distracted from Jesus. In his classic work *Tyranny of the Urgent*, Charles Hummel makes this insightful observation for believers to heed,

Ironically, the busier you get the more you need this time inventory, but the less you seem to be able to take it. You become like a fanatic, who, when unsure of his direction, doubles his speed. And frenetic service for God can become an escape for God. But when you prayerfully take inventory and plan your days, it provides fresh perspective on your work.⁹⁰

For all the potential good that World Vision offers, their mission should be wisely tempered with prayerful discernment and an astute awareness of boundaries and limits, two things which Ignatian Christian formation does extremely well.⁹¹ That being said, World Vision is another strong asset towards a holistic, formational practice as seen from their statement on approach:

⁸⁸ Richard Stearns, *The Hole in Our Gospel* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009), 243.

⁸⁹ See Luke 10:38-42.

⁹⁰ Charles Hummel, *Freedom from Tyranny of the Urgent* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press,), 9.

⁹¹ We could also say World Vision helps us to engage our hands but we need that engagement to be tempered with the head and heart.

Our faith in Jesus Christ is core to who we are. As an expression of God's unconditional love for all people, especially vulnerable children, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed. We hope to live as followers of Christ by being active, visible bearers of God's love.

Relying on God's grace and Spirit, we affirm the truth of the gospel and our hope in Christ through our character, speech, actions, and in the signs of God's power at work in individual lives, in the communities where we work, and in all creation.⁹²

This approach will only be enhanced as it coalesces with Ignatian Christian formation which continually pushes Christ followers towards loving others as we love God in all that we do, but does so in a way that accounts for our whole selves.

Summary

As is clear through this section, there are other ways of proceeding in the cause of Christian formation. Yet, what one finds is that many offer less than a holistic way after Jesus in the end. The genre represented by BSF tends to focus on the cognitive, wherein the pursuit of information takes precedence over that of transformation. Renovaré provides an effective way to engage the heart, yet Renovaré and those similar are often treated with contempt and fear by more conservative evangelical churches. World Vision represents and demonstrates the limitless ways to actively engage one's faith. Yet without tempering the church's pursuits with active discernment and reflection, evangelicals are too often like the Gospel's hurried, worried and upset Martha,⁹³ finding themselves distracted from Jesus.

In this study of the engagement and implementing of Ignatian formation practices, a way of proceeding is presented that can converge the genres mentioned,

⁹² "Our Faith in Action," World Vision, accessed April 8, 2015, <http://www.worldvision.org/our-impact/our-faith-in-action>.

⁹³ See Luke 10:38-42.

helping dedicated Christ followers in “every way of preparing and disposing the soul to rid itself of all inordinate attachments, and, after their removal, of seeking and finding the will of God in the disposition of our life for the salvation of our soul.”⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Puhl, Loc. 83.

SECTION 3: THE THESIS

Scripture

Central to evangelicalism is the authority and supremacy of Scripture. It is no surprise then to discover the first point of the Statement of Faith, for the National Association of Evangelicals is, “We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.”⁹⁵ Growing up in conservative, evangelical circles Sword Drills,⁹⁶ memorizing and quoting Bible passages for points and awards in Sunday School, competitive Bible quizzing and Bible Baseball were are part of my experience and vocabulary as far back as I can remember. In each, we were rewarded for how well we “knew” the Bible, as in how well we could recite and quote the information from the Bible. On this path the Bible subtly, but assuredly, became the focus of our faith. Nuancing the description of this reality, my conservative evangelical tradition lead into a primary relationship with the Bible and a secondary relationship with Jesus. Most certainly, we talked about trusting Jesus, and read about Jesus; still, the overall approach and focus of the fundamentalist Christianity of formation (aka: discipleship or “becoming like Christ”) was knowing the information the Bible told us about Jesus, not intimacy with Jesus as a person. The contrast can be likened to that of talking about one’s spouse with a new friend as opposed to introducing one’s spouse personally to that friend. Without the friend meeting the spouse personally, the two have no opportunity for a genuine relationship.

⁹⁵ “Statement of Faith,” National Association of Evangelicals, 2012, accessed February 7, 2015, <http://www.nae.net/about-us/statement-of-faith>.

⁹⁶ A Sword Drill is when the teacher or leader calls out a Bible verse and the first student to find the verse, stand, and read it wins.

Few places in the Scriptures show this dichotomy so clearly as in John 5, where Jesus is in sharp dialogue with the Sword Drill experts of his day, the Pharisees, ones who had memorized the Old Testament and quoted it authoritatively and feverishly. Jesus cuts to the central point highlighting the issue addressed here: “You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”⁹⁷ The Pharisees were experts in the Law. More accurately stated, they were experts in knowing the information that was in the Scriptures, and held the Scriptures as their ultimate authority.

To Jesus, the Scriptures were, and remain, not an end in themselves but a pathway that lead to himself as the final authority. Donald Bloesch brings bold clarity to this argument in stating, “The ultimate, final authority is not Scripture but the living God himself as we find him in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ and the message about him constitute the material norm for our faith just as the Bible is the formal norm. The Bible is authoritative because it points beyond itself to the absolute authority, the living and transcendent Word of God.”⁹⁸

Acclaimed sociologist and public theologian Christian Smith asserts in *The Bible Made Impossible*, that evangelicals have the problem of biblicism. Smith shares nine axioms that together generate a tenth that he calls the *Handbook Model to the Bible*: “The Bible teaches doctrine and morals with every affirmation that it makes, so that together those affirmations comprise something like a handbook or textbook for Christian belief

⁹⁷ John 5:39-40 (NIV).

⁹⁸ Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology: God, Authority, and Salvation* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), 62.

and living, a compendium of divine and therefore inerrant teachings on a full array of subjects—including science, economics, health, politics, and romance.”⁹⁹ Approaching the Bible in this way, contributes to Western Christianity’s naive conviction that more information equals transformation, as Boyd made emphasized earlier.¹⁰⁰

This study is indebted to Scott McKnight, who shares a conservative evangelical heritage, for providing a helpful distinction between two opposing ways of using the Scriptures. Jesus desires us to have the Scriptures propel us into relationship with

⁹⁹ Smith explains, “By ‘biblicism’ I mean a particular theory about and style of using the Bible that is defined by a constellation of related assumptions and beliefs about the Bible’s nature, purpose, and function. That constellation is represented by ten assumptions or beliefs:

1. Divine Writing: The Bible, down to the details of its words, consists of and is identical with God’s very own words written inerrantly in human language.
2. Total Representation: The Bible represents the totality of God’s communication to and will for humanity, both in containing all that God has to say to humans and in being the exclusive mode of God’s true communication.
3. Complete Coverage: The divine will about all of the issues relevant to Christian belief and life are contained in the Bible.
4. Democratic Perspicuity: Any reasonably intelligent person can read the Bible in his or her own language and correctly understand the plain meaning of the text.
5. Commonsense Hermeneutics: The best way to understand biblical texts is by reading them in their explicit, plain, most obvious, literal sense, as the author intended them at face value, which may or may not involve taking into account their literary, cultural, and historical contexts.
6. Solo Scriptura: The significance of any given biblical text can be understood without reliance on creeds, confessions, historical church traditions, or other forms of larger theological hermeneutical frameworks, such that theological formulations can be built up directly out of the Bible from scratch.
7. Internal Harmony: All related passages of the Bible on any given subject fit together almost like puzzle pieces into single, unified, internally consistent bodies of instruction about right and wrong beliefs and behaviors.
8. Universal Applicability: What the biblical authors taught God’s people at any point in history remains universally valid for all Christians at every other time, unless explicitly revoked by subsequent scriptural teaching.
9. Inductive Method: All matters of Christian belief and practice can be learned by sitting down with the Bible and piecing together through careful study the clear “biblical” truths that it teaches.
10. Handbook Model: The Bible teaches doctrine and morals with every affirmation that it makes, so that together those affirmations comprise something like a handbook or textbook for Christian belief and living, a compendium of divine and therefore inerrant teachings on a full array of subjects—including science, economics, health, politics, and romance.

Christian Smith, *The Bible Made Impossible: Why Biblicism Is Not a Truly Evangelical Reading of Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2011), Kindle Loc.179-215.

¹⁰⁰ See page 28.

himself, what McKnight calls a “relational approach to the Scriptures” as opposed to simply an “authoritative approach.” A relational approach points beyond the pages of Scripture to a relationship with the living Christ. An authoritative approach treats the Scriptures as an end in themselves and actually establishes a “relationship” with the Bible instead.¹⁰¹

With this understanding, it is helpful to return to John, chapter five and hear the censure from Jesus to the Pharisees: “Here you are scouring through the Scriptures, hoping that you will find eternal life among a pile of scrolls. What you don’t seem to understand is that the Scriptures point to Me. Here I am with you, and still you reject the truth contained in the law and prophets by refusing to come to Me so that you can have life.”¹⁰²

This is actually a core issue that is missed by many evangelicals, and can be rectified by applying a Christocentric reading of the Scriptures as Smith elaborates,

The purpose, center, and interpretive key to Scripture is Jesus Christ. It is embarrassing to have to write this, for it should be obvious to all Christians. But I am afraid this is not always so obvious in practice in biblicist circles. At least the profound implications of this fact for reading Scripture are not always obvious to many evangelicals. Truly believing that Jesus Christ is the real purpose, center, and interpretive key to Scripture causes one to read the Bible in a way that is very different than believing the Bible to be an instruction manual containing universally applicable divine oracles concerning every possible subject it seems to address.¹⁰³

Reading and interpreting the Scriptures with a Christocentric vantage point is not new, as Jesus pointed out not only in John 5 but also in Luke 24 with the two on the road

¹⁰¹ Scot McKnight, *The Blue Parakeet: Rethinking How You Read the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), Kindle Loc. 84.

¹⁰² John 5:39-40 (VOICE).

¹⁰³ Smith, Loc. 1808-1812.

to Emmaus. “Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”¹⁰⁴

Many centuries later, the much esteemed among conservative evangelicals, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, eloquently stated in one of his more famous messages,

That sermon which does not lead to Christ, or of which Jesus Christ is not the top and the bottom, is a sort of sermon that will make the devils in hell to laugh, but might make the angel of God to weep, if they were capable of such emotion This is the way to preach. From every little village in England—it does not matter where it is—there is sure to be a road to London. Though there may not be a road to certain other places, there is certain to be a road to London. Now, from every text in the Bible there is a road to Jesus Christ, and the way to preach is just to say, “How can I get from this text to Jesus Christ?” and then go preaching all the way along it . . . You must not think of reading without feeling that he is there who is Lord and Master of everything that you are reading, and who shall make these things precious to you if you realize him in them. If you do not find Jesus in the Scriptures they will be of small service to you.¹⁰⁵

Less than a hundred years later, we find another Englishman who is also a favorite among evangelicals, John Stott, authenticating the importance of a Christocentric reading of the Bible.

The salvation for which the Bible instructs us is available “through faith in Christ Jesus.” Therefore, since Scripture concerns salvation and salvation is through Christ, Scripture is full of Christ. Jesus himself thus understood the nature and function of the Bible. “The Scriptures,” he said, “testify about me” (John 5:39). Again, walking with two disciples after the Resurrection, from Jerusalem to Emmaus, he rebuked them for their folly and unbelief due to their ignorance of Scripture. Luke who tells the story adds: And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself (Luke 24:27).

Christ’s assertion was, then, not only that the Scriptures bore witness to him in a general way, but that in each of the three divisions of the Old Testament

¹⁰⁴ Luke 24:27 (NLT).

¹⁰⁵ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “How to Read the Bible,” *The Spurgeon Archive*, accessed June 17, 2015, <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/1503.htm>.

Scripture—the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms (or “Writings”)—there were things concerning him.¹⁰⁶

The goal of our Christian formation is not for us to have a relationship with Scripture or to know the Scriptures as an end in themselves, rather as Spurgeon and Stott eloquently teach, the Scriptures are to lead us to Jesus so we may know God personally and intimately, articulated in the words of McKnight: “The relational approach turns the Bible from facts-only to facts-that-lead-to-engagement with the God of the Bible.”¹⁰⁷ The salient concept here is in what question we ask as we engage the Bible. The authoritative approach influenced with biblicism asks, “What does the Bible say?” In contrast, those who seek a relationship *with* God ask, “What does God say to us through the Bible?” With this latter question, we begin to move beyond the pages of Scripture to engage the God of the Bible in the everyday moments of our lives.¹⁰⁸ British theologian, N.T.

Wright, highlights the fullness of this relational approach:

In the Bible we find a vocation to human knowing that is always relational, always responsible, always fully attentive to the thing or person that is known and yet, always bringing to it the larger world of narrative, imagination, metaphor, and art that enables us to know things more fully than merely as a list of facts or a string of formulas.¹⁰⁹

Unless intentionally addressed, the typical evangelical relationship to the Bible leads to an approach that inadvertently diminishes the relationship with Christ the Bible is meant to foster. As a result, what could be argued as evangelicalism’s greatest strength,

¹⁰⁶ John R. W. Stott, *Understanding the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001), Kindle Loc. 164-193.

¹⁰⁷ McKnight, *The Blue Parakeet*, 87.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹⁰⁹ N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Scripture: Engaging Contemporary Issues* (New York: HarperOne, 2014), Kindle Loc. 146.

their love for the Scriptures, turns out to be their greatest weakness and begins to work against what they say they desire, to know Jesus. This is where elements of Ignatian Christian Formation can be of great service. The Scriptures, in Ignatian formation, are held in very high esteem, yet are never an end in themselves, but a means to lead readers of the Bible to Jesus relationally and practically. Wakefield summarizes the holistic nature of how we are engaged in a relational approach to Scriptures through Ignatian practices. He writes,

Ignatius invites us into the story of Jesus and calls us to be transformed by our participation in the story. With our imagination and reason, with our five bodily senses, and especially with our emotions, we become secondhand witnesses of the events of Scripture. Ignatius supplements these meditations on the Gospels with certain parables and themes that help us clarify our feelings. We are called to desire God above all things, and we are taught to love our neighbors sacrificially. Secure in God's love for us, we learn to experience God's peace in every situation.¹¹⁰

There is an outward vibrancy that is generated as we engage Scripture not as an end in itself, but rather as a means to engage with Jesus in the everyday moments of our lives. To be reassuring to evangelicals, Scripture is still and always will be vitally important in our Christian formation. The illuminating point we are making is that the goal is to continually and intentionally seek, hear and follow Jesus through the Scriptures—striving to foster the relational intimacy seen throughout the Bible. As one grows in discerning how to engage with Jesus in the flow of his or her life, the way of Christ is written and read through everyday moments for all to see.

As this study proceeds, one will discover a core strength of Ignatian formation is that it always leads outward into searching, discerning and expecting to find God in all

¹¹⁰ Wakefield, Loc. 212-216.

things, in the normal flow of daily living. This in itself helps prevent treating engagement with the Bible as a quest for information, but instead relationally engages God in the world. The Apostle Paul's instructions to Timothy are illustrative here:

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.¹¹¹

Paul encourages Timothy to remember what Timothy has been taught of the Scriptures and by whom. Learning the Scriptures, nurtured through a caring faith community, leads believers to trusting Jesus, and in trusting Jesus, living into the realization that, "Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way. Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us."¹¹² Notice here that clearly, Scripture leads one to action, not simply information. Scripture leads individuals into joining with Jesus, in the ordinary events of life, an endeavor in which Ignatian Christian formation can offer great help. The intentional pursuit of action with Jesus is shared in this prominent Ignatian prayer, "Day by day, three things I pray: to know Thee more clearly, to love Thee more dearly, to follow Thee more nearly."¹¹³

Consider again the challenge of Jesus in John 15,

¹¹¹ 2 Timothy 3:14-17 (NIV).

¹¹² 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (MSG).

¹¹³ Ivens, 91.

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.¹¹⁴

Jesus connects and encourages his followers to have his words remain in them, and only then producing fruit, demonstrating who his true followers are. Living out, demonstrating what one says one believes is what brings God the Father glory. Stating the cause and effect positively, as one finds his or her day-to-day and moment to moment life in Jesus, fruit is produced and God is glorified. This is where the tension lies: how does one remain in Jesus? How does one abide? Undoubtedly, an initial answer for evangelicals would reference knowing the content of the Bible in some way. The Bible is so very important, but as this study endeavors to show, study of the Bible is an important starting point, but the end point is our ongoing Christian formation into Christlikeness.

In approaching Scripture by way of Ignatian Christian formation, this author seeks to discern, follow and be transformed by the presence of Christ throughout the pages of the Scriptures. Bonhoeffer in his classic text on community, *Life Together* challenges his readers in this very concept:

The Word of Scripture should never stop sounding in your ears and working in you all day long, just like the words of someone you love. And just as you do not analyze the words of someone you love, but accept them as they are said to you, accept the Word of Scripture and ponder it in your heart, as Mary did. That is all... Do not ask 'How shall I pass this on?' but 'What does it say to me?' Then ponder this word long in your heart until it has gone right into you and taken possession of you.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ John 15:5-8 (NIV).

¹¹⁵ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, as quoted in Marjorie J. Thompson, *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 23.

Entered into this way, reading the Scriptures cannot stay a simple endeavor in which facts are to be found, because something much greater is transpiring. Christ followers are actively engaging with the risen Christ, discerning how *presently* Jesus is saying,

The Father has given me all these things to do and say . . . I'm not keeping it to myself; I'm ready to go over it line by line with anyone willing to listen. Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.¹¹⁶

In response to this invitation of Jesus, disciples arrange each day's events in such a way as to abide, to listen, to discern, and to be actively attentive to the voice of God. Jesuit priest, David Fleming, illuminates the pervasiveness of these points in Christian formation in Ignatian terms. He writes,

God is an active God. He is ever at work in people's lives, inviting, directing, guiding, proposing, suggesting. This understanding of God animates Ignatian spirituality and gives it its internal cohesion. The techniques and practices associated with Ignatian spirituality are all designed to help us be more attentive to this active God. Ignatian spirituality can be described as an active attentiveness to God joined with a prompt responsiveness to his leading.¹¹⁷

Active attentiveness to God is crucial in the endeavor to have a holistic Christian spirituality, for it acts as a bridge across different formational practices. A person actively attentive to Christ in the pages of Scripture, begins to deepen and widen this attentiveness through prayer, thereby interlocking everyday life with classic formational practices.

Prayer

¹¹⁶ Matthew 11:27-30 (MSG).

¹¹⁷ Fleming, 269.

In Ignatian Christian formation, as in evangelical circles, prayer is a mainstay in formation. Not surprisingly, reading through *The Exercises*, one can find many instructions on prayer from Ignatius. For example,

The First Method of Prayer is on the Ten Commandments, the Seven Capital Sins, the three powers of the soul, and the five senses. This manner of praying is not meant so much to provide a form and method of prayer properly so called, but rather to supply a way of proceeding and some practices by which the soul may prepare itself and profit so that its prayer may be acceptable to God.¹¹⁸

The two most distinct and notable means of prayer in Ignatian Christian formation are 1. Imaginative Contemplation and, 2. The Daily Examen. These two prayer practices combined, accent the intensely holistic nature of Ignatian prayer, as Lawrence Herrera summarizes well,

Whereas other forms of prayer or meditation in both Asian countries as well as Europe and North America may be purely nonverbal or contemplative, the prayer style distinctive to Ignatian spirituality seeks to engage the entire person. The physical senses are valued in every way as well as the imagination and memory as powerful tools to open the person to the transcendent in their experience. The prayer that supports discernment is simply not a discursive or rationalist experience alone.¹¹⁹

In our pursuit of an integrated approach to Christian formation, imaginative contemplation will serve one well to connect the cognitive, emotive and ethical aspects of their formation.

Imaginative Contemplation

¹¹⁸ Ignatius of Loyola, Loc. 740.

¹¹⁹ Lawrence P. Herrera, "The Tradition of Ignatius of Loyola: A Holistic Spirituality." *Journal of Individual Psychology* 56, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 312.

As Herrera described so well, to foster a rich imaginative contemplation experience, a key methodology of Ignatius is to meld the use of the senses with the imagination, as we see in the Fifth Meditation of the Second Week,

. . . it will be profitable with the aid of the imagination to apply the five senses to the subject matter of the First and Second Contemplation in the following manner . . . seeing in imagination the persons, and in contemplating and meditating in detail the circumstances in which they are . . . hear what they are saying, or what they might say . . . smell the infinite fragrance, and taste the infinite sweetness of the divinity . . . apply the sense of touch, for example, by embracing and kissing the place where the persons stand or are seated, always taking care to draw some fruit from this.¹²⁰

The imagination is often overlooked, if not treated as suspect, in many conservative, evangelical circles. Greg Boyd, in his book, *Seeing is Believing*, helps the follower of Christ understand why: “We live under the influence of Enlightenment rationalism, imagination is often equated with sheer fantasy. As opposed to the physical world, the imagination is seen as consisting of what is not real.”¹²¹ Addressing the practice of imaginative prayer, Boyd takes on three of the most common arguments against it, “To some, imaginative prayer seems fanciful, based on wishful thinking. To others, it seems dangerously close to aspects of New Age spirituality. And to others, it seems to involve idolatry.”¹²² In addition, Boyd continues to make the striking point that, “faith for contemporary Western Christians is generally a belief about something, not an experience of anything.”¹²³

¹²⁰ Puhl, Loc. 435-443.

¹²¹ Boyd, 128.

¹²² Ibid., 127.

¹²³ Ibid.

All this is ironic since Jesus invites seekers to use one's imaginations extensively through the means of parables and stories. In doing so, Jesus is not simply giving his followers mere information and doctrine to accept and memorize rationally, but giving invitation to move forward, to engage him relationally and experientially. Consider John 1 where two of John the Baptist's disciples ask Jesus where he is staying. Jesus, provides them more than information when he invites them to "come and see" for themselves.¹²⁴ They wanted information, but Jesus offered a personal, relational experience. Far too often evangelicals settle for an informational interaction but through the use of story and parables, and thereby the imagination, Jesus continually invites disciples into a personal, relational experience to "come and see."

Based on the work of Paul Ricoeur, Ming Yeung Cheung explains the intensity and transformative power of the imagination to shape one's way of life:

According to Ricoeur, this projective function of the imagination works on three levels: planning, motivation and the capacity to act. On the level of planning, imagination helps us to schematize the relation between different means and goals, and by playing in our imagination with different possible courses of action we can choose between them. Thus imagination is like a laboratory for playing with the future, similar to the way in which narratives play imaginatively with what could have happened in the past.¹²⁵

Into planning a transformed future, cooperating more with Christ's presence, is exactly where Ignatian prayer hopes to lead us. In this future, we are motivated to act by becoming more and more indifferent to the infinite variety of competing choices that hinder us from continually offering more of ourselves to Christ.

¹²⁴ John 1:39 (NIV).

¹²⁵ Ming Yeung Cheung, "Prolonging the Itinerary of Meaning," *Bijdragen: International Journal for Philosophy and Theology* 72, no. 4 (2011): 365.

Throughout the contemplations in *The Exercises*, Ignatius often ends them by giving instructions for a colloquy—a rich conversation between friends:¹²⁶

Imagine Christ our Lord present before you upon the cross, and begin to speak with him, asking how it is that though He is the Creator, He has stooped to become man, and to pass from eternal life to death here in time, that thus He might die for our sins. I shall also reflect upon myself and ask: “What have I done for Christ?” “What am I doing for Christ?” “What ought I to do for Christ?” As I behold Christ in this plight, nailed to the cross, I shall ponder upon what presents itself to my mind.¹²⁷

The importance of this should not be missed. One has just engaged her imagination to place herself at a formative scene in the gospels and rather than simply saying amen and going about her day she is asked to have a conversation—a colloquy with Jesus. More so, “in whatever form the colloquy is proposed it will always be marked by the personal and spontaneous quality of conversation between friends.”¹²⁸ The point here is to create intimacy, a heart connection that fosters a response in living while considering one’s past, present, and future involvement with Christ. Cheung highlights why this is crucial and reveals the interconnectedness between Scripture and prayer leading to a holistic practice in living, “The key to appropriating a text into one’s life . . . is the continuation of the imagination’s work from reading to acting.”¹²⁹ As one seeks to move beyond a rational ascent to doctrine and foster a holistic, intimate engagement with Christ, these imaginative contemplations become a catalyst. Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s classic

¹²⁶ As described by Ignatius, “The colloquy is made by speaking exactly as one friend speaks to another, or as a servant speaks to a master, now asking him for a favor, now blaming himself for some misdeed, now making known his affairs to him, and seeking advice in them.” Ignatius of Loyola, trans. Puhl, Loc. 284-285.

¹²⁷ Ignatius, trans. Puhl, Loc. 280.

¹²⁸ Ivens, 53.

¹²⁹ Cheung, 365.

statement melds the analogous thematic points of Willard shared earlier (see page 6), where Willard implores his readers to remember the importance of intimate engagement with Christ:

Discipleship means adherence to Christ and, because Christ is the object of that adherence, it must take the form of discipleship. An abstract theology, a doctrinal system, a general religious knowledge of the subject of grace or the forgiveness of sins, render discipleship superfluous, and in fact exclude any idea of discipleship whatsoever, and are essentially inimical to the whole conception of following Christ ... Christianity without the living Christ is inevitably Christianity without discipleship, and Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ. Christianity is not a doctrine but a person to whom I entrust myself without reserve.¹³⁰

Ironically, even with the rich biblical foundation and Christocentric nature of imaginative contemplation, many conservative evangelicals will be stymied by the word “contemplation.” Schwanda brings to our attention that contemplation has been common throughout church history and to keep the attention and trust of evangelicals, it is also important to note, common throughout the pages of Scripture.¹³¹ Schwanda continues,

The common thread throughout all of these detractors is a general contempt for anything related to spiritual disciplines or even remotely comparable to Roman Catholic spiritual practices. What is lacking is any awareness of how Protestants from the sixteenth century onward adapted the Roman Catholic practices that they inherited according to their own emerging Protestant sensibilities and theology.¹³²

Due to common biases, as described by Schwanda, further insight and assistance is needed for evangelicals to fully understand what is meant by contemplation. Throughout Church history, the literature mentions two key types of prayer experiences: *kataphatic* and *apophatic*. Apophatic prayer is seeking to transcend the mind and engage

¹³⁰ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Touchstone, 1959), 59.

¹³¹ Tom Schwanda, “‘To Gaze On the Beauty of the Lord’: The Evangelical Resistance and Retrieval of Contemplation,” *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care*, 7, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 62.

¹³² Schwanda, 66.

union with God at the innermost level of one's being. Kataphatic prayer, on the other hand, employs thoughts and images to better experience God.¹³³ Regarding the two types of prayer, Frederick G. McLeod instructs, "What is significant here are the ways that Ignatius uses reason, will, imagination, feelings and senses to provoke [relationally formative] experiences and then to channel these experiences toward specific goals. In other words, his method, techniques, and goals are *kataphatic*."¹³⁴ Willard's use of a familiar adage¹³⁵ gives a clarifying visual picture for imaginative contemplation, along Ignatian terms:

A popular saying is "Take time to smell the roses." What does this mean? To enjoy the rose it is necessary to focus on it and bring the rose as fully before our senses and mind as possible. To smell a rose you must get close, and you must linger. When we do so, we delight in it. We love it ... This simple illustration contains profound truth. If anyone is to love God and have his or her life filled with that love, God in his glorious reality must be brought before the mind and kept there in such a way that the mind takes root and stays fixed there.¹³⁶

The reality is when one prays using imaginative contemplation, he or she is living out in practical and profound ways, truths that are found throughout Scripture. Consider the following as a small sampling,

- "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46).
- "Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it ... Keep company with me and you'll learn to live" (Matthew 11, MSG).
- "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me" (John 10).
- "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." (Matthew 7)

¹³³ Frederick G. McLeod, "Apophatic or Kataphatic Prayer?" *Spirituality Today*, 38 (Spring 1986): 41.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹³⁵ It is worth stating again that many of these terms will stymie the typical evangelical audience. One will more effectively use illustrations, such as Willard provided, as opposed to technical terms that will hinder the conversation.

¹³⁶ Willard, 323.

And of course, what is now becoming an exemplar passage for us,

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.¹³⁷

Imaginative contemplation, in its own right, is a powerful means for connecting the head, heart and hands in a life with Jesus, yet there is another prevalent Ignatian prayer practice that opens an even wider reality for an intimate, holistic way of life with Jesus. The prayer experience is called *The Examen of Conscience* or *The Daily Examen* and more commonly, as will be referred here, the Examen.

The Examen

The Examen originates from the early portions of *The Spiritual Exercises*. Although it is not original to Ignatius, as forms of it were practiced in the Church at the time, his unique personal experience with it and how intensely he taught it to others forever associates his name with this formative practice.¹³⁸ A key element is how the Ignatian principle of finding God in all things, is truly brought to life through the practice of the Examen. Timothy Gallagher highlights these connections and explains how the Examen pulls one into working with God in the everyday moments of life,

[The Examen] is a way of praying that opens our eyes to God's daily self-revelation and increasingly clarifies for us our own responses to it. As this spiritual clarity grows, we gain a correspondingly greater freedom to respond and so to progress in our relationship with God. We find a path towards what our

¹³⁷ Romans 12:1-3 (NIV).

¹³⁸ Timothy M. Gallagher, *The Examen Prayer: Ignatian Wisdom for Our Lives Today* (New York: Crossroad Publishers, 2006), 21.

hearts most deeply desire; a growing relationship in love with God and so with the People of God.¹³⁹

The fundamental power and benefit of the Examen is taking the events of one's day and discerning one's cooperation and response to the activity of God therein. By default, one is seeking to not only know truth but to experience *The Truth* in the midst of everyday life.

Reflecting again on Paul's encouragement from Romans 12, in the Examen Christ's followers are not only offering the very moments of daily life to God but, as a *living* sacrifice, are fully engaged and intentionally participating in the process with one's whole being. As we will see, each section of the Examen enables the disciple of Jesus to gain a foundational understanding of Ignatian Christian formation and the ability to capture how this particular Christian formation pathway can continue to move evangelicals, specifically, forward in a holistic pursuit of Jesus as, "This is not about completing a task but about building a relationship."¹⁴⁰

"The first point¹⁴¹ is to give thanks to God our Lord for the favors received."¹⁴² A sense of gratitude is found throughout Ignatian spirituality. One approaches God not out of fear, or shame but out of a thankful heart for the grace and life given, living in, and about to receive. This is no clearer than in the three stated outcomes of the Contemplation of Divine Love, "seeking: (1) 'interior knowledge of all the great good I have received';

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Kevin F. O'Brien, *The Ignatian Adventure: Experiencing the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius in Daily Life* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2011), Kindle Loc. 615.

¹⁴¹ The most contemporary renditions of the Examen, offer a transition time where one is instructed to settle down from the distractions of the day through a time of silence.

¹⁴² Puhl, Loc. 239.

so that (2) I will be ‘stirred to profound gratitude’; so that this in turn will enable me (3) ‘to love and serve God’s Divine Majesty in all things.’”¹⁴³

Pertinent, especially for evangelicals, is how often in the Scriptures, the people of God are encouraged to “remember” the works of God. Remember, how God has protected and provided for them. Remember, how they are loved and who they are becoming. Throughout the New Testament, especially in the Pauline Epistles, a favorite among evangelicals, there is an overwhelming sense of thankfulness and gratitude, for all that God has, is and will do, in which one is challenged to emulate and share.¹⁴⁴

“The second point is to ask for grace to know my sins and to rid myself of them.”¹⁴⁵ Proceeding from point one, with a renewed cognizance of the goodness of God, one can now turn and ask for grace, for God’s help, in becoming increasingly aware of those things that hinder from enjoying the goodness of God and bringing God glory. A growing spiritual honesty is present, as one asks for grace, with the admission that one is often blind to his or her own sin and thereby in need of God’s revelatory light.

“The third point is to demand an account of my soul from the time of rising up to the present examination. I should go over one hour after another, one period after another. The thoughts should be examined first, then the words, and finally, the deeds...”¹⁴⁶ At this point in the Examen, in a place of love (first point) and a grace

¹⁴³ Haight, 276.

¹⁴⁴ Consider Romans 7:25; 1 Corinthians 1:4, 10:16; 2 Corinthians 2:14, 9:15; Ephesians 1:16; Colossians 1:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

¹⁴⁵ Puhl, Loc. 239.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

empowered commitment to Christ (second point), one is ready to prayerfully review the day in the same spirit as King David's prayer from Psalm 139:

Investigate my life, O God,
 find out everything about me;
 Cross-examine and test me,
 get a clear picture of what I'm about;
 See for yourself whether I've done anything wrong—
 then guide me on the road to eternal life.¹⁴⁷

Just as one senses the passion from David's request, this daily review is anything but a cold reflection on one's day with regret. Rather there is an orientation towards an intentional, growing discernment of interaction with God throughout the day, aided by a growing discernment of what Ignatius called "consolations and desolations":

We recognize that there is properly spiritual consolation when the soul takes fire in the love of its Creator by some inner motion and then cannot love any creature but because of him. Also when tears are shed, provoking that love, either because they come from sorrow with regard to sins, or from the meditation of Christ's passion or from whatever other cause that is rightly disposed for the worship in honor of God. Finally, any increase of faith, hope, and charity can also be called consolation; equally all joyfulness, which usually incites the soul to meditation on heavenly things, to zeal for salvation to be at rest in peace with God.

On the contrary, any obscuring of the soul, any disturbance any instigation to inferior or earthy things, must be called spiritual desolation; likewise, any disquietude and agitation or temptation leading to mistrust of salvation and to the expelling of hope and charity; and thus the soul feels itself becoming sad, tepid, and apathetic and almost despairing of the clemency of God himself, its Creator. In fact, as desolation is opposed to consolation, so, also, all thoughts proceeding from each of them are directly opposed to one another.¹⁴⁸

The main direction of consolations is towards a life reflective of Christ's love in every way; a life that is exhibited by a grace-filled, outward-action towards others.

¹⁴⁷ Psalm 139:23-24 (MSG).

¹⁴⁸ Pierre Wolff, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius* (Liguori, MO: Triumph, 1997), 80.

Desolations pull away from God, filling one with self-centeredness and contempt for the life of Christ.¹⁴⁹

Self-awareness is crucial for any type of formation process and even more so in Christian formation. As one reviews her day she is asking God, as David asked, to “get a clear picture of what I’m about.”¹⁵⁰ In this endeavor, one not only notes when she feels near or distant from God, but seeks to discern the illusive *why* for each instance. Clues are gained as to why, by paying attention to various emotions and feelings throughout the day, which Wakefield reminds his readers, are closely reflected in one’s bodily responses, “As flesh-and-bone people, we respond to God with our bodies as well as with our minds. There is much to gain through paying attention to what we are saying with our bodies and feeling in our emotional responses.”¹⁵¹ This is asserted by the Apostle Paul as he shared in Corinth, “[Our bodies] were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies.”¹⁵²

“The fourth point is to ask pardon of God our Lord for my faults.”¹⁵³ Order, once again, is important. One seeks forgiveness for sins only after being reminded of God’s goodness and provision towards us. From a place of loving acceptance one now asks God to forgive how he has offended the relationship with his sins. How has he willfully inhibited the flow of loving grace to control his actions and thoughts towards others and

¹⁴⁹ Lonsdale, 98.

¹⁵⁰ Psalm 139:23-24 (MSG).

¹⁵¹ Wakefield, Loc. 539-541.

¹⁵² 1 Corinthians 6:13 (NLT).

¹⁵³ Puhl, Loc. 239.

self. The following prayer by St. Francis Xavier¹⁵⁴ captures the essence of this portion of the Examen and leads one into the essence of the fifth point,

My God, I love you above all things
and I hate and detest with my whole soul
the sins by which I have offended you,
because they are displeasing in your sight,
who are supremely good and worthy to be loved.
I acknowledge that I should love you
with a love beyond all others,
and that I should try to prove this love to you.
I consider you in my mind as infinitely greater
than everything in the world,
no matter how precious or beautiful.
I therefore firmly and irrevocably resolve
never to consent to offend you
or do anything that may displease your sovereign goodness
and place me in danger of falling from your holy grace,
in which I am fully determined
to persevere to my dying breath. Amen.¹⁵⁵

“The fifth point will be to resolve to amend with the Grace of God. Close with an Our Father.”¹⁵⁶ Up to this point in the Examen, prayer has mainly been a reflective look back on the day and with God’s grace and help has gleaned spiritual insight into where God’s presence has been and to what degree one has moved in the flow of God’s grace and love. Being fully aware of God’s presence, grace, and love, one concludes this time of open, soulful discovery with a commitment to live tomorrow in light of the discoveries of today, with and by God’s empowering grace. The pray-er is committing and choosing

¹⁵⁴ Francis Xavier was one of the original companions and co-founders of the Jesuits with Ignatius.

¹⁵⁵ Michael Harter, ed., *Hearts on Fire: Praying with Jesuits* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1993), 22.

¹⁵⁶ Puhl, Loc. 239.

to “work out [one’s] salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in [us] to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”¹⁵⁷

This point of resolve and intention is crucial to one’s formation for it fosters a holistic response engaging all aspects of one’s being—head, heart, and hands. Willard captures the fundamental importance of this in *The Divine Conspiracy*,

But in the last analysis we fail to be disciples only because we do not decide to be. We do not intend to be disciples. It is the power of the decision and the intention over our life that is missing . . . it could well prove to be a major turning point in our life if we would . . . ask ourselves if we really do intend to be life students of Jesus. Do we really intend to do and be all of the high things we profess to believe in? Have we *decided* to do them? When did we decide it? And how did we implement that decision?¹⁵⁸

Each day, through the Examen, disciples bring themselves to a potentially transformative place before God. Point five leads into tomorrow with a focused intention to seek God’s grace and presence, and continue the cooperative journey with Jesus. The Examen fleshes out in a very practical way what is at the heart of Ignatian Christian formation, “[a] means of preparing and disposing our soul to rid itself of all its disordered affections and then, after their removal, of seeking and finding God’s will in the ordering of our life . . .”¹⁵⁹ This is presented in such a way as to bring one’s whole being, including thoughts, feelings, and passions into the process. Ignatian prayer practices, properly understood and conveyed can be a catalyst for evangelicals to engage and dispose their whole life in cooperation with Jesus.

¹⁵⁷ Philippians 2:12b-13 (NIV). Brackets mine.

¹⁵⁸ Willard, 299.

¹⁵⁹ Ganss, 121.

Ivens provides us with a path¹⁶⁰ to lead evangelicals, which maintains the holistic nature of Ignatian prayer practices and moreover helps to guard against many evangelical tendencies that would diminish the holistic nature of these practices. The first is to be sure the Examen is seen as a way to add habits leading towards spiritual growth and not merely editing negative ones. The Examen is not simply about stopping one from sinning, but continually growing, in discernment for God's active presence throughout the everyday moments of life. Far too often the concern of evangelicals is on avoiding sinful acts, as opposed to becoming transformed. It is a nuance but an important one, which begs the question, What are disciples practicing the presence of? One's own will power in an attempt to not sin, or the presence and thereby the power of the resurrected Christ, who alone transforms?

The Examen is not a replacement but a continued aid to enhance whatever is a help to inner freedom at every level.¹⁶¹ "Indifference" is the term Ignatius used to describe this inner freedom. Modern ears tend to have an immediate, negatively imbued definition to hearing the word "indifference." Despite what modern ears might hear, Ignatius describes indifference as being, "free from any disordered attachment, so that I am not more inclined or attracted to accepting the thing before me than to refusing it ... I should be as though at the centre of a pair of scales, ready to follow the direction I receive to move to the glory and praise of God"¹⁶² Therefore, as one becomes more and more indifferent, she will stop clinging to people, possessions, and position and grow

¹⁶⁰ Ivens, 34.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid., 139.

into living open-handedly towards God alone. Subsequently, she begins to realize that her transformation by God's grace, through the Examen, is outward focused. This study suggests that evangelical Christ followers practice the Examen so that they may cooperate with God in the service of others more freely and use whatever is at their disposal for God's glory.¹⁶³

Service

With the engagement of any aspect of Christian formation it is crucial that one realize how the individual exercises are never an end in themselves, but a pathway to something more. Ignatian Christian formation is especially good at this. Looking back to the Principle and Foundation, Ignatius writes, "Our one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we are created."¹⁶⁴ Over the years the Jesuits formulated a name for this pathway, *Magis*. In Latin, *Magis* plainly means "more."¹⁶⁵ In reference to Ignatian Christian formation the term means *more doing in direct correlation to a growing awareness and responsiveness to loving and serving God* in the everyday moments of life. Each aspect of Ignatian formation guides the Christ follower towards an outward demonstration of how he or she is growing to love God *more*. In this section, the outward journey for more is highlighted, by looking at one of the final contemplations of *The Exercises*—The Contemplation to Attain the Love of God.

Shared definitions are helpful for understanding and clarity. With that in mind, "attain is used in the sense not of 'obtain' but rather of 'reaching to' or 'arriving at.' The

¹⁶³ Ibid., 33.

¹⁶⁴ Puhl, Loc. 178.

¹⁶⁵ Fleming, Loc. 288.

love to be attained is a growing love on our part for God.”¹⁶⁶ This is a pathway into the normal flow of everyday living, where one not only loves God in word, but demonstrates this love in action. Haight expands on this as he brings to light a helpful focus,

Two aphorisms of Ignatian spirituality [that] are drawn from The Contemplation [of Divine Love]. The first says that one should find God in all things. The second says that, in doing so, a person engages in a form of ‘contemplation in action.’ ... The Contemplation should not lead to a peak experience that will be followed by the let-down of ordinary life. It provides a path by which one finds God in the world, in ordinary life, ‘in all things.’¹⁶⁷

From their earliest days, the Jesuits had the motto, “The world is our house.”¹⁶⁸ In their context they were atypical from other monastic orders, in that they never sought to build monasteries and steal away from the world. Rather their desire and practice was to be *contemplatives in action*, going into the world where they started hospitals, schools, and engaged in other social services; all the while helping others to discern and then engage where God was present and active.¹⁶⁹ It comes as no surprise, then, that as one engages in The Contemplation of Divine Love—at the end of *The Exercises*—one is really at the beginning. For The Contemplation forces the Christ follower to *lead out*, into the flow of daily life. Just as in the final point of the the Examen, the disciple looks to begin tomorrow with a plan for living differently while, “resolving to amend with the grace of God.”¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ Ivens, 172.

¹⁶⁷ Haight, 277.

¹⁶⁸ O’Malley, 46.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 73.

¹⁷⁰ Puhl, Loc. 239.

The whole dynamic of this final contemplation of *The Exercises*, is to come to terms with the covenantal action of God's love for us and our love for God.¹⁷¹ There is a familiar, reciprocal dynamic in this that is helpful to comprehend. Garnering from the context of The Contemplation, one has just finished the fourth week's reflections, focusing on the resurrected Christ. Now, in the reality of the resurrection, in partnership with the risen Christ, she enters back into the normal flow of life. This is important to understand for as Haight noted earlier, The Contemplation is a transition to normal life and not a climatic spiritual experience.¹⁷² Life with Jesus is grounded in the mundane of the everyday. An awakening takes place when the Christ follower ceases chasing the extraordinary and realizes God is in the ordinary that surrounds him/her on every side.

Table 1

Themes of The Weeks	Points of The Contemplation
Week 1: God Bestowing gifts.	Remember all that God has given.
Week 2: God Present in the gifts.	See where God is present.
Week 3: God Working through the gifts.	Consider how God works through all things.
Week 4: God as the Source of the gifts.	See how God is the source of all we have.
Moving from God is Transcendent to God is Immanent.	

As one prays through The Contemplation, one is praying through a review of the last four weeks of *The Exercises*'s key graces and reflections.¹⁷³ A summary of the

¹⁷¹ English, 238.

¹⁷² Haight, 277.

¹⁷³ See Table 1 on page 64.

Contemplation is found in the second prelude to it, “seeking: (1) ‘interior knowledge of all the great good I have received’; so that (2) I will be ‘stirred to profound gratitude’; so that this in turn will enable me (3) ‘to love and serve God’s Divine Majesty [more] in all things.’”¹⁷⁴ One seeks inner knowledge, a self-awareness enabled by grace, through the Spirit of God, to fully comprehend what God has done for and with the believer in Jesus. Being so moved by this reality, one is compelled to seek God all the more wherever he or she finds oneself, for God is in all things active and present.

There is a movement from God’s transcendence, found in the Principle and Foundation at the start of *The Exercises*, to a realization and an experiencing of God’s immanence found in The Contemplation. For in The Contemplation, the Christ follower is guided to look into the everyday moments of life to find God present all round. Poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning captures this essence when she crafted, “Earth’s crammed with heaven, And every common bush afire with God, But only he who sees takes off his shoes; The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.”¹⁷⁵ Experiencing God so unexpectedly near, catalyzes a growing sense of love, gratitude, and a commitment to continue to seek and share the ubiquitous presence of God with all.

To empower evangelicals to engage with this, one can take special notice of finding these ideas throughout the New Testament. In Romans 12 Paul encourages, “Therefore . . . in view of God’s mercy, offer your bodies as a living sacrifice . . .”¹⁷⁶ As a result of the dynamic, transformational truths centered upon Jesus, as addressed in

¹⁷⁴ Haight, 276.

¹⁷⁵ Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* (New York: C.S. Francis & Company, 1857), 275.

¹⁷⁶ Romans 12:1-2 (NIV).

Romans 1-11, where God's mercy, grace, and love is palpable, what else can one do but respond with great gratitude, by offering one's whole self, unreserved, to God? Ignatius provides a prayer to live into these truths as part of the first point of The Contemplation, "Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O Lord, I return it. All is Thine, dispose of it wholly according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and Thy grace, for this is sufficient for me."¹⁷⁷

Correspondingly, we find Paul's awareness of the intimate, gratitude laden, reciprocal action between God and us in Philippians 2,

What I'm getting at, friends, is that you should simply keep on doing what you've done from the beginning. When I was living among you, you lived in responsive obedience. Now that I'm separated from you, keep it up. Better yet, redouble your efforts. Be energetic in your life of salvation, reverent, and sensitive before God. That energy is God's energy, an energy deep within you, God himself willing and working at what will give him the most pleasure.¹⁷⁸

and Colossians 3,

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.¹⁷⁹

In each of these beautifully challenging passages, one finds the reciprocal interplay of God's movement and the believer's following. When one intentionally maintains a receptive posture of humility and openness to God's grace, and is engaged by

¹⁷⁷ Puhl, Loc. 729.

¹⁷⁸ Philippians 2:11-2 (MSG).

¹⁷⁹ Colossians 3:15-17 (NIV).

grace, one is then empowered to share, celebrate, and love God and those around. It is to the benefit of those being served in our faith communities to consider how well one's practices of formation enable others to be aware of and engage in this reciprocal love response with God.

Far from this gratitude-filled awareness, with many evangelicals, there seems to be a "bar-code faith practice".¹⁸⁰ In this metaphor Willard draws parallel with how many conservative Christians believe God treats their relationship as a grocery checker does a bar-code on a package. It does not matter what is in the package, all that matters is what is scanned from the bar-code. The goal then becomes to get the right information in my bar-code so when I am "scanned," at my death, I'm passed through to heaven, as long as I have the right information in the bar-code. This has the byproduct of creating spiritual practices as an end in themselves, versus engaging in them as a way of life with Jesus. Thereby faith practice is one of accomplishing and obtaining, as opposed to cooperating and becoming.

Summary

Ignatian Christian formation will help evangelicals consistently have a Christian formation process that fosters a relational intimacy with Christ engaging the cognitive, emotive, and ethical aspects of living. From start to finish, Ignatian Christian formation provides this holistic framework. There is a reciprocal energy connecting one's cognitive, emotive, and ethical way of life after Jesus while engaging in Ignatian practices. By infusing the Ignatian way of proceeding with evangelicalism's mutual affinities for

¹⁸⁰ Willard, 36.

Scripture, prayer, and service these central practices for Christian formation are never an end in themselves but all a means to become *magis* – more; more loving, more in tune, and responsive to ever growing levels of God’s presence in the ordinary moments of life; and more like Jesus. It is for this reason that weaving Ignatian Christian formation practices into the evangelical culture can be transformative for churches, groups, and individuals.

Sections 4 and 5 of this dissertation give an example of how Ignatian Christian formation practices can be introduced and experienced in an evangelical setting. The proposed artifact is an interactive iBook to be used as a guide for individuals, small group facilitators, and Church leadership. The iBook uses the common affinities present between Ignatian Christian formation and evangelicalism—Scripture, prayer, and service—giving practical steps and experiences that can be adapted to their own setting.

SECTION 4: TRACK 02 ARTIFACT DESCRIPTION

Section 3 concluded with the claim that by infusing an Ignatian way of proceeding with the mutual affinities evangelicalism has for Scripture, prayer, and service, a more holistic Christian formation practice can be catalyzed. Section 4 describes the practical implications of this endeavor via the Artifact prescribed in the dissertation guidelines for Track 02.¹⁸¹ The aspiration of this study is to help evangelicals consistently observe or participate in Christian formation practice, which fosters relational intimacy with Christ engaging the cognitive, emotive, and ethical aspects of lives.

Realizing that the average person cannot disengage from one's normal life for the prescribed thirty days to experience *The Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius allowed for flexibility to meet personal situations and needs. The eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth annotations from *The Exercises* in particular, offer these variables.¹⁸² Borrowing from this practice that has continued to see creative development and adaption through the centuries,¹⁸³ the proposed Artifact is an interactive iBook¹⁸⁴ to be used as a guide for individuals, small groups, and Church communities. Just as today, few have the luxury to withdraw from one's family or responsibilities for a prolonged spiritual retreat, the iBook will leverage the Ignatian and evangelical common affinities of Scripture,

¹⁸¹ "Track 02 Dissertation Guidelines," George Fox Evangelical Seminary, June 3, 2013, accessed September 1, 2015, <https://foxfiles.georgefox.edu/SEM/DMin/diss/track02/trk2guidelines.htm>.

¹⁸² Puhl, Loc. 143.

¹⁸³ This is so pervasive that there is a term coined of a "Nineteenth-annotation retreat."

¹⁸⁴ See <https://www.apple.com/ibooks/> for an overview of iBook capabilities.

prayer, and service giving practical steps and experiences that can be adapted in the midst of the everyday moments of one's life.

iBooks are a fitting medium for the topic at hand, as they are meant to be experiential and offer many ways for the reader to interact with its content. Just as *The Exercises* were not meant to be simply read but were to be participated in communally and experientially¹⁸⁵ so too is the composition of this iBook.

Being well aware of the circumspection that many evangelical churches, especially on the more conservative side of the spectrum, have for the current trends in Christian formation, as well as an accustomed anti-Catholic bias, the speakers' adage, *know your audience* takes on a new soberness that will be addressed practically in the way and form this message is being delivered. The following threefold process has been implemented while shaping readers' interactive experience in the iBook format: 1. Lead in, 2. Help remain, 3. Lead out. The author anticipates and "leads in" by acknowledging the tensions, doubts and concerns sure to be present at the beginning of the experiential spiritual journey the reader is about to take. In light of the sensitivities of conservative evangelical churches, this is done always with an acknowledgement of Scriptural connectedness, related expressions throughout church history and, as much as possible, examples of when Jesus has also reflected and informs what is being shared.

The intentional approach of "lead ins" might help the reader past hesitations and initial objections, still, in the midst of some practices or experiences this approach will only bring the Christ follower so far, especially as God starts, "knocking the house about

¹⁸⁵ Ganss, 53.

in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make much sense,”¹⁸⁶ as C.S. Lewis so aptly puts it. This is when the written discourse is even more important to *help remain*. In doing so, the reader participates in rephrasing what was stated from the *lead in* section with additional permission that, “it is okay to be feeling the way you are right now, but instead of avoiding the tensions lean into them and work through the inner resistance you are feeling right now and see what God does.” Visualize a person on a log crossing a river. In the middle of the log she experiences a sense of vertigo and uneasiness. As her spiritual mentor, you come along side and gently hold her hand until she is able to regain balance and continue on. In a very real sense *Create Space*, in an iBook format, is designed to companion the reader and thus, *help remain*.

How many binders does a typical church leader have commemorating the number of conferences and seminars he or she has been to? How many of these said binders, are actually put into action on a continual basis? *Lead out* is all about putting into action, in the everyday moments of life, what was just experienced and learned. The intentional *lead out* elements inherent in the iBook *Create Space* insures practical, tangible, doable next steps. The key for successful *lead outs* is realizing one size does not fit all. It is not necessarily the same next step for everyone. More likely, two to three next steps are necessary based on an individual’s or a community’s experience and maturity level with Christian formation practices. One must also consider how God has been working in and with oneself as well.

The format of *Create Space* is engineered with a two-part framework. The first is the repository, which is the iBook itself. Again an iBook is a medium that fosters an

¹⁸⁶ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (London: Fount, 1997), 176.

engagement with one's whole self and enables various ways to share and interact with the content. The second centralizing feature of the iBook's framework is this author's original model of UpReach, InReach, Outreach (UIO) Paradigm of Christian Formation. This is what translates the core concepts from this dissertation in a way that will help evangelicals across the spectrum to engage with the material. Over and over again in the Scriptures, people of faith are encouraged to respond appropriately to who God is and what God has done and is doing through Jesus (UpReach); consider who they are before God (InReach); and consider the state and plight of others responding in a Christlike manner (OutReach). Infusing Ignatian formation practices into what evangelicals are already passionate about will help those engaged to reach up to love God passionately (heart); reach in to love oneself and grow in self-awareness (head); and reach out to love others sacrificially (hands).

UIO Paradigm of Christian Formation

Emotive	Cognitive	Ethical
UpReach	InReach	OutReach
Heart	Head	Hands
Love of God	Love of Self	Love of Others

The chapters for the iBook, *Create Space* will be as follows:

Chapter 1: Come and See

Overview of how to use the iBook and introduction to *Create Space*, explaining key ideas.

Chapter 2: Ponderings As We Create Space

Collection of stories, metaphors and ideas to inform and shape our understanding and practice of Christian formation, and creating space in the every day moments of life.

Chapter 3: UpReach

After a brief explanation of UpReach, this chapter offers practices of faith through life that reach into the depths of one's heart enabling them to grow and express their love for God especially through worship and prayer.

Chapter 4: InReach

After a brief explanation of InReach, this chapter offers practices of faith through life which enables one to grow in their knowledge and understanding of God and themselves.

Chapter 5: OutReach

After a brief explanation of OutReach, this chapter offers practices of faith through life that engages one in the Christ like loving service of others.

Chapter 6: Retreats

Using *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius as inspiration, this chapter provides a guided retreat for an individual or group for a day and weekend experience.

By using an iBook to infuse evangelical communities with Ignatian formational practices, a holistic quality is gained—a quality that engages not just the mind but seeks to engage the heart, and leads to Christ empowered action into the normal flow of one's daily life. As disciples grow in awareness and cooperation with the Spirit in everyday events, chores, and responsibilities of life, we are being drawn to go further out as the Spirit leads into all truth to follow Jesus beyond the words of the Bible into real time:

The Father has given me all these things to do and say . . . No one knows the Son the way the Father does, nor the Father the way the Son does. But I'm not keeping it to myself; I'm ready to go over it line by line with anyone willing to listen. Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and

work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁷ Matthew 11:27-30 (MSG).

SECTION 5: TRACK 02 ARTIFACT SPECIFICATION

Section 5 of the Written portion of this dissertation follows the Non-Fiction Book Template provided by the George Fox University Doctor of Ministry Program.¹⁸⁸ Being a template, the formatting of Section 5 deviates from the Turabian style used in the rest of the Written Statement to ascribe to the guidelines of the provided template, as close as possible for that of an iBook.

Title:

Create Space: An Experiential Guide Into A Holistic Way of Christian Formation

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Overview:

“Come and see,” was the response of Jesus that day on the road. Being pointed to Jesus by John the Baptist who had been their mentor and guide, they asked Jesus for some information, “Where are you staying?” Jesus extended to them an invitation to come and see for themselves. An invitation that moved them beyond black and white information to a full color relational experience that had a transformational impact on their lives and the world.

This is the purpose of this iBook - to help an individual, small group or church community create space to intentionally engage with Jesus in a holistic way. Through the interactive and experiential dynamics an iBook offers, *Create Space* provides exercises in UpReach, InReach and OutReach for the readers to fully engage with, that are not typically found in the average ebook. Far too often we settle for an informational interaction about Jesus. But Jesus continually invites us into a personal, relational

¹⁸⁸ <https://foxfiles.georgefox.edu/SEM/DMin/diss/materials/Track02-Book-Proposal-Template-Nonfiction.doc>

experience to “come and see.” To participate with him fully with our heart, head, and hands.

Purpose:

- Provide a pathway that connects the head, heart, and hands for Christian formation.
- Translate Ignatian spirituality in an evangelical friendly manner.
- Provide practical and experiential ways to create space for individuals, small groups, and church communities.

Promotion and Marketing:

This book can be easily promoted on social media venues such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and the author’s website.

Competition:

- *Spiritual Formation Workbook* by James Bryan Smith. Pub. Harper One, 2007. Using six dimensions of the spiritual life found in Christ’s life and Christian tradition, Smith offers this starter guide in establishing a spiritual formation group.
- *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us*, by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun. Pub. IVP Books, 2005. Calhoun provides an overview of what can be considered classic spiritual disciplines offering practical insights and applications to experience them.
- *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*, by M. Robert Mulholland. Pub. IVP Books, 1993. Mulholland walks us through a definition of spiritual formation and then provides a practical understanding and encouragement to engage in classic spiritual disciplines.

Uniqueness:

The uniqueness of this iBook comes from enabling the reader to experience what is being shared about Christian formation through the various mediums an iBook offers. It is also designed for the individual, small group or church community. While touching on classic spiritual disciplines, it offers unique experiences to engage in those disciplines.

Endorsements:

I am confident that the following active members of Christian publishing will read and endorse this iBook.

- Greg Thornton, President of Moody Press
- Tracey Bianchi, author and pastor
- Alicia Britt Chole, author and speaker

Book Format:

iBooks are a rich resource that offer many ways for the reader to experience and interact with it's content and is thereby a fitting medium for the topic at hand. A sampling these ways are:

- *Reflective Journaling* to offer space to pause and capture thoughts and impressions.
- *Scrolling Sidebar* containing prayers, scriptures, and additional details to engage with.
- *Galleries* are a series of curated images used to enhance and illustrate a particular section.
- *Interactive Images* enable you to interact with an image to find opportunities for additional insights and observations to ponder.
- *The Glossary* is a storehouse of additional resources, links, cross-references, interactives, ideas, and citations used to enhance and compliment the main body of the iBook.
- *Interactive Media Windows* could contain a website to explore, a movie clip to watch or a presentation to journey through.

Just as *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius were not meant to be simply read but were to be participated communally and experientially, so too is the composition of this iBook. We are invited to create space to hear, listen, and follow Christ in our own lives, but we are never meant to engage in this endeavor alone. Everything in this iBook is meant for the individual, small group, and larger church community. As a result, the opening chapter contains a special section just for small group or church leaders. Likewise in Chapters 3-6 there will be additional resources and considerations to be explored beyond the individual.

Chapter Outlines:

Chapter 1: Come and See!

Overview of how to use the iBook and introduction to *Create Space* explaining key ideas.

Chapter 2: Ponderings As We Create Space

Collection of stories, metaphors, and ideas to inform and shape our understanding and practice of Christian formation and creating space in the every day moments of life.

Chapter 3: UpReach

After a brief explanation of UpReach, this chapter offers practices of faith through life that reach into the depths of one's heart enabling them to grow and express their love for God especially through worship and prayer.

Chapter 4: InReach

After a brief explanation of InReach, this chapter offers practices of faith through life, which enables one to grow in their knowledge and understanding of God and themselves.

Chapter 5: OutReach

After a brief explanation of OutReach, this chapter offers practices of faith through life that engages one in the Christlike loving service of others.

Chapter 6: Retreats

Using *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius as inspiration, this chapter provides a guided retreat for an individual or group for a day and weekend experience.

Intended Readers:

- **Primary Audience:** Evangelical Christians who have an interest in Christian formation. Special attention is given to those who lead a small group or church community. Having the medium as an iBook, it is also noted the interested audience will also tend to be more technologically comfortable.
- **Secondary Audience:** Those who have an interest in Ignatian spirituality with a non-Catholic background.

Manuscript:

The manuscript is 100% complete and will be available for download in iTunes by May 2016. Estimated word count is 18,000.

Author Bio:

Eric Haskins is a candidate for a Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Spiritual formation through George Fox University. Eric holds a Masters in Educational Ministries from Wheaton College and a BA in Bible and Theology from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Haskins has recently formed a nonprofit called Create Space which comes along side churches, groups, and individuals enabling them to enhance how they consider Christian formation. When not facilitating a spiritual retreat, Eric has a passion for strategy board games and grilling. Eric can be found through his website, www.createspaceforlife.org.

Future Projects:

A Family's Guide to Creating Space - A version of this current work that helps focus the experiences and ideas to be used by the family with children from preschool to teens.

A Church's Guide to Creating Space - Designed specifically for church leaders, this work will focus on how to address common church practices that tend to collapse a space rather than create space for those present to interact with Christ.

Space Savers - A series of short (5 minute) blog posts and/or Podcasts that help people experiment and experience practical ways to create space for Christ in the every day moments of their lives.

SECTION 6: POSTSCRIPT

From start to finish the faculty and staff at George Fox have done a superior job at helping us prepare for the writing of this dissertation. Particularly helpful was the on-going dialogue and prescribed dissertation work from the opening semester and continuing throughout our last semester. Each of our dissertation specific classes, with the formal and informal feedback received therein, helped to shape and focus this dissertation to a manageable and beneficial thesis.

The journey of this dissertation began years ago in grad school at Wheaton College. During a summer class on Christian Spirituality, I read *The Exercises*, which initiated my own personal exploration into Ignatian Spirituality. A number of years later I find myself on the other end of a series of guided Ignatian retreats, my own Christian formation having been greatly shaped, influenced, and enhanced. The principle impact, and subsequently the focus of this dissertation, has been a pathway towards a holistic practice of Christian formation, which addresses and connects the cognitive, emotional, and ethical aspects of my life. I have found the process of creating this dissertation to be helpful for revealing and strengthening Ignatian spirituality's natural affinity and natural segue to the world of evangelicalism. What has been especially revealing for me is the affirmation of the holistic nature of Ignatian spirituality and how easily it can be shared with evangelicals as they take into consideration their love for Scripture, prayer, and service.

That being said, transforming the academic tone and focus of the Written Statement to a readable and experiential iBook proved to be more challenging than I first expected. One reason was simply in learning and leveraging the medium (an iBook) to its

fullest potential. An iBook is still a relatively new technology for most, yet it is a platform well suited over that of a typical ebook, to not only teach Christian formation but also proving attractive to our technology driven and experiential seeking culture.¹⁸⁹ As a result, creating an iBook moves beyond writing to designing the experiential elements, forcing the author to thoughtfully take these dynamics into account as well.

The second reason this dissertation project was particularly challenging is that the iBook's focus is the local church. Translating the academically focused written statement to a more popular rendering in that of the iBook format took much experimentation. In the end, I am happy with what has been produced and look forward to testing it with various groups in size and focus to add further enhancements based on their recommendations.

Post-doctoral work, I would like to center my attention upon two points that have already been mentioned. The first is continuing to expand and deepen the commonalities between Ignatian spirituality and evangelicalism. As is no surprise, in reality, there is a lot more that can be explored, explained, and experienced between Ignatian spirituality and evangelicalism. In seeking to expand this bridge, the hope is to foster a continued expansion with technology such as iBooks and other experiential means. Doing so effectively reflects Ignatian spirituality as it enables an experiential and full-bodied living of what is taught. Many times this is missing in much of evangelicalism as has been shown throughout this dissertation.

I have recently formed the non-profit, Create Space. Through this platform I will continue to expand the current project with the addition of Ignatian flavored retreats for

¹⁸⁹ See Section 5 for a summary of the experiential nature of an iBook.

evangelicals. The last section of the iBook contains a guide for such a retreat inspired by *The Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius. Having been on a number of formal Ignatian retreats hosted at Jesuit retreat centers, I am not only well suited to design and lead Ignatian style retreats for evangelicals but excited about the possibilities knowing first hand the impact retreats have on one's Christian formation.

As I end this dissertation my hopes and prayers are expressed through the impassioned plea by Ignatius, "Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O Lord, I return it. All is Thine, dispose of it wholly according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and Thy grace, for this is sufficient for me."¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ Puhl, Loc. 729-731.

APPENDIX A

The Principle and Foundation from the Spiritual Exercises

The Principle and Foundation at the beginning of the First Week of *The Exercises*, plays an important introductory role challenging one with the ultimate purpose of life and all creation. The Principle and Foundation seeks to enable those entering into *The Exercises* to consider the goal of life as to live and partner with God beginning now and into eternity. Thereby we strive to leverage all of life towards growing in discernment, seeking to make each decision in light of whether it will lead towards greater fulfillment and engagement with God's way of life.

Following is the original by Ignatius and also a contemporary rendering of the Principle and Foundation by Protestant Pastor James Wakefield. These are set in juxtaposition to one another to help capture subtle nuances in meaning contemporary readers might initially miss.

Original by Ignatius of Loyola: Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph*, trans. Louis J. Puhl, (Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 1951), Kindle Loc., 178-183.

Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul. The other things on the face of the earth are created for man to help him in attaining the end for which he is created. Hence, man is to make use of them in as far as they help him in the attainment of his end, and he must rid himself of them in as far as they prove a hindrance to him. Therefore, we must make ourselves indifferent to all created things, as far as we are allowed free choice and are not under any prohibition. Consequently, as far as we are concerned, we should not prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honor to dishonor, a long life to a short life. The same holds for all other things. Our one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which we are created.

Contemporary Rendering By James Wakefield: James L. Wakefield and Ignatius, *Sacred Listening: Discovering the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006), Loc. 2566-2572, Kindle.

We were created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to experience salvation. All things on earth are created for us and to help us praise, reverence, and serve God. We are to use them as much as they help us in this service, and ought to rid ourselves of anything that hinders our service. For this it is necessary that we become indifferent to all created things so that, on our part, we want not health rather than sickness, riches rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, long rather than short life, and so in all the rest; desiring and choosing only what helps us praise, reverence, and serve God. This detachment comes only if we have a stronger attachment; therefore our one dominating desire and fundamental choice must be to live in the loving presence and wisdom of Christ, our Savior.

APPENDIX B

John 15 and Romans 12

Table 1: John 15:1-8

New International Version	The Message
<p>1 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.</p> <p>5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.</p>	<p>1-3 “I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. He cuts off every branch of me that doesn’t bear grapes. And every branch that is grape-bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more. You are already pruned back by the message I have spoken.</p> <p>4 “Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can’t bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can’t bear fruit unless you are joined with me.</p> <p>5-8 “I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you’re joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can’t produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. This is how my Father shows who he is—when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.</p>

Table 2: Romans 12:1-2

New International Version	The Message
<p>1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.</p>	<p>1-2 So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.</p>

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