

Spiritual Formation Sebagai Strategi Pendidikan Kristen

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Abstract

Most Christian schools and colleges have goals of fostering the spiritual formation of their students. This paper discusses the meaning of spiritual formation and factors which impinge on ongoing spiritual development in Christian educational establishments. Research and insights from the social sciences are examined and applied where appropriate as tools for Christian educators to understand how not all people will experience spirituality in the same way. A multi-faceted strategy is suggested in order to meaningfully facilitate Christian formation in as many students as possible.

Key Words: Christian education, spiritual formation, spirituality, social science, spiritual disciplines, culture

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INTRODUCTION

Whether in Asia, America, Africa or Europe, Christian education faces challenges in terms of credibility, authenticity and relevance. The twenty-first century could be termed the century of education, as greater percentages of the world's population are educated. Average years of schooling has grown worldwide from 1970 to 2009, with the average number of years of schooling by both men and women almost doubling in that time, according to 2010 research by the Washington Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation. A 2009 UNESCO report on higher education concludes that there has been a revolution in higher education in the past half century, marked by massification, diversification, globalisation and competition for funding and students. This has been accompanied by a lowering of standards, and declines in the sense of academic community, mission and traditional values. On the other hand there is a need for graduates with new skills such as ICT, a broad knowledge base and a range of competencies to enter a more complex and interdependent world (Altbach et al, 2009, viii).

Into this arena has come an increase in Christian educational establishments of many shapes and sizes. There are Christian childcare centres, kindergartens, elementary schools, high schools and tertiary institutions of all types. Some are very similar to secular educational establishments, except that the majority of their staff is Christian. Others have varying degrees of Christian perspectives infused into their curricula, or added as specific subjects. Most Christian schools have goals of fostering the spiritual formation of their students alongside other educational goals. The questions addressed in this paper are:

- 1) How can Christian educators best facilitate the spiritual formation of their students?
- 2) What can be learnt about the development of spirituality from other academic disciplines without sacrificing Christian basic beliefs?
- 3) What factors impinge on the ongoing spiritual development of older youth and adults in Christian training institutions?

Throughout this paper, the term "Biblical understanding of spirituality" refers to a perspective which considers that the Bible provides sufficient

resources to build a Christian understanding of spirituality. Other resources and analytical tools utilised need to operate in a way that is consistent with the Biblical resource. The wisdom of God can be found outside of the Bible, but not when it negates the revealed wisdom of God in the Scriptures.

Definition of Spiritual Formation

The term “spiritual formation” is used in a number of different ways with different conclusions as to its meaning and practice. One approach equates spiritual formation with Christian mysticism and a search for techniques to help people feel closer to God. According to Willard (1991) these spiritual disciplines may include meditation, solitude, fasting and chanting, fashioned after the practices of the medieval church. DeWaay(2005) warns that this type of approach may substitute human endeavour for God’s work of grace in a person’s life and is in opposition to God’s revelation in the Bible. For example, the apostle Paul writes in Galatians 3:3 NIV, “Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?”

In contrast, Foster (2009) comments that all spiritual formation is “heart work”, because all human action springs from the heart. Because each person is “a tangled mass of motives: hope and fear, faith and doubt, simplicity and duplicity, honesty and falsity, openness and guile” (p. 2) the most important work in Christian education is accomplished in the depths of the heart. The formation of the heart before God involves learning from Jesus, with the assistance of loving mentors, how to live well, study well, run businesses well, and form community life well, loving God, neighbours and even enemies. External actions are not the central focus, because outward actions are a natural result of something far deeper. Luke 6:45 (NIV) records the words of Jesus

“A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. So the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”

The wise man Solomon wrote nearly a thousand years prior to the time of Christ, “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it” (Proverbs 4:23 NIV). John Flavel, a 17th century English Puritan

noted in *Keeping the Heart*, that “the greatest difficulty in conversion is to win the heart *to* God, and the greatest difficulty after conversion, is to keep the heart *with* God.” Thus spiritual formation is rooted in the development of the heart, in purity and Godly motivation.

In the context of twenty-first century churches, the task of spiritual formation is made more difficult by a number of factors, Foster (2009) suggests. One is the search for instant solutions, a second is the tendency for worship to become performance oriented, and another is a consumer mentality which puts the desires of the individual at the forefront. This is in contrast to spiritual formation work, which focuses on the need to die to self and take up one’s cross and follow Jesus Christ (Mark 8:34), requiring discipline, struggle and even times of sacrifice.

Willard (2003) suggests that it is useful to distinguish three different meanings or moments of spiritual formation. The first is to identify certain activities as “spiritual” work or exercise and hence to see spiritual formation as training in spiritual disciplines. Secondly we can see spiritual formation as the shaping of

the inner life or the heart of the human being. Thirdly, spiritual formation may be conceptualised as the shaping of the human life by the Holy Spirit and other spiritual agencies, such as the Word of God.

Spiritual formation has two foci: the transcendent – the sense of what is beyond ourselves, and the immanent – the sense of the divine or the spirit in ourselves. There is an imperative to connect inner and outer worlds in order to have meaning and experience spirituality. There may be an outworking in relatedness to other people and society.

Outside of the United States, writers tend to use the term *spirituality* rather than *spiritual formation*. Gordon Wakefield, in the Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality (1983) defines spirituality as “a word . . . to describe those attitudes, beliefs, practices which animate people’s lives and help them to reach out towards super-sensible realities.” Spirituality is seen as that which gives life meaning, including a sense of something greater than oneself (Gardner, 2011).

Modern Spirituality

There are a number of trends in modern spirituality. A modern Jesuit

description of Christian spirituality sees it as the relationship between the individual and God pursued in the life of faith, hope and love (Schneiders, 1986). *Spiritual growth* or *growth in spirituality* refers to the development of a self-actualising, self-transcending relationship with God which is simultaneously affective, cognitive, social and personal, and which is both God-centred and other-directed, according to Schneiders (1986, p. 267).

Mainline Protestant churches have since the 1970's sought renewal through a more experiential depth of faith, and this has included spiritual practices and spiritual direction (Driskill, 2000). Many churches have developed spiritual formation groups, involving prayer, meditation on the Scriptures, and guided discussion. Spiritual retreats, self-denial and other practices have been borrowed or adapted from Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic monastic traditions. A relatively recent development among Evangelicals is the equating of spiritual formation with practicing spiritual disciplines such as solitude, silence, prayer, fasting, worship, study, fellowship and confession (Hall & McMinn, 2003a). The charismatic

movement has added a further dimension to the experience of spirituality, blending it into the practices and experiences of Pentecostal churches. Serrano (2003) holds that the central emphasis of Pentecostal spirituality is the personal experience of God through the work of the Holy Spirit, and empowering to live according to Kingdom realities. The Spirit works at a deeper level than belief, emotion or behaviour, that is, primarily in the heart.

Traditionally religion is seen as providing answers to meaning of life questions, and is a shared and public experience. In the modern era² there developed a sense of optimism that people could solve the problems of life by relying on scientific rationality without the aid of religion. Nonetheless, people feel a need for spirituality. In current times spirituality is increasingly related to the individual and not shaped by a particular religious tradition. Individuals seek their own 'truth' from their internal search for meaning and their experience of the spiritual. Christian

² The modern era of history extends from the 18th century to the 20th century in Europe. The period from 1500 to 1800 is also referred to as the early modern period, marked by the Scientific Revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries.

educators are rightly concerned that they teach and train their students to both understand and experience true spirituality as expressed by the Bible and passed down through the church.

Spirituality from a Critical Perspective

One practice frequently used within the practice of human sciences to manage the dilemmas of life and spirituality is *critical reflection*. Fiona Gardner (2011) defines *critical reflection* as “articulating implicit assumptions and values combined with an understanding of how these are influenced by the social context.” She continues “the aim of critical reflection as a process is to be able to make conscious and active choices based on fundamental values, acting in ways that have meaning and integrity and reflect a socially just perspective” (page 18). *Critical spirituality* holds the view that no particular religious stance is privileged or holds the key to ultimate truth, so that all beliefs and practices can be accepted as long as they have authenticity. This view, aligned with postmodernism,³ is not

endorsed by the author of the current paper. Using critical reflective processes may be important in understanding spirituality, but this needs to occur within the boundaries of historically and Biblically revealed Christian truth.

Developing Spirituality through Christian Education

Christian education has been defined in various ways, depending on the relative emphases placed on the roles of theology and the social sciences. The first approach is to consider that the Bible is the foundation of education and the sole source of truth. The second is to see theology juxtaposed over against psychology and sociology, with each occupying different spheres of influence, without interacting with each other. In this view, developmental psychology and learning theories inform education, and the church and the home deal with the Christian side of education, with perhaps a separate subject in school called “Religious Education.” A third view sees Christian education as a type of “tossed salad”, where different ingredients from theological and social

³ Postmodernism may be defined as the culture from the late 1960’s to the early 21st century, characterised by the rejection of modernism, of dogma and grand theories, substituting “a multiplicity of coexisting cognitive and

cultural paradigms, without any one of them being uniquely dominant” (Geyh, 2005).

scientific perspectives are simply added to the mix, without considering how they might contradict or complement each other. Finally, there is a more complex and demanding viewpoint in which psychology and theology are both considered as valid sources of information, but the Bible is the final arbiter of truth. The perspectives of other disciplines must be in constant dialogue with theology according to this view. Downs, (1994) argues that taking an integrative approach to Christian education is necessary, albeit difficult.

In order to further this process, Christian colleges need to first be aware of their own context. Is there a theological, philosophical or educational paradigm within which spiritual formation or spirituality is situated? What are the expectations from previous experience of faculty and staff, as well as stake-holders? What are considered to be the marks of Christian spirituality, and what are the means by which it is fostered? (Amirtham & Pryor, 1989). Scholars use many academic disciplines in their search for understanding of spirituality (Dreyer, 1994) so that the academic study of spirituality is necessarily interdisciplinary. Hence it behoves us

to draw insights here from anthropology, psychology and sociology as well as theology and education.

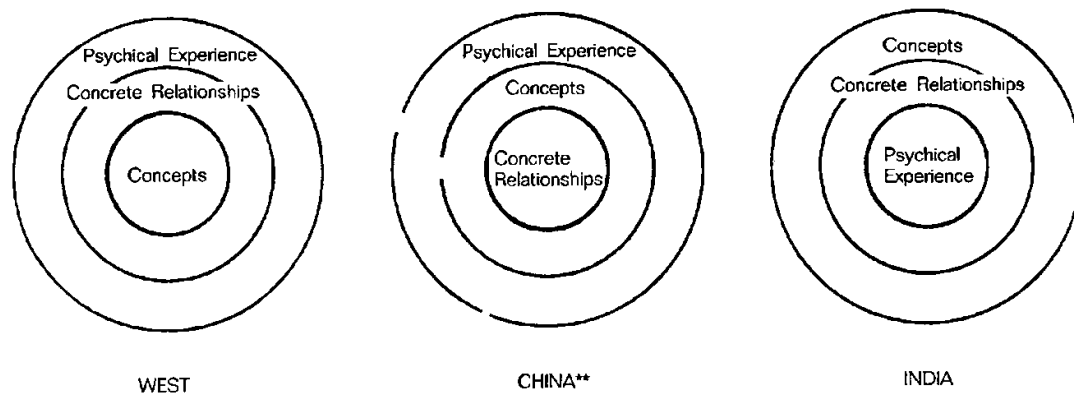
Insights from Social Sciences

Each person may have a preferred style of knowing, and relate marginally to other methods for developing spirituality because they do not speak deeply into their being due to the approach used.

One insight from anthropology concerns the cognitive processes preferred by people from different cultures. David Hesselgrave (1990) in his book *Communicating Christ Cross-culturally* notes that there are three main approaches to reality, or knowing what is real. The one most familiar to people trained in Western rationality is learning through concepts, discussion, analysis and logic. Those who prefer this approach may to a lesser degree also learn through concrete experiences and relationships, and minimally learn through psychical experience. They can be called “scientists.” The second type of cognitive approach has been called the concrete relational approach, and people who utilise this as their main method for discovering reality tend to

use the visual, such as pictures, schema and symbols, to conceptualise what they know. They also feel that reality can be discovered in relationship with other people, more so than by analysing concepts alone. In the figure below, from Hesselgrave's book, we see that psychical experience⁴ is not used very much by this type of person, who has been characterised as an "artist." Hesselgrave posits that Chinese use this approach to knowing, as well as many other cultures in the world. The richness of symbolism and the expression of truth through images in Asian views of spirituality suggest that a number of Asian cultures prefer the concrete relational approach to knowing.

⁴ Psychical experience refers to experiences which are not primarily through the five senses or accessed through rationality. They are described as direct spiritual experiences. "I know because I experienced/felt it."



*Edmund Perry, *Gocept in Dispute*, p. 100.

**As modified by Perry, who in accord with E.R. Hughes, thinks concepts more important than psychical experience in the Chinese way of thinking.

Figure 1: Three Basic Cognitive Approaches to Reality per Hesselgrave (1990)

The third approach to thinking and knowing has been called the “mystic”, since the preferred way of perceiving reality is through psychical experience. Indian mystics and gurus are one example of this type of cognitive approach, but so too are advocates of Eastern Christian practices and those of some monastic traditions. Christ can be experienced as a mystery rather than as someone who speaks through relationships or concepts.

As a result anthropology and cultural studies help Christian educators to understand the development of spirituality. However, it is necessary to remember that making generalisations about whole groups of people is

simplistic, and within any culture one could find each of the three types. These insights are simply a tool to enable educators and Christian leaders to appreciate that not all people will experience spiritual formation in the same way.

Insights from Psychology

Psychology focuses on the psyche, or soul of individuals. McMinn and Hall (2003) suggest that an understanding of psychology can transform our views of Christian spirituality and spiritual formation. One example is ‘attachment theory’, which has been utilized for understanding relationships throughout the life span. If spiritual formation

relates to how individuals relate to God and others, it is also impacted by the styles individuals have developed in relating to others and self. Eckert and Kimball (2003) report that secure individuals perceive God as a secure base and haven of safety, have positive images of self and relate well to others. Those who have had more difficult childhood and formative experiences may exhibit disturbance in their style of relating to others, self and God, such as fearful and defensive relationships. These characteristics can hinder growth in spirituality until dealt with at either the soul or spiritual level. Christian educators and spiritual guides, recognising such blockages, may adjust their program of spiritual formation to overcome the problem.

Further, an understanding of different personality traits can inform Christian education and efforts to foster spirituality by showing how there is no “one size fits all” strategy in spiritual formation. More extroverted people may find exuberant worship and the use of vocal gifts of the Spirit more efficacious than meditation, solitude and silence. Conversely, results from a research study by Van Meter et al (2003) showed that the spiritual disciplines of solitude and

silence created greater positive response in students who tended to introversion.

Insights from Sociology

The contribution of sociology is its insights concerning human social behaviour, including organizations and institutions. However, a sociology of religion tends to focus on the social and institutional aspects of organized religion, without acknowledging the possibility of an underlying reality. What sociology can contribute is an understanding that the religious background of individuals does influence their preferred style of interaction with the spiritual realm. Three chapters in Hall and McMinn’s section on Christian traditions and spirituality show how evangelical Christians from reformed, liturgical and pietistic traditions, with differing theological emphases and experiential backgrounds, approach spiritual growth questions differently. Correspondingly, Christian educators within these differing contexts may use varying strategies for promoting spirituality. The Reformers stress God’s sovereignty and sanctification, with a spirituality of personal holiness grounded in the Scriptures (Morgan & Yarhouse, 2003). Liturgical traditions

are sacramentally oriented, with reliance on practices such as confession, fasting, chanting, meditation and spiritual direction to promote spiritual formation. The pietistic group includes Wesleyan, charismatic and Pentecostal churches, which have in common a belief in human freedom in the context of God's gift of grace, sanctification as a dynamic process of transformation, with transformed emotions in which God is central (Kilian & Parker, 2003).

The result of such insights is an appreciation for the diversity of paths for spiritual formation. In inter-denominational Christian education contexts there is a need to have a flexible, considered and sincerely motivated eclectic approach to spiritual formation, within the confines of Biblical understandings of spirituality.

Contemporary Insights from Educational Philosophy

Jude Long (2010) says that we can learn from recent research and thinking in educational philosophy. A significant development in the area of adult education has been research into teaching and learning styles. Individuals have been found to have preferred learning styles, grouped into cognitive, affective and kinaesthetic. A

cognitive learning style is characterised by verbal thinking, where concepts, numbers and logic are important. Affective methodology seeks to engage students emotionally, with commitment developed through images and symbols more than explanations and verbal detail. Kinaesthetically oriented students need actual experience or simulations, action rather than ideas, in order to best absorb material taught. Christian educators also identify a spiritual dimension to learning. Long's (2010) survey of theology students found that they desired to grow in their relationship with God, as well as to learn objective truth about God.

Contemporary educators tend to analyse the learning styles of their students and adopt a variety of teaching styles, with an overall holistic approach to education. Researchers have found that today's students learn best in community, and demand authenticity from their teachers and mentors. Parker Palmer (1998) comments that students he interviewed revealed that no one teaching style was best. The one trait that students identified as characterising good teachers was "a strong sense of

personal identity” which infused their work.

In addition, learning outcomes as a system of assessment has become widespread at all educational levels. However, the formulating and measuring of spiritual formation outcomes are problematic, and could well be the topic of another paper. Yuzon (1988) points out that critics and cynics are quick to suggest that spirituality formation is a missing ingredient in Christian schools, and in particular Divinity Schools such as the one where he teaches.

All of the above insights have application to spiritual formation in Christian education. Figure 2 below summarises factors which affect spiritual formation. On the left we have an individual at the beginning of their journey in the Christian education process. As they move forward, through what is often called *sanctification*, to ultimate *glorification*, a variety of factors influence them. Those above the line are external factors which may need to be understood, and those below the line are intrinsic to the person and possibly open to transformation.

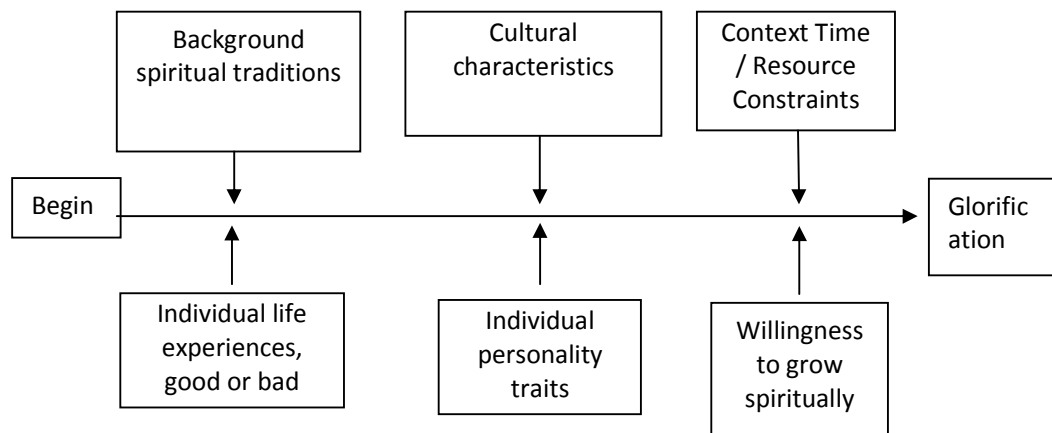


Figure 2: Factors affecting spiritual progress

Spiritual Formation as a Strategy for Christian Education

If we consider the interwoven aspects of an individual’s body, soul and spirit to all be engaging in a

process of life-long development, it behoves Christian educators to simultaneously seek to promote spiritual formation, knowledge about God and Christianity and moral and

affective development. A 2004 survey of 112,232 American college students found that 75% were trying to make their lives more connected, integrated and spiritual. They had “high expectations for the role their institutions would play in their emotional and spiritual development” (Astin, 2004). Yet even staff members at faith-based institutions have been found to be more comfortable with intellectual development than spiritual development, according to Braskamp’s 2005 study of faculty in ten religious institutions. Another researcher, Jane Vennard (2003) found that students in seminaries experience a time of intense transformation and realise that without intentional spiritual practices they may fail to reach their full potential in serving God and others. Those she interviewed felt that seminary education was more about the head than the heart, and they felt the need to integrate the head and heart on their spiritual journey.

Thus there is a drive for spiritual formation and spiritual growth amongst youth and adults in Christian education. On the other hand, young people born since 1965, the so-called Generation X and Generation Y, are characterised by a scepticism about

institutions and the integrity of authority figures. They were born at a time when unethical leadership practices and betrayal of trust by those who should be trustworthy, including parents, had become commonplace. They want spiritual direction in a safe environment, with “an atmosphere of acceptance, authenticity and possibly a mystical encounter with the Divine” (Kuchan, 2006). Kuchan’s research showed that Generation X individuals are looking for a trustworthy, non-heirarchical, non-authoritarian, mutually created sacred space.

How then can spiritual formation be facilitated? Some would say through giving opportunities for worship and devotion – the experiential mode of teaching. Others would say through teaching and discussion about what it means to be spiritual as well as moral and ethical – the oral learning mode of teaching. A third group believe that the Godly example of a teacher or mentor and exposure to the lives of other spiritual people is the best way to learn – the visual learning model. This last perspective is most demanding of the Christian educator, since it requires a high degree of consistency in their lives as well as transparency before

those being mentored. It may well be the most crucial in the spiritual formation of young people, who are very observant and alert to hypocrisy. The old adage says “things are better caught than taught” and in the final analysis, people do as some-one does, not what they say. Nonetheless, there is a need to discuss openly the hard questions with modern young people, who are being exposed to the realities and temptations of life at much younger ages than previous generation.

In her investigation into how holistic transformation can occur in Christian tertiary education, Ruth Smith (2010) found that her respondents “appreciated staff who believed in them, were encouraging and modelled in practice what they were teaching,” as well as being honest, transparent and open (p. 67). They expressed the importance of safe hospitable environments where they were not judged or evaluated as they openly searched for spiritual development. This accorded with the common thread in the literature when discussing spiritual formation –the role of authentic community.

Suggestions for Strategies

As seen above, there are various different models advocated to maximise spiritual growth. Sometimes the onus is placed squarely on the shoulders of the individual, as in the conclusion reached by Valerie Bock after her meditation on the task of maintaining and developing spirituality in her time at seminary. She says on page 31, “I need to cultivate my spiritual life in every aspect: in the network of my relationship with God, myself, my community and the victims of this world. . . .The decision and responsibility for spiritual formation is mine.” Traditionally in Protestant circles the emphasis of spiritual formation in Christian colleges has been on the individual’s personal relationship with God (Group 4 in Amirtham & Lak, 1989).

More recently the communal dimension of spiritual formation has been acknowledged as having efficacy due to the accountability involved in growing in community, and in response to Biblical injunctions to ‘build each other up’, ‘encourage one another’ and so on. Mutual responsibility in an atmosphere of openness, trust and love provides a context for growth in spirituality.

Group 4 at the Kaliurung consultation on spiritual formation in Asian theological education suggests that spiritual formation takes place essentially in relationships, with faculty, other students and the wider Christian church (Amirtham & Lak, 1989, p. 240). Students who live-in at the institution are particularly challenged as they have to live, work and study with other disciples who are on a faith journey, and have not yet been perfected. They come with a wide diversity of experiences and expectations. It may take much patience to weld them together into a coherent worshipping community, but it is in this process that spiritual formation takes place.

Oftentimes a program is seen as the answer to the need for spiritual formation. An example is Smith's (1994) presentation of a small group format of weekly meetings of sixty to ninety minutes, where leadership is rotated, and the program is designed to promote a nurturing fellowship of mutual accountability. This can be incorporated into the program of a seminary or Christian college more easily than the monthly one-on-one meetings with a spiritual director

advocated by others such as Vennard (2003).

Practised in a wide range of settings including amongst laity, spiritual direction can be defined as "help given by one Christian to another which enables that person to pay attention to God's personal communication, . . . to respond to this . . . , to grow in intimacy with this God, and to live out the consequences of the relationship" (Barry & Connelly, 1982, cited in Hardy, 2003). The issue of spiritual direction raises questions about who should be spiritual directors and what type of training, if any, they should be given. Within theological training institutions and Christian colleges, students raise the issue of evaluation and confidentiality. If lecturers and teachers, who are responsible for making assessments about their progress, are also their spiritual confidants, a conflict of interest can arise. One answer is for students to have their own pastor as spiritual director, or to assign a campus pastor who is not a teacher. Another methodology is to assign senior students to mentor junior students, in prayer partnership relationships.

***Studies for Spiritual Formation:
an example***

James Smith (1994) draws on five Christian traditions for his studies in spirituality, and works from discussion and openness in a spirit of accountability. Prayer is the foundation of the Contemplative tradition. The Holiness tradition is about developing a life of purity and virtue. He presents the Charismatic tradition as discovering a life of empowerment through the Holy Spirit and the Social Justice tradition as involving a life of justice and compassion. The Evangelical tradition advocates a life founded on the Word of God. All five are seen as complementing each other and facilitating the spiritual formation of those who practice them.⁵ He emphasizes that balance is a key ingredient in true spirituality. This insight can be applied wherever we seek to apply spiritual formation to Christian education: in the seminary, in Christian schools or in the church. These traditions encompass the spread of historical approaches to seeking to live a life which God requires and

⁵ Smith's Handbook provides guidelines for successive studies focussing on each of the traditions, with homework assignments and accountability to the group. He believes that using all of the traditions at different times will lead to the best result in terms of spiritual formation.

approves, and which satisfies the deep longings of the soul.

- In the contemplative tradition, students can be required to participate in prayer meetings, both early in the morning as is the tradition in Asian theological institutions and churches, and also during the day to involve non-residential members of the theological community. Other aspects which are important for spiritual formation are spiritual retreats or spiritual emphasis weeks, and even compulsory solitary prayer in prayer cells, followed by journaling of the results of the prayer. This promotes the practice of and expectation of hearing from God directly, and being spiritually formed through individual prayer, in addition to through corporate prayer.
- A movement towards holiness can be facilitated by accountability in small groups or pairs, which pray for and support each other in their personal struggles with sin or failings.
- The charismatic tradition may be pursued in different ways by schools from different denominational backgrounds, but

may involve glossolalia, use of spiritual gifts of wisdom and knowledge, prayer for miracles and belief in healing both bodily and emotional in the context of mentoring groups or prayer meetings.

- An emphasis on social justice and the practice of compassion may involve social action projects and reflection on social justice issues. Compulsory participation in social work such as visiting the sick, assisting the poor, giving alms and community development work could be considered as important methods for the spiritual formation of students in this area.
- Apart from studying the Bible for the purpose of writing assignments, students can be encouraged to read the Word of God for personal edification by compulsory journaling of the Scriptures they have read and what insights the Holy Spirit has revealed through them.

Spiritual Formation of the Teacher

At various points above, the necessity for students to be exposed to Godly spiritual examples who authentically live out their faith has been mentioned. Christian educators

need to be on a road of spiritual transformation themselves, and able to reveal both their triumphs and their difficulties, in order for those they educate to be validated in their own struggles to grow. It behoves Christian schools and training institutions to provide opportunities for ongoing spiritual growth in all of their staff, without negating the role of their own pastoral oversight or their individual responsibility.

Bradshaw (2011) in her study of the phases of development of new faculty, found that lecturing staff initially learnt about how lecturers act, before they learnt to act like a lecturer and finally became integrated into an interacting community of practice of lecturers. Part of this development was growth in spirituality, and embracing the vision of the institution, which in the case of Christian institutions involves spiritual mandates. This ongoing spiritual formation of lecturers intersects with the spiritual formation of students, through mutual participation in spiritual disciplines, discussions and mentorship. As already noted, the example of teachers is very important for the development of those they educate.

CONCLUSION

There are a number of factors which impinge on the spiritual formation of people involved in Christian education. One is the particular strand of Christianity in which they have been raised or trained, and the approach to spirituality which they embrace. Another is the cultural heritage of the individuals, and yet another is the multitude of their personality traits. It is fair to say that people are by nature complex, from the viewpoints of personal history, developmental stage and spiritual maturity. Each is on a journey and one goal of Christian educators is to speak into the lives of their students in such a

way as to promote their forward movement on that journey. Spirituality can be formed through both individual and community exercises, and a balance needs to be achieved between the varying strands of Biblically based Christian tradition. The wisdom of God as revealed in the Bible is the baseline from which paths of spiritual formation should be developed, but the wisdom of God revealed through the social sciences can also inform and aid teachers and mentors. The conclusion of this paper is that spiritual formation can and should be facilitated in Christian education in a variety of ways as shown above, in order to meaningfully assist as many students as possible.

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