

FINCH SYMPOSIUM ON PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION: A Dream at Mid-Stream

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One of the more exciting efforts in which I have been involved at Fuller has been the inauguration of the John G. Finch Symposium on Psychology and Religion. Begun in 1971, the idea of contributing to the theoretical dialogue between psychology and theology, had been a goal of the Graduate School of Psychology for some years before this date.

The joint faculty supported this goal. A committee composed of Professors Smedes (School of Theology), Winter (School of World Mission) and Malony (School of Psychology) presented a statement of purpose which became the foundation for the Symposium. The statement reads:

The John G. Finch Symposium on Psychology and Religion is sponsored by the Graduate School of Psychology of Fuller Theological Seminary. The series of addresses was established to deepen the understanding of man's religious behavior as seen in the light of social and behavioral sciences.

Toward this end we have invited three outstanding scholars to deliver lectures in January of 1971, 1972 and 1973. Walter Houston Clark, Ph.D., professor of the psychology of religion, retired, Andover-Newton Theological School, delivered the first lectures. Thomas A. Oden, Ph.D., professor of the theology, Drew University, delivered the lectures in 1971. Richard L. Gorsuch, Ph.D., Kennedy associate professor of psychology, George Peabody College, delivered the lectures this year. Each Symposium has included opportunity for dialogue and small group discussion.

Each lecturer has been provocative and stimulating. Charles C. Thomas, publisher, is publishing the Symposium each year. Clark's lectures on *Religious Experience: Its Nature and Function in the Human Psyche* (1972) are already off the press. The volume includes responses by Professor James Daane (theology) and Alan R. Tippett (missions) in addition to myself. It was presented to President Hubbard in special ceremonies at the most recent Symposium led by Dr. Gorsuch. The book can be ordered from the Seminary bookstore.

Dr. Neil Warren of the School of Psychology chaired the 1972 Symposium delivered by Professor Oden on the theme *Human Potential and the Evangelical Hope*. This volume will come off the press in the fall and includes responses by Professors Schoonhoven (theology), Kraft (missions) and Warren (psychology). In addition, a special feature of this volume will be two student responses—one by Warren Walker, a student in psychology, and Ken Mulholland, a student in theology.

This year's Symposium continued last year's tradition of offering an integration seminar in connection with the Symposium. The integration seminars have been features of the curriculum in the School of Psychology for several years. They are attempts to relate theology and psychology and are taught jointly by a theologian and a psychologist. During the Symposium the class met for three discussion periods

with Dr. Gorsuch. Professors Jewett (theology), Winter (missions) and Malony (psychology) taught the course.

Dr. Gorsuch lectured on *The Nature of Man: A Social Psychological Perspective*. He attempted to delineate the characteristics of man which can be inferred from the data of social psychology. His lecture, "Man and Finitude," reported the research which suggested man is easily misled and classically inept in his judgment. The second lecture, "Man and Man," inferred man is overly dependent on the judgments of his fellows. His last lecture, "Man and Destiny," suggested ways man can transcend his environment and live a post-conventional life.

The format of the integration seminar included a breach of several weeks during which the professors and class members prepared responses to Dr. Gorsuch's lectures. The class reassembled and met for four successive Wednesday afternoons to discuss these responses. Again, two student responses—by Douglas Mathews and Henry Venema—were selected to be included in the published volume.

We are convinced of the value of these Symposia and the integration seminars which are organized around them. The lectures have been thought-provoking and have provided much material for discussion in the Seminary community. Of course, the format will improve with time—but the basic idea is a good one. As I said in my introduction to the Clark volume, "Knowing that the field is growing rapidly this volume (the Symposia—sic) are presented as a contribution to the history of the field. It is attempted to be of special interest to theological and scientific scholars who are attempting to relate their disciplines. We can only hope that these essays provide dialogue and promote further interest" (Clark, et. al., 1972, p. x).

A special word is in order regarding John G. Finch, in whose honor the Symposia are named. It is entirely appropriate that his name should be related to this effort because his was the guiding genius that led to the establishment of the School of Psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary. His long standing concern for delineating a Christian psychology and for training Christian psychotherapists is the firm foundation on which we build. This well known clinical psychologist from Tacoma, Washington is our mentor and senior colleague.

In summary, I have tried to share with the alumni the historical saga of a dream in mid-stream, the John G. Finch Symposium on Psychology and Religion. It is a unique contribution of Fuller Theological Seminary. At this time, few, if any, other institutions are supporting such efforts. ■

REFERENCE

- Clark, W.H., Malony, H.N., Daane, J., and Tippett, A.R., *Religious Experience: Its Nature and Function in the Human Psyche*, Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1972.

The 3 Ps of Integration

There are 3 Ps of integration. They are Principle, Profession, and Person. They represent three targets toward which integrators should shoot. Those who would integrate psychology and anthropology with theology should attempt to relate their disciplines in principle, in profession, and in person.

The diagram below illustrates this. It shows a bowperson shooting a bow and arrow out on the target range. There are three bulls eye targets mounted on tri-pods. The coach has just told the shooter that it is necessary to hit all three targets before the day is over. The bowperson is turning to shoot. So it is with integration. Those who would become really adept at the task must shoot at three target - the target of Principle, the target of Profession, and the target of Person.

Just what kind of target is each of these three Ps? Are these really different or are they simply three terms for the same thing? Just what is meant by "principle", "profession", and "person"? Assuming that they are, in truth, distinct target, are there any ways in which they are related? These are the questions with which this essay deals.

Below is a bull's-eye target which shows "principle" at its center and a number of synonyms at each of the concentric circles. The word 'principle' stands for all the principles or ideas or theories or models or assumptions or explanations or interpretations or hypotheses or beliefs or theses that pertain to Christian theology, to anthropology, to sociology, and to psychology plus all attempts to relate these fields of knowledge. Principle integration includes the study of these matters plus efforts to critique and reconstruct these theories. Such efforts can be both logical attempts to relate ideas in a rational fashion plus experimental efforts to understand relationships or predict them. Research, thus, can be undertaken through logic or through demonstration.

①
how we think.
knowledge

Below is a bull's-eye target which shows "profession" at its center and a number of synonyms at each of the concentric circles. The word 'profession' stands for all the applications or practices or interventions or utilizations or services or vocations or jobs or careers or missions or callings or duties or pursuits or trades in which Christian theology is intergrally related to the day-to-day work of those who are employed as ministers, anthropologists, psychologists, teachers, counselors, missionaries, and sociologists. Profession integration includes both the thinking that one does before one acts plus what one does when one acts. It has both a ~~behind the scenes~~ and an on stage dimension. It refers both to how one understands what was done and the plans one makes for what will be done.

②
what we do
practice of trade
application / principle to
life.
behavior.
(requires compromise?)

Below is a bull's-eye target which shows "person" at its center and a number of synonyms at each of the concentric circles. The word 'person' stands for all the personal or individual or private or subjective or idiosyncratic or distinctive or unique or inside-the-skin processes in which Christian faith and personal identity are related to each other. Although person integration does not specifically pertain to what one does at one's work, it yet includes one's sense of one's identity as a worker and the sense of destiny and status that this implies. It also includes those beliefs which bring dignity and meaning to one's life when one is alone or

③
personal

in the company of others. It includes doubt as well as confidence, belief as well as practice, memory as well as commitment.

The next question becomes "How are the three related?". It is essential to understand whether one of the Ps is more important than the others?; whether one of the Ps precedes the others?; whether emphasizing one of the Ps means the others are weakened? There are several possibilities that need consideration.

There is some warrant for saying that if your heart is right everything else will fall into place. This is tantamount to placing prime importance on Person integration. After all, that is why we are integrators in the first place - namely, because of our own salvation. Do we not love because he first loved us, as 1 John 4:19 suggests? Are we not studying to help people because we have been helped by God? More importantly, we will have no interest in Principle or Professional integration if we have not experienced salvation in our own lives. The other two Ps would make no sense apart from Personal integration. So, perhaps the first step would be to get our personal faith going in relation to our psychology and our anthropology. Maybe the first step is to be sure our experience of God is alive and well before we start integrating at the level of Principles or Profession.

The only problem with concluding that we should integrate at the Person level first is that integration is not the same thing as religious experience. It is our faith that propels us toward helping us, but when we begin our faith is not "integrated faith", it is just "faith". It has not been informed by graduate study of its own foundations in Bible, ethics, and theology. Much less has it been informed by advanced study of psychology with all its personality theory, its cognitive processes, its psychotherapeutic models, to mention only a few parts of the endeavor. Sometimes that "pre-integration faith" falters and needs its own first-aid while it is studying what integration in the other two Ps is all about.

Maybe there is not such thing as primacy or precedence in 3P integration. Of course, we bring our faith to the task but let us not kid ourselves. The faith with which we end training is not the same faith with which we begin. Our end faith is enlightened, tested, stressed, enriched, informed, strained, uneven, and sophisticated. It is better integrated on some days than others; in some environs more than others; with some people more than others. Most importantly, it is a faith that knows better than it can possibly say that Person integration is a pilgrimage more than a product; it is a process more than a final achievement.

Turning to Principle and Profession integration, "Is it possible to do a good job integrating faith with practice without having a solid foundation in Principle integration?" I think not. It would seem as if what one did in helping people would have to be based on a solid understanding of what was wrong and what was needed if any good was to come of the help. Moreover, it would seem as if one would need to be very clear about how the Christian understanding of life meshed with the treatment being offered or one would simply slip into advice giving, adjustment counseling, or non-religious therapeutic technology. After all, most help givers function fairly well without attempting to integrate. Learning contemporary psychology and anthropology does not require parallel learning of Christian theology or ethics. The Christian framework is specific and

unique. It is not general knowledge. It cannot be utilized post-hoc. It must be included pre-hoc. Principle integration must precede Professional integration.

Nevertheless, the above presumption about the precedence of Principle integration may not be as absolute as one might think. We've all known perfectly good professional integrators who were unsophisticated and unlearned. They seem to do it naturally. Often they are more bold about it than those who are trained, which may be a blessing in and of itself. Learning may make Professional integration more difficult. It certainly seems to make it less obvious and more wordy. And it often happens that the concerns of Professional integration pose the questions which lead to intense efforts at Principle integration.

A proposal about the relating of the three Ps might go something like this: all three are essential, no one can be ignored, they co-exist and are interrelated, it is possible to be good at one and weak in another, no one of them is easy to do, they are never finished, they are aspects of a life-long trek to which all integrators should be committed.