

THE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY: ANTITHESIS, COMMON GRACE, AND PLATO'S VIEW OF THE SOUL

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I. THE STATE OF AFFAIRS

Christian academicians seem to agree about the product they would like to see in a graduate from their particular institution. When reading the purpose and/or vision statement from a Presbyterian (Reformed), Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopal, Mennonite, Nazarene, or non-denominational evangelical college or university, the reader finds a similar taxonomy of rhetoric. Interestingly, the respective historical roots of these institutions seem to make little difference to the programmatic declaration and, thus, the descriptive language offers a common marketable metanarrative. Specifically, an imitative amalgamation of terminology has emerged across the horizon of Christian education to describe the mission *praxis* of the enterprise. These expressions often include such phrases as the following: “Christ-centered education,” “integrating faith and learning (life),” “equipping leaders and servants in a global environment,” “impacting, influencing, and engaging church, society, and culture,” “bringing justice and compassion to a broken world,” and being “agents of renewal and transformation in community, nation, and world.”¹

As these institutions advance the public representation of their college/university, obviously, the purpose and vision of their institution is intended to be integrated into the product they foresee for the school. In fact, it would seem fair to say that any mention of the ecclesiastical affiliation or academic prowess of the school's environment serves only as a means to accent the teleological mission of the institution. Herein exists the implicit eschatological message of the institution's own great commission for its students—be leaders, servants, instruments, and agents of the institution's message of renewal for the world. This activist and geographical view of eschatology comes across as a generic metanarrative characterizing the core of Christian higher education no matter what institution a prospective student considers. Furthermore, where this core belief exists, in most cases it energizes the classroom. Professors seek to apply the purpose/mission statement to their own ends as they blend the Christian

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¹ The voice of James Davison Hunter's analysis, argument, and critique concerning the transformation of culture is timely and appropriate; it needs serious reflection within the halls of the Christian academy (*To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, & Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010]).

message into their own agenda for the natural and human sciences. Meanwhile, these institutions hope that students are riveted to the challenging and passionate call (καλέω) of the professors to become life-changing agents in the world; students are called to make a difference.

As the current establishment of this generic metanarrative becomes further entrenched in academia, perhaps not all who are associated with these institutions find this storyline pleasing. Conscientious dissenters do exist on these campuses, in some cases minority voices that view the current eschatological focus on cultural renewal to be indoctrination into the present popular educational milieu. Moreover, on these campuses marginal voices can be found, those who are genuinely perplexed over the apathetic spirit of leadership with respect to the institution's particular ecclesiastical and theological roots. Indeed, in the public sphere, many of these institutions usually pay lip service to those foundational roots, while in the classroom or on the campus, a student may identify little, if anything, that typifies the historic roots of the institution. In many cases, as a particular academy distances itself from its birth date, it becomes increasingly compelling to those who are shaping the philosophy of the school to seek relevance primarily to the current state of affairs.² Clearly, the seduction of being relevant to the changing landscape of life is what leads to our tendency in academia to leave the past behind us.

Not just an interesting cultural phenomenon, the craving to be relevant becomes a crisis within the inner soul of Christian education. In order to attract students and attention, the institution must convey the message that it actively puts into practice the dynamics of the Christian faith. After all, nothing is more hideous than a religion that seems dead and does not have an impact on the world. Meanwhile, some demand that the institution give an account of its historic roots, and how those roots influence the school's progress into the future. In answering to their living constituency (mostly embodied in alumni), most schools endeavor to demonstrate that their current agenda reconciles well with the historical agenda of the institution. Administrations readily attempt to convey that their institutions hold a sacred affinity to the past. However, much ink has been spilled to dissect their claim; most notable are those works that document the failure of institutions to maintain their ecclesiastical, theological, and philosophical roots.³ For a specific example from

² Concerning the content in this paragraph, the author is fully aware that there is not a necessary logical consequence here, that is, that the endorsement of this generic metanarrative does not automatically mean that one has surrendered the ecclesiastical and theological roots of the institution.

³ For example, George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (New York: Oxford, 1994); George M. Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987); George M. Marsden and Bradley J. Longfield, eds., *The Secularization of the Academy* (New York: Oxford, 1992); James Tunstead Burtchaell, *The Dying of the Light: The Discouragement of Colleges & Universities from Their Christian Churches* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); and Stephen R. Haynes, ed., *Professing in the Postmodern Academy: Faculty and the Future of Church-Related Colleges* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2002). Although his thesis can be challenged, Robert Benne's volume has been celebrated as a prescription for the Christian academy to remain faithful to its task (*Quality with Soul: How Six Premier Colleges and Universities Keep Faith with Their Religious Traditions* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001]; on this note one can also consult George

within my Reformed heritage, perhaps James D. Bratt sets up my discussion best when he summarizes E. Digby Baltzell's study:

According to Digby Baltzell's provocative study, *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia . . .*, nearly a third of the United States' two hundred colleges at the time of the Civil War has been founded "by the heirs of Calvinism" and another third were "indirectly controlled by the Presbyterian church" (248). The prototype of them all was Harvard.⁴

If Baltzell's assessment is correct, then, as the Civil War dawned, nearly two-thirds of the colleges in the United States had roots in the Reformed tradition of Calvinism. At the emergence of the twenty-first century, though, very few of those schools would claim publicly any allegiance to the historic Confessional roots of Calvinistic orthodoxy.⁵

Since the Civil War, the themes of modernity have found dominance in many of those schools as a result of an effort by academics to temper, restrain, and conquer the archaic themes of a perceived rigid Calvinism. In a number of those institutions, modernity has flowed easily into the current themes of postmodernity as these world views find a voice in the agenda of the institution, whether it be in the school's marketing, its philosophy of education, its curriculum, or the underlying presuppositions of the content within its classrooms. Hence, as historic Reformed orthodoxy has disappeared from those campuses, there seems to be no sympathy for its death. In fact, in acknowledgment of its departure, we hear echoes of the modern world's approach to viewing and understanding the historic past, that is, the dictate that one must view all historical traditions as breathing and living traditions that must be recast to fit the current social, cultural, political, economic, aesthetic, scientific, and moral state of affairs.

Since, with the assistance of Baltzell and others, the demise of the splendid tradition of Reformed higher education has been documented, perhaps, a

M. Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* [New York: Oxford, 1997] and Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian, eds., *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Success in the Twenty-First Century* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997].

⁴ "Puritan Schools in a Quaker Age," *A Journal of Reformed Thought: Perspectives* (August/September, 1995) 12; James D. Bratt has brought our attention to the same resource in his article, "What Can the Reformed Tradition Contribute to Christian Education?," in *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Success in the Twenty-First Century* (ed. Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 126. Cf. E. Digby Baltzell, *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia: Two Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Class Authority and Leadership* (New York: The Free Press, 1979) 248. Baltzell's observation receives further credence from Donald G. Tewksbury, who notes that by 1851 "two-thirds of the colleges in the land were directly or indirectly under the control of the Presbyterian Church" (*The Founding of American Colleges and Universities before the Civil War* [New York: Archon, 1965] 92).

⁵ The term "orthodoxy" when used throughout this essay will have some different nuances. In most cases, however, whether in reference to Reformed orthodoxy or to Christian (meaning evangelical) orthodoxy, I have in mind an understanding of Christian truth rooted in the infallible Word of God and its interpretation by the era of the Protestant Reformation without being tainted by Renaissance and Enlightenment higher-critical approaches to the biblical canon and ecclesiastical dogmatics. Moreover, the term "orthodoxy" implies being faithful without reservation to the absolute authoritative and self-authenticating Word of God, in which the sole infallible method of the interpretation of Scripture is Scripture itself (see *Westminster Confession of Faith* 1:4–5, 9).

subtle voice can yet be heard which savors the historic confessional roots of Reformed orthodoxy as being relevant for the present academic and cultural environment. Although, to some, such a voice may be an archaic reverberation of the past, to others the rhetoric may be a refreshing innovation, since the historic voice has been silenced so long by the current generic meta-narrative. As I attempt to expound this point, my hope is that my example can be broadly applied across the spectrum of Christian higher education. Specifically, those who are part of a splendid tradition in their own heritage of higher education can reflect upon my discourse and apply it to their own legacy. In order to do so, perhaps those who wish to reflect upon my discourse should start with their own historic documents of the Christian faith, and then work back in assessing those documents in light of Scripture, and then apply their reflections to the academy and its curriculum.

II. THE REFORMED EDUCATIONAL HERITAGE

For those who wish to resist the gravitation towards modernity and secularization, or even the elements of postmodernity, the task of preserving the strength and ability to remain steadfast in the tradition of historic Christianity can be wearisome. As already noted, Reformed higher education within Christendom has dissipated almost entirely since the Civil War. This degeneration has occurred not because the historic ecclesiastical roots of these institutions have been savored, instead, primarily because the agenda of modernity and cultural relevancy has been accommodated.⁶ Modernity has trumped historic orthodoxy rather than historic orthodoxy tempering modernity. Specifically, Reformed institutions of higher learning have become secularized since the Civil War because the collective mindset of the institution has stressed common grace arching between orthodox Christian thought and non-Christian thought at the expense of the antithesis. Under the banner of common grace, Reformed Christian educators have adopted the methods and substance of secular thought without clear discernment. They have failed to employ transcendental analysis and critique that remains faithful to revelational-history (Scripture) as summarized in the ecumenical creeds and the Reformed Confessions. Hence, it is not uncommon to find Christian academicians who employ the pious-clad phrase, "all truth is God's truth," to justify a methodology that utilizes the fundamental precepts of rationalism, empiricism, realism, idealism, romanticism, naturalism, materialism, existentialism, structuralism, or

⁶ James D. Bratt and Ronald A. Wells make a salient, succinct analysis of an important observation that George M. Marsden made in his *The Soul of the American University*. Bratt and Wells write, "In academic life in particular, as former Calvin history professor George Marsden has written, secularization occurs not necessarily when religion becomes too little but when it becomes so much and so broad that it is robbed of content" ("Piety and Progress: A History of Calvin College," in *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Success in the Twenty-First Century* [ed. Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997] 161). Although Marsden's observation is not my focus here, the reader must be aware that such a factor is pertinent to a comprehensive study of the deterioration of a Christian institution from its founding principles.

poststructuralism, without any clear critique of the foundational premises of those methodologies.

In the history of Reformed thought, its view of common grace can serve both as stumbling block and as a positive theological rubric. In Calvinistic institutions, this tension between stumbling block and positive formulation has been extremely problematic. When Reformed scholars pay attention to the biblical doctrine of sin, their account of human depravity seems to indicate that the unbeliever cannot know anything correctly while remaining outside of regeneration by Christ's Spirit (1 Cor 2:6–16).⁷ The effects of the fall mean that the unbeliever can do absolutely nothing to attain salvation or to interpret God, humanity, and the world correctly (Rom 3:9–20). Every function that constitutes a human being is affected by sin: reason, experience, psyche, and emotions. Nevertheless, the Reformed world admits the obvious—the unbeliever maintains that $2+2=4$ just as the believer does. How does this factual agreement fit into the biblical doctrine of sin and its effects? Reformed theology has constructed the concept of common grace to clarify the concord.⁸ Simply put, for many the phrase refers to the common facts that the Christian and the non-Christian share in God's created world in spite of the noetic ef-

⁷ See Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., "Epistemological Reflections on 1 Corinthians 2:6–16," in *Revelation and Reason: New Essays in Reformed Apologetics* (ed. K. Scott Oliphint and Lane G. Tipton; Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2007) 13–40.

⁸ The Reformed tradition has had a particular interest in the concept of common grace in light of its view of total depravity. If the fall has affected all the faculties of the human, then how can one have any true knowledge at all? In responding to this question, Reformed theology has had its own intramural debate on the subject. For a summary of that debate, especially in the twentieth century, one can consult J. van Genderen and W. H. Velema, *Concise Reformed Dogmatics* (trans. Gerrit Bilkes and Ed M. van der Maas; Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2008) 294–99, and William D. Dennison, "Van Til and Common Grace," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 9/2 (Fall 1993) 225–36. In my judgment, principal documents in the discussion within the Dutch Reformed tradition are Abraham Kuypers's multivolume set under the title, *De Gemeene Gratie* (3 vols.; Amsterdam: Höveker & Wormser, 1902–1904); Herman Bavinck, "Common Grace," *Calvin Theological Journal* 24/1 (April 1989) 38–65; and Cornelius Van Til, *Common Grace and the Gospel* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1972). James D. Bratt has included a brief segment from Kuypers's *De Gemeene Gratie* in his anthology *Abraham Kuypers: A Centennial Reader* (ed. James D. Bratt, "Common Grace"; trans. John Vriend; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 165–201; see also idem, "Common Grace in Science" 442–60. A brief, but fine discussion accenting the tradition of Old Princeton can be found in John Murray's article on "Common Grace," in *Collected Writings of John Murray: 2: Systematic Theology* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1977) 93–119. Perhaps, the present nuances of the discussion on the topic are depicted best by Richard J. Mouw in *He Shines in All That's Fair: Culture and Common Grace* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001). Although Kuypers claimed that "only the Reformed have clearly perceived the distinction between 'special grace' and 'common grace,'" others have now claimed the notion of common grace for themselves (Kuypers, "Common Grace" 192; e.g. Timothy J. Wengert has claimed "common grace" in the older Melancthon and the Lutheran tradition [see his review of John R. Schneider's, "Philip Melancthon's Rhetorical Construal of Biblical Authority: Oratio Sacra," *The Sixteenth Century Journal: The Journal of Early Modern Studies* 25/1 (Spring 1994) 203]; John C. Raines, "Tools and Common Grace," *Cross Currents* 40/3 [Fall 1990] 314–27; Belden C. Lane, "Dragons of the Ordinary: The Discomfort of Common Grace," *The Christian Century* [August 21–28, 1991] 772–75; Philip Yancey, "Chords That Bind," *Christianity Today* [September 1, 1997] 120; Keith E. Yandell, "Modernism, Post-Modernism, and the Minimalist Canons of Common Grace," *Christian Scholar's Review* 27/1 [Fall 1997] 15–26; and Robert K. Johnston, *Rethinking Common Grace: Toward a Theology of Co-relation* [Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2002]).

fects of Adam's fall. Sadly, however, while common grace should hold in check the submersion of Christian scholars into secularization since the doctrine of sin should always maintain a prominent position before them, much too often the exact opposite has occurred. Under the rubric of common grace, Reformed scholars have readily fallen right into secular models. Invoking common grace, these thinkers have allowed natural and general revelation to become a shared arena of integration with non-Christian scholars. Invoking common grace, at times the scholar becomes an eclectic collector of non-Christian propositions without serious analysis as long as the secular material can be incorporated into the believer's so-called system of Christian thought. In my judgment, the use of these models by Reformed academicians compromises any coherent integrated understanding of a discipline in line with historic orthodoxy. By contrast, the work of Cornelius Van Til (1895–1987) stands out.⁹

Van Til maintained that true Christian thinking must begin with the self-attesting Christ of Scripture. In Van Til's estimation, the Christian must never compromise the pervasive revelation of Christ found in the infallible record of Scripture and summarized in the ecumenical creeds of the early church and the Reformed confessions of the Reformation.¹⁰ It is within this theological and ecclesiastical framework that Reformed scholars should desire to govern every dimension of their discipline from within their identity in Christ. The Christ of Scripture as the ground of the scholar's epistemological self-consciousness defines the parameters of academic interface with the realm of unbelief. With this commitment in place, Van Til set forth a challenging formula for the Christian scholar to use in order to keep his moorings: *antithesis must precede common grace*. By this Van Til indicates that when analyzing the Christian worldview in relationship to a non-Christian worldview, the two systems, holistically conceived, are antithetical to each other. Herein, the *uni-*

⁹ With respect to the fallen condition of human reason and its spiritual discernment, Calvin's attack upon the philosophers is insightful. In modern academia, his point can be applied across the entire scope of all the academic disciplines. He states: "Certainly I do not deny that one can read competent and apt statements about God here and there in the philosophers, but these always show a certain giddy imagination. . . . But they [philosophers] saw things in such a way that their seeing did not direct them to the truth, much less enable them to attain it! They are like a traveler passing through a field at night who in a momentary lightening flash sees far and wide, but the sight vanishes so swiftly that he is plunged again into the darkness of the night before he can take even a step—let alone be directed on his way by its help. Besides, although they may chance to sprinkle their books with droplets of truth, how many monstrous lies defile them!" (Joannis Calvini, *Joannis Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia: Institutio Christianae Religionis. 1559* [ed. Guilielmus Baum, Eduardus Cunitz, and Eduardus Reuss, vol. 2; Brunsvigae: C. A. Schwetschke, 1864], II.ii.18., 200–201); *Institutes of the Christian Religion* [ed. John T. McNeill; trans. Ford Lewis Battles; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967] II.ii.18., 277). If Calvin made this comment in an interview in Christian academia today, one wonders if he would receive an appointment, even in those accredited institutions which stand in the Reformed tradition.

¹⁰ One of my favorite statements from Van Til's pen is appropriate here; the quip will enable the reader to see how Van Til viewed the antithesis between Calvin and Aquinas: "Aquinas sought to show the unbeliever that the Christian story is in accord with logic and in accord with fact. Calvin sought to show that 'logic' and 'fact' have meaning only in terms of the 'story'" ("Calvin as a Controversialist," in *Soli Deo Gloria: Essays in Reformed Theology. Festschrift for John H. Gerstner* [ed. R. C. Sproul; Nutley NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1976] 8).

versal frameworks of two holistic systems of thought are thoroughly distinct and at odds with one another. Nevertheless, although this holistic antithesis exists, such a position does not restrict a non-Christian from affirming a truth in compliance with what has been revealed by God, for example, $2+2=4$. In other words, the *holistic* character of one's system of unbelief is antithetical to Christianity, whereas a *particular* element in that system may be a common grace insight, one which can be shared by believer and unbeliever alike. Even as this distinction is made, the Reformed academician must actively take a further pedagogical step—the antithesis must submit all academic material to analysis and investigation so that all elements that emerge as common grace insights are thoroughly examined through the lenses of an orthodox commitment to the truth of Christ in Scripture. Herein, a common grace insight can only be called a common grace insight if it is in compliance with the truth of God's revelation.

With this particular component of Van Til's view of antithesis and common grace before us, it is now fitting to present an example of how his formula might be used by the Christian academician in a concrete situation—specifically, in analysis of Plato's view of the soul. The premise is this: Plato's belief that the soul is immortal is a common grace insight since God's Word also teaches that the soul is immortal. With such an observation before the Christian scholar, careless thinking can lead to errors closely aligned with previously noted stumbling blocks. Some might declare that Plato was enlightened by natural revelation; specifically, they might claim that Plato's observation indicates he acknowledged a biblical truth and was on the correct track towards Christian belief. Herein, Plato may be praised because, as a non-Christian, he gives affirmation to a truth in the Christian belief system. Another popular reaction is exemplified by the scholar who, in observing Plato's common grace insight, will perceive the presuppositional differences between Plato and Christianity for the sake of eventually qualifying those differences. In particular the distinctions will be contextualized by the Christian academic for the sake of tolerance, support, and encouragement at the table of ideas. Often when this model is employed, the traces of commonly held data on Plato's view of the soul are found in order to be incorporated eclectically into the Christian's system of beliefs so one can attain academic credence. In this way, the ideal of peaceful co-existence between the two camps dissolves the antithesis. Finally, some Christian scholars will take up without much discernment everything Plato states that seem to be in compliance with a biblical view of the soul, and adapt it into the Christian view of immortality. In fact, they may declare that Plato's view of the immortality of the soul is Christian in so far as it goes. On the other hand, Van Til's directive counters these compromised Christian approaches. He instructed the Christian scholar not to surrender the antithesis for the sake of any degree of appeasement. As we proceed, Van Til's edict seems most instructive and challenging in order to maintain a biblical and Reformed conception of the soul.

III. PLATO'S VIEW OF THE SOUL

Readers of Plato's dialogues must be sensitive to what literary critical scholars refer to as the "Socratic problem," that is, the task of separating which concepts belong to Socrates and which concepts belong to Plato. Although a number of ideas continue to be subject to speculative analysis, many scholars follow Aristotle's (384–322 B.C.) lead, maintaining that the doctrine of Forms that appear in the middle and later dialogues belongs to Plato.¹¹ For Plato the Form world and his view of the human soul are closely related.¹² With respect to knowledge, everything must exist in the transcendent Form world in order to be known and exist in the immanent empirical universe in which humans dwell. As Plato unpacks his view of anthropology, the human soul is said to be the residence of the knowledge of Forms. In this analogical construct between the objects in the transcendent Form world and the objects in the immanent empirical universe, the soul grasps those objects as it possesses the quality of immortality.¹³ Likewise, according to biblical revelation, the

¹¹ See *Aristotelis Metaphysica* (ed. W. Jaeger; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957) A, 987a29–b14; M, 1078b12–31. English edition: "Metaphysica," in *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (ed. Richard McKeon; New York: Random House, 1941) I.6, 987a29–b14; 13.4, 1078b12–31. Whether one agrees with Gail Fine's analysis or not, one sees in her work an excellent discussion of the scholarly material surrounding the doctrine of Forms, including the interrelationships among the ideas of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle on the doctrine of Forms (*On Ideas: Aristotle's Criticism of Plato's Theory of Forms* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1995] 20–38, 44–65). Moreover, A. P. Bos has provided an update of the current scholarly discussion on Aristotle's own view of the soul and his rejection of Plato's dualism (*The Soul and Its Instrumental Body: A Reinterpretation of Aristotle's Philosophy of Living Nature* [Leiden: Brill, 2003]). Concerning the Socratic problem, see John Burnet, "Introduction," in *Plato's Phaedo* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1912); Homer H. Dubs, "The Socratic Problem," *The Philosophical Review* 36/4 (July 1927) 287–306; Arthur Kenyon Rogers, *The Socratic Problem* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933); W. D. Ross, "The Socratic Problem," *Proceedings of the Classical Association* 30 (1933) 7–24; Cornelia J. de Vogel, "The Present State of the Socratic Problem," *Phronesis* 1/1 (November 1955) 26–35; Holger Thesleff, *Studies in Platonic Chronology* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1982); Andreas Patzer, *Der Historische Sokrates* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1987); Charles H. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue: The Philosophical Use of a Literary Form* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); John R. Wallach, "Plato's Socratic Problem, and Ours," *History of Political Thought* 18/3 (1997) 377–98; and William J. Prior, "The Socratic Problem," in *A Companion to Plato* (ed. Hugh H. Benson; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006) 25–35.

¹² I will not follow Gail Fine's lead on the use of upper-case or lower-case in the term, Form and the corresponding concepts associated with Plato's Form world. Like Stephen M. Cahn, I have decided to use the upper-case so the reader can easily follow the distinction between a concept in the Form world and that which is not in the Form world (see his *Classics of Western Philosophy*, ed. Steven M. Cahn, 3d ed. [Indianapolis: Hackett, 1990]). Fine maintains that the upper-case was used in order to mark how the entities were viewed as different for Socrates and Plato. Since Fine rejects that premise, she uses only the lower-case (Fine, *On Ideas* 244–45).

¹³ Perhaps Plato's most succinct statement about the immortality of the soul comes in the form of a rhetorical question in Socrates' discussion with Glaucon: "Are you not aware that our soul is immortal and never perishes?" (ὄτι ἀθάνατος ἡμῶν ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ οὐδέποτε ἀπόλλυται) (*Platonis Opera: Republic* [ed. Joannes Burnet; vol. 4; Oxford: Clarendon, 1902] 608d3–4; cf. *Platonis Opera: Phaedrus* [ed. Joannes Burnet; vol. 2; Oxford: Clarendon, 1901] 245 c5–9, 245e4–6). Attention to Plato's understanding of the immortality of the soul has had a long tradition in the west. For the sake of brevity, beginning in the Renaissance a number of works should be highlighted: Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum* 1474 (see Marsilio Ficino, *Pla-*

Christian religion presents a position that the human soul never dies, i.e. the soul is immortal. Plato and biblical revelation agree—the soul is immortal. If one believes that biblical revelation is the record of the infallible revelation of the true God of heaven and earth, and that all human knowledge is either directly or indirectly dependent upon God, then in some manner the God of the Bible communicated the truth that the soul is immortal to Plato. John Calvin's analysis is insightful at this point.

Calvin held that, as created in the image of God, Plato believed that the soul was immortal because of the "seed of religion" (*religionis semen*) within him, i.e. the seed of religion "engraved" (*insculptam*) the immortality of the soul upon his soul.¹⁴ In Reformed language, Plato's belief regarding the soul's immortality would be a result of a common grace insight. In this context, Calvin provided excellent insight into the tension between common grace and

otic Theology: Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum [ed. James Hankins with William Bowen; trans. Michael J. B. Allen; vol. 6 bk. XVII–XVIII; Cambridge: President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2006]; Pietro Pomponazzi (1462–1525), *Tractatus de immortalitate animae* 1516 (see Pietro Pomponazzi, *Tractatus de immortalitate animae: Abhandlung über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele* [ed. Burkhard Mojsisch; Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1990]; and Pietro Pomponazzi, "On the Immortality of the Soul" [trans. William Henry Hay II in *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*; ed. Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall Jr.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948]) 280–381; Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), *Phadon: oder, Über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele* 1768 (see Moses Mendelssohn, *Phaedon: Or, on the Immortality of the Soul* [trans. Patricia Noble; New York: Peter Lang, 2006]); Friedrich Schleiermacher's Übersetzung, *Platon. Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. 2: *Lysis, Symposion, Phaidon, Kleitophon, Politeia, Politeia, Phaidros* (ed. Ursula Wolf; repr. Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2006 [1824]); Paul von Zimmermann, *Die Unsterblichkeit der Seele in Plato's Phaedo* (Leipzig: H. Haessel, 1869); Eric J. Roberts, "Plato's View of the Soul," *Mind* 14/55 (July 1905) 371–89; Paul Natorp, *Plato's Ideenlehre: Eine Einführung in den Idealismus* (2d ed.; Leipzig: Verlag von Felix Meiner, 1921); and more recently, Dorothea Frede, *Platons "Phaidon": Der Traum von der Unsterblichkeit der Seele* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999). Among some of the sources mentioned here, there are a few dynamics worth noting. In Ficino (soul is immortal as separable from the body) and Pomponazzi (soul is mortal as inseparable from the body) we observe the dynamics between Plato's and Aristotle's view of the soul playing out in the Renaissance. For a fine introduction to the dispute over Plato's and Aristotle's positions on the soul during the Renaissance, see John Montasani's, "Marsilio Ficino and the Plato-Aristotle Controversy," in *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His Legacy* (ed. Michael J. B. Allen and Valery Rees with Martin Davies; Leiden: Brill, 2002) 179–202. Later, another dispute emerged in light of Mendelssohn's work on the *Phadon* which was one of the most popular volumes in its day, going through three editions. Although Immanuel Kant was sympathetic to the immortality of the soul, he was not convinced of Mendelssohn's Platonic version that a simple being like the soul cannot vanish (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Vol. 4 [1787; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968] B413–B426, 350–358). In turn, Schleiermacher (1768–1834) found himself defending Mendelssohn against Kant. Schleiermacher's significant contribution to Platonic studies was his translation of the ancient philosopher's dialogues. These translations are still a standard work today as they provide tremendous insight into Schleiermacher's hermeneutical approach to the interpretation of a literary text. Also Schleiermacher provided a penetrating introduction to each dialogue. It is in the introductory essay to a work such as *Phaidon* that Schleiermacher's sympathy towards Mendelssohn over against Kant was exposed with respect to Plato's view of the soul. Later, as Natorp (1854–1924) was involved in reviving Kantian thought at the end of the nineteenth century into the beginning of the twentieth century, he attempted to bring a synthesis between Kant and Plato on the soul as he engaged intently Schleiermacher's literary and hermeneutical interpretation of the classic philosopher's thought.

¹⁴ *Institutio* I.xv.6., 140; cf. *ibid.* I.iii.1., 36; *Institutes* I.xv.6., 192; cf. *ibid.* I.iii.1., 43–44.

human depravity.¹⁵ Calvin stated that the soul functions in two basic ways: (1) “ruling man’s life” with respect “to the duties of his earthly life” (*nec solum quoad officia terrenae vitae*); and (2) “arous[ing]” man “to honor God” in meditating “upon the heavenly life” (*ad coelestis vitae*).¹⁶ As Calvin interacted with Plato’s view of the soul, he chose to address human depravity with respect to the second point.¹⁷ In light of the fall into sin, humanity is corrupt and, thus, cannot perceive clearly and correctly in order to honor God. Nevertheless, Calvin went on to say, there are some “remnants” (*reliquiae*) of God’s image in humanity which explain such common grace declarations from Plato’s lips. Calvin acknowledged that such assertions appear in the context of the speaker being encompassed by the vices of human corruption. Indeed, the presence of these vices within the soul produces various versions of the soul—some more corrupt than others.¹⁸ Calvin himself acknowledged this degradation of vices among fallen humans by stating that a better definition of the soul can be extracted from Plato than from the other philosophers of his day because Plato reflected better on the “image of God in the soul.”¹⁹ Even so, in the same section of the *Institutes*, Calvin exposed the corrupt aspects of Plato’s view of the soul by attacking the latter’s alleged view of two souls within a person—a sensitive soul and a rational soul.²⁰ Hence, as Calvin advanced his common

¹⁵ The phrase “common grace,” which has been used by Reformed theology was referred to as the “general grace of God” (*generalem Dei gratiam*) by Calvin (e.g. *Institutio* II.ii.17., 199; *Institutes* II.ii.17 and 276, n. 63).

¹⁶ *Institutio* I.xv.6., 140; *Institutes* I.xv.6., 192.

¹⁷ In terms of the functional operation of the soul, one must not conclude that Calvin held that there is a domain within the soul which is not fallen or depraved (first function). In fact, as Calvin presented the nature of original sin, he was extremely clear that depravity and corruption is “diffused into all parts of the soul.” Calvin followed this statement by writing, “we are so vitiated and perverted in every part of our nature that by this corruption we stand justly condemned and convicted by God, to whom nothing is acceptable but righteousness, innocence, and purity” (*Institutio* II.i.8., 183; see also *ibid.* II.i.9., 183–84; *Institutes* II.i.8., 251; see also *ibid.* II.i.9., 252–53).

¹⁸ Plato recognized that the vices taint the soul as well (see *Platonis Opera: Republic*, 439a1–e4).

¹⁹ Calvin wrote: “It would be foolish to seek a definition of ‘soul’ from the philosophers. Of them hardly one, except Plato, has rightly affirmed its immortal substance. Indeed, other Socratics also touch upon it, but in a way that shows how nobody teaches clearly a thing of which he has not been persuaded. Hence Plato’s opinion is more correct, because he considers the image of God in the soul” (*Institutio* I.xv.6., 140; *Institutes* I.xv.6., 192). Also, it needs to be noted that Calvin would view certain qualities of the remnants of God’s image in fallen humanity as positive virtues; he did not view every trait of fallen humanity through the degradation of vices. Indeed, though they are fallen, the Creator endowed some humans with such virtues as “keenness,” “superior judgment,” and “learning the arts.” According to Calvin, God performed this act upon fallen creatures in order “to display in common nature God’s special grace” (*in natura communi emineat specialis Dei gratia*; *Institutio* II.ii.17., 200; *Institutes* II.ii.17, 276). Calvin’s point is not to negate what he has written about the depravity of humanity, nor is it to deny that salvation comes solely through the special intercession of the Holy Spirit’s work applying the benefits of Christ’s redemptive work to sinners. Rather, Calvin is merely bringing to the attention of his readers that God continues to provide virtuous traits (as a special gift of grace) within the fallen human race in order to serve his own providential end for the creation.

²⁰ See *Institutio* I.xv.6., 141; *Institutes* I.xv.6., 193. Calvin seems to be referencing Plato—perhaps from *Platonis Opera: Republic* 439d4–6, 439e2–3. (Calvin’s reference to Plato’s *Republic* comes from the English edition of the *Institutes*; the reference does not appear in the original Latin edition).

grace insight into Plato's understanding of the soul, he soon dissolved that insight by applying the antithesis to Plato's formulation.²¹

Before we turn more specifically to that antithesis, we need to direct the Christian academician to the next area of inquiry: Does the content of Plato's view of the immortality of the soul agree with the content of the Christian view of the immortality of the soul as disclosed in biblical revelation?²² In order to answer this question, we must have some competent grasp of the view of the soul's immortality in each system of thought. With respect to Plato, the analysis calls for an examination into the structures of his view of the soul as it functions coherently in his system. Hence, although an empirical comparison reveals that both Plato and biblical revelation teach that the soul is immortal, the task remains to discover whether both present the same understanding of the soul. Without a coherent understanding of how a concept functions within another thinker's system, no judgment can be made about whether that concept is antithetical to one's own system. For introductory purposes, Plato's view of the soul interfaces with his view of the Form world and his contribution to the chain of being.²³ In this context, the soul interfaces with his theory

The question arises, however, whether Plato is actually referencing two souls within a human being in that section of the *Republic*. Rather, it has been viewed by some scholars as two distinct principles, elements, or partitions within the soul, whereas with others it has been argued that Plato's *Republic* presents a "tripartition of the soul" (for an overview of this discussion, see Laurence D. Cooper, "Beyond the Tripartite Soul: The Dynamic Psychology of the *Republic*," *The Review of Politics* 63/2 [Spring 2001] 341–72; see *Platonis Opera: Republic* 439e3–4). Moreover, debate continues to surround Plato's view of the functionary categories of the soul or mind (*Platonis Opera: Republic* 511d6–e4) as well as his view that different qualities which compose the soul determines one's status on the human chain of being (*Platonis Opera: Republic* 413c5–414b6).

²¹ In this same section Calvin returns to a common grace statement, that is, that Plato may be profitable to read in order to understand how the faculties of the soul function. Herein, Calvin maintained that the philosopher may be beneficial to the Christian (see *Institutio* I.xv.6., 141; *Institutes* I.xv.6., 193).

²² In recent literature one of the most popular discussions on this topic has appeared in N. T. Wright's *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008). Wright has been strongly critical of the infiltration of the Platonic view of the soul into Christian thought. In doing so, Wright even questions whether the Bible teaches the immortality of the soul (ibid. 28; see also pp. 36, 80, 160). As Wright feels compelled to free the biblical notion of the soul from Platonism, he can be pressed to distinguish his own interpretation of the soul disclosed in biblical revelation from Aristotle's view of soul. Indeed, a comparison between Wright's view of the soul in *Surprised by Hope* and A. P. Bos's explanation of Aristotle's view of the soul reveals amazing substantive parallels (see esp. Bos, *Soul and Its Instrumental Body* 33–68). Moreover, what is the relationship between Wright's notion that Plato presents the soul as a "disembodied entity hidden within the outer shell of the disposable body" with David Bostock's analysis that "the belief in a reasonably 'full' mental life after death is common, and from Homer onwards (*Odyssey* ix) all those who have pictured it have pictured the souls of the dead as having the shape of human bodies, and as doing just the kind of things that ordinary living human beings do" (Wright, *Surprised by Hope* 28; Bostock, *Plato's Phaedo* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1986] 28). Specifically, Bostock remarks that "when the non-philosopher dies, he [Plato] suggests that the soul is not after all *completely* separated from the body, but remains 'interspersed with a corporeal element' (81c4)" (ibid. 28).

²³ In this study my focus is basically upon Plato's dialogue, the *Phaedo*; my purpose is not to be involved in a critical examination of the changes and progress of Plato's view of the soul throughout his entire corpus, especially found in such other dialogues as *Phaedrus*, *Republic*, *Gorgias*, *Meno*,

of epistemology—what is referred to as his recollection theory of knowledge, which, in turn, presupposes a cyclical movement of souls. Furthermore, the cyclical movement presupposes his particular construct of reincarnation.

In the *Phaedo*, Socrates faced the immanence of death. In fact, the dialogue presented the day of execution. After discussing suicide with his select group of friends, Socrates entered into a general discussion of his position with respect to death and the immortality of the soul (63e7–67c2).²⁴ After all, his friends found him quite amenable to the imminence of death. In their unfolding discussion, Socrates' companions realized that his comfort and peace with death emerged from his system of beliefs. But what are some of the key components that constitute those beliefs?

Socrates maintained that one of the chief aims of a philosopher is to practice for the occasion of death (64a4–6). Death is not the end; rather, for Socrates, the practice for death is directed towards the reward that comes after death. Since Socrates was a philosopher, he had a unique platter of bountiful rewards awaiting him. He would enjoy the companionship of wise gods and good men. Also, in the afterlife he would relish an eschatological state of the good and the realization of greater blessings. In light of these characteristics of the afterlife, R. Hackforth contended correctly, that “at bottom Socrates' faith is in the moral order of the universe, which demands that a good life on earth should have some reward hereafter.”²⁵ Indeed, for Plato, faith and knowledge (reason) are interlocked in Socrates' belief in life after death.²⁶ In fact, Plato underlines this point in a statement that Cebes, one of Socrates' friends, makes in the process of the discussion. Cebes states that to believe in the immortality of the soul entails a great amount of “faith and persuasive argument” (70b2).²⁷ In fact, as faith and rational persuasive argumentation are intertwined, the dialogue evolves towards one of its central theses, i.e. that the soul is immortal, and that the philosopher alone enjoys eternal existence in the Form world without embarking on another cyclical journey back into the empirical world which he just departed.

Socrates, as a philosopher, had strong courage, therefore, in the face of death. In order to construct a portrayal of Socrates' courage, Plato begins with the question of what constitutes death. The answer provided is that death is

Timaeus, and *Laws*. In light of the entire corpus, I am also aware that Socrates stated that the nature of the soul cannot be comprehended without an understanding of the nature of humans (*Platonis Opera: Phaedrus* 270c1–2). For the sake of brevity, Plato provided a microcosm of this construction in the *Phaedo* which is sufficient for our purpose.

²⁴ References to the *Phaedo* placed within the text are taken from *Platonis Opera: Phaedo* (ed. Joannes Burnet; vol. 1; Oxford: Clarendon, 1900).

²⁵ Plato's *Phaedo*, translated, with introduction and commentary by R. Hackforth (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1955) 42.

²⁶ Plato does not place Socrates in a vacuum; the belief in the immortality of the soul has long been held in Greek thought. For the most part it is thought that Plato adopted the more recent Pythagorean version, which involved the moral purification of the soul as well as holding to that moral purification through the cyclical view of reincarnation.

²⁷ “Παραμυθίας δεῖται καὶ πίστεως” (*Platonis Opera: Phaedo* 70b2).

“the separation of the soul from the body” (64c4–5).²⁸ In order to make his case for defining death in this manner, Socrates begins by noting the philosopher’s distinctions between vices and virtues. Simply put, for him, characteristics associated with the body are not good, whereas characteristics associated with the soul are good. More specifically, the body is spoken of as the pleasures of food, drink, and sex, and it includes the desire for, as well as the wearing of, distinguished clothes, shoes, and bodily ornaments. The body is associated with the darker side of moral vices: wants, desires, fears, and various illusions (e.g. passions, will, and emotions). Additionally, the senses are associated with the body, and, thus, they are inferior in acquiring knowledge. In sum, in contrast to human virtue, the body is inherently “evil” (κακοῦ; 66b6).

On the other hand, the soul in its pure state is reason functioning without interference from the body. In order to attain this state of purity, the soul must approach the object with thought alone. In this realm of thinking, things exist in-themselves, that is, the doctrine of Forms can exist in pure thought (e.g. Justice, Good, Beautiful, Size, Health, Strength). The soul is, therefore, the residence of truth, wisdom, and pure knowledge. Herein, the task of the philosopher is set. Since the philosopher’s task is defined by reality, good judgment, and understanding, Socrates points out to his friends that the philosopher alone is equipped for the task of freeing and separating the soul from the body. He is able to attain this objective because in his training he is taught to approach an object of knowledge with reason or thought alone. Being trained in wisdom and reason, he has the ability to free or release (ἀπολύσει) his mind from the senses (67a1–6). In doing so, he is able to prevent diseases, contaminations, impediments, confusions, and illusions which the body brings to the soul (see 66a1–67b5). Only the philosopher, by means of thought, has this type of access to the soul, the residence of pure Forms. The elite status of the philosopher is exposed: his superior use of reason, thought, intellect, and logic determines his standing as the highest individual on the hierarchical chain of being. Every other human being is in a state of degradation with respect to the philosopher. It is in light of this view of the inner harmony of the soul and the hindrances of the body that Socrates must defend that the soul exists after death.

Socrates’ defense deals with more than just a dualistic construct of the body and the soul. Rather, the soul is integrally wrapped in various crucial components of Socrates’ world view as part of a coherent system of belief. So far we have already noticed some of these elements: the body-soul dualism, the superiority of the wise and intellectual soul, the position of the philosopher, and the definition of freedom. As we proceed, our interest is *not* to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of Socrates’ arguments or their validity; instead, our concern is to grasp some key components of his arguments concerning the immortality of the soul. In this regard, we will focus on two arguments which are sufficient to illustrate the antithetical nature of his position in relation

²⁸ “τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος ἀπαλλαγὴν” (*Platonis Opera: Phaedo* 64c4–5; cf. *Platonis Opera: Gorgias* [ed. Joannes Burnet; vol. 3; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903] 524b). This definition of death—the separation of soul from the body—was common in Plato’s era.

to the historic orthodox Christian position. These two are his cyclical and his recollection arguments.

Plato set up the cyclical argument in the context of a dialogue between the skeptic Cebes and Socrates. Cebes suggests the position taken by some in his day—that after death the soul no longer exists since it is “shattered [dissipated; disbanded] like breath or smoke.”²⁹ In response, Socrates invokes the ancient theory about the recycling of souls. Socrates inquires of Cebes whether souls of men who have died continue to exist in the underworld, since in that case, the ancient theory states that those souls which arrive in the underworld are from here, and those souls which arrive back here are from there (70c7–8). Herein is the cycle. In addition, this understanding is set up in the context of opposites.³⁰ Socrates states that opposites come from opposites; specifically, whenever we have a pair of opposites which are on a par with each other, they are generated (γένεσιν; 70d9) from each other in a cycle of perpetual recurrence, for example, waking and sleeping, greater and smaller. Life and death are also in the category of recurring opposites. In the construct of cyclical recurrence, Socrates maintains that each process in the cycle must be reversed by its opposite in order to exist. For example, the process of moving from waking to sleeping can only exist if there is a return from sleeping to waking. Likewise, the process of living to dying can only exist if there is a return from dying to living. This process must be cyclical rather than linear. If it were linear, then the soul would enter into a sleepless state, and, life would eventually cease. As we can see, however, life does not cease. For life to continue with respect to the soul, as the soul separates from the body in death, the soul must reenter a body for life. Simply put, it can be said that as the soul enters a body, it becomes incarnate in the body. For Socrates, *every reincarnation is an incarnation*. The cyclical argument of opposites affirms a doctrine of reincarnation as part of Plato’s view of the immortality of the soul.

In connection with the cyclical rotation in Socrates’ argument rises his recollection (ἀνάμνησις) argument (72e3–7). For Socrates, the recollection argument is fused with epistemology. If learning is the recovery of knowledge possessed in a previous existence (*recollection*), the soul, the source of true knowledge, must have existed somewhere *before* it was incarnate in a human shape in order to possess understanding. In the flow of the dialogue, the discussion moves from Cebes to Simmias who enters the conversation, not as a skeptic, but as one who wants to be reminded about the content of the recollection theory.³¹ Socrates comes to his assistance with the example that when a person sees, hears, or perceives one thing, that person not only knows

²⁹ “ὡσπερ πνεῦμα ἢ καπνὸς διασκειασθεῖσα” (*Platonis Opera: Phaedo* 70a5). Many scholars point to a similar imagery about the death of the soul in Homer’s *Iliad*: “ψυχὴ δὲ κατὰ χθινὸς ἤϊτε καπνὸς ὄχγετο τετριγυῖα” (*Homeri Ilias* [ed. Thomas W. Allen; vol. 3; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931] ψ:100–101).

³⁰ Scholars often point to Heraclites’s fragment #88 and his argument of opposites as background to Socrates’ argument here (see Heraclitus, *Fragments*, a text and translation with a commentary by R. M. Robinson [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987] #88).

³¹ Calvin in an antithetical manner attacked Plato’s view of recollection (see his *Institutio* II.ii.14., 198; *Institutes* II.ii.14, 273).

the object being perceived but also thinks of another such object. For example, Socrates uses the imagery of a lyre. Seeing a lyre, it would be customary for a person also to imagine a boy playing a lyre. This image of the boy *playing* a lyre would be something recollected, since at the moment the object that is seen is only the lyre in *isolation* (73c4–73d10). In the recollection of an object, then, the object is perceived not only in isolation but also in relation to its function—the person perceives both the lyre and the tune from the lyre.

With this illustration before Simmias and his companions, Socrates turns to the crux of his argument; he speaks of the intersection of the doctrine of Forms and the common statements of knowledge. Herein, he employs another illustration: as two people talk about whether two sticks are equal, one sees them as equal, and the other does not see them as equal. Socrates points out that people can only speak of sticks being equal if they know what Equal is in the Form world. Consequently, Equal stands behind the senses as something different from the judgment by the senses of two things equal to each other. Equal in the Form world and equal things perceived in the sensual world are not the same (see 74c4–9). Clearly, we have knowledge of equal in the sensual world, so Socrates argues that we had to have a prior knowledge of it. In other words, Socrates argues that a person must possess the knowledge of Equal before ever applying it to equal objects. Only by prior contact with the Form world would an individual know what equal is. The general principle is, therefore, that all human learning is acquired by means of recollection. We have this knowledge before birth; it is lost, and it is reestablished by the senses—recollected (75e). The conclusion of Socrates' argument is quite simple for our purposes: if the Forms exist before one's birth, then one's soul exists before one's birth. For Plato, through Socrates' argument, the existence of the Form world is a necessary part of the proof for the immortality of the soul.

Another critical component of Plato's cyclical recurrence is his view that the immortality of the soul is dependent upon an intimate connection with other biological creatures, such as insects, birds, and donkeys. In Plato's construction, a soul that is polluted by the impure elements of the body (e.g. eating, drinking, and sexual gratification) gravitates to a continual existence on earth (81b). Explicitly, in the cycle of reincarnation, inferior souls polluted by the human body depart from the body in death but hang around graveyards waiting for a biological creature to enter. Indeed, these souls pay the penalty for their life of vice; they must wander around "monuments and tombs" (μνήματά τε καὶ τοὺς τάφους), waiting to dwell in another living creature that corresponds to their moral conduct while dwelling in a human body in their prior life.³² Obviously, in Plato's understanding, some animals and insects have souls. Meanwhile, as these souls dwell in such creatures, they wait for a human being to be born in order to reenter a human body. (Hence, the cycle of the soul functions in the following manner: the soul released through death lingers around graves → it enters a biological creature → it enters into another human body.) When the soul enters another human body, it enters at the same level of the vice it practiced when it departed its previous human body. For

³² *Platonis Opera: Phaedo* 81d1.

example, a person who was a glutton in a previous life returns as a glutton. However, the chain of being is not fixed, so the person returning to life can move up or down the chain of being:

Chain of Being:

Philosopher: Form world: live like a swan

↑

Top: Practiced popular & social virtue: those who lived in moderation & justice (without philosophy) = reincarnated as bees, wasps, ants.

↓

Middle: injustice, tyranny, stole = reincarnated as wolves, hawks, kites.

↓

Bottom: gluttons, violence, drunks = reincarnated as donkeys

For Plato, the goal is to move to the status of the philosopher where the cycle ceases. Only the philosopher lives forever in the afterlife free from returning into the body—a state that Plato compares to that of another creature, a swan.

IV. REFORMED ORTHODOXY RESPONDS

In view of Reformed orthodoxy's historic creeds and their understanding of the teaching of the soul in Scripture, Plato's view of the soul is a departure. Reformed orthodoxy would not agree that Scripture teaches the immortality of the soul as dependent upon the cyclical motion of the soul between the Form world and the empirical world (reincarnation). As well, Reformed orthodoxy would not concur that human knowledge is a recollection of knowledge from within the Form world, encountered as the soul makes contact with the Form world in its revolving cycle of perpetual motion in and out of bodies. Simply put, the interrelationship between the Form world and the immortal soul is not the Archimedean point on which the Bible predicates the immortality of the soul. For this reason, Plato's *holistic* construct of the immortality of the soul is *antithetical* to the *holistic* teaching of the immortality of the soul found in Holy Scripture.

The Bible teaches that male and female were created with an immortal soul (Gen 1:26–28; 2:7 [לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה]; 2:21–23). Reformed orthodoxy has clarified Scripture's teaching about the immortal soul. For example, the *Vallérandus Poullain (1551) Confession* made the following statement about God's image: "And therefore He made him [man] after His own image and likeness, giving him, to wit, a soul which is a spirit, as God Himself is, and also immortal, albeit it hath a beginning."³³ Pollanus's (1520–1557) last phrase is important; theologians have maintained that an essential attribute of God is that he is immortal. On the other hand, although an immortal soul is said to be an essential characteristic of human beings, it must be noted that this immortality is given by God. God's nature alone is immortal (1 Tim 6:16), whereas the

³³ "Vallérandus Poullain: Confession of the Glastonbury Congregation (1551)," in *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation: Volume I, 1523–1552*, Compiled with Introductions by James T. Dennison Jr. (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2008) 651.

human soul's immortality "is derived from God's creative activity. In order to clearly distinguish between the Creator's immortality and the creature's immortality, Calvin states that "the term 'soul' [is] an immortal yet created essence" (*Atque animae nomine essentiam immortalem, creatam tamen inteligo*)—it is characterized as "immortal spirit" (*immortalis spiritus*).³⁴ When viewing human beings as image of God, it is the spiritual soul that clearly distinguishes them from the brutes—the engraving of the divine and immortal essence which gives life to a human body (Ps 16:10; Matt 10:28; Luke 16:22–23; 2 Cor 5:6, 8; Heb 12:9; 1 Pet 1:9).

The human fall into sin and its penalty of death, to be sure, raises the issue now as to how this "immortal spirit" is to be viewed at the moment of death. As Reformed exegetes reflected upon this subject, a position emerged that maintained continuity with historic orthodoxy: at the moment of death, the soul immediately separates from the body and continues consciously to live either as a recipient of Christ's blessings or as an object of God's wrath (Eccl 12:7; Luke 16:23–24; 23:43; Acts 7:59; 2 Cor 5:1–8; Eph 4:10; Phil 1:23; Heb 12:23; 1 Pet 3:19; 4:6).³⁵ On the basis of such biblical texts as those just

³⁴ *Institutio* I.xv.2., 135; *Institutes* I.xv.2, 184.

³⁵ This position on the state of the soul after death was definitely found in Calvin. Although it is not my focus, it is still worth noting that the Protestant Reformation did not have a united position on the state of the soul after death. In fact, Calvin scholars point out that his first major theological treatise was *Psychopannychia* (1534) which attacked the Anabaptist view that the soul is in a state of sleep between death and the last judgment (Joannis Calvini, *Joannis Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia: Tractatus Theologici Minores: Psychopannychia. 1534* [ed. Guilielmus Baum, Eduardus Cunitz, and Eduardus Reuss; vol. 5; Brunsvigae: C. A. Schwetschke, 1866] 165–232; English edition: John Calvin, *Tracts and Treatises in Defense of the Reformed Faith: Psychopannychia* [trans. Henry Beveridge; vol. 3; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958] 414–90). Calvin was alarmed with the Anabaptist position since he thought it was affecting the positive advance of the Reformation among the evangelicals in France. Regarding the historical circumstances and current debate on this dispute, one can begin with Heinrich Quistorp, *Die letzten Dinge im Zeugnis Calvins: Calvins Eschatologie* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1941) 50–107; English edition: Heinrich Quistorp, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things* (trans. Harold Knight; Richmond: John Knox Press, 1955) 55–107; Willem Balke, *Calvijn en de Doperse Radikalen* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Ton Bolland, 1973) 23–36; English edition: Willem Balke, *Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals* (trans. William Heynen; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981) 25–38; Benjamin Wirt Farley, ed. and trans., *John Calvin Treatises Against the Anabaptists and Against the Libertines* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982); George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 3d ed., vol. 15: 16th Century Essays & Studies (Kirkville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000) 897–912. In terms of my own focus, I find it interesting that Williams falls into the trap of which I have given warning for those who do not employ the transcendental critique. Williams maintains that Calvin holds to a Platonic view of the soul (p. 901; Williams does not stand alone on this viewpoint, see Gerd Babelotzky, *Platonischer Bilder und Gedankengänge in Calvins Lehre vom Menschen* [Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1977]). Quistorp is not as careless as Williams in his assessment. Quistorp recognizes that Calvin noted respect for Plato and Aristotle's view of the soul while at the same time clearly maintaining that the scriptural teaching on the soul is antithetical to these philosophers (Quistorp, *Die letzten Dinge im Zeugnis Calvins* 69–71; Quistorp, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things* 71–72; see Calvini, *Psychopannychia* 178; Calvin, *Psychopannychia* 420). With respect to our own subject matter, Calvin admits that the insights by Plato and Aristotle about the soul (common grace) surpass certain points by those who claim to be followers of Christ (Calvini, *Psychopannychia* 178; Calvin, *Psychopannychia* 420). Hence, even within the antithesis-common grace paradigm it can be maintained that certain particular insights by non-Christians can surpass the insights by Christians but only as those insights occur within the true parameters of the teaching of biblical revelation. On this crucial point it may be well to have the

listed, Calvin was convinced that the soul's immortal essence continues to survive in the intermediate state between the death of the body and the final resurrection of the body. Calvin is cautious, however, about reading too much into the intermediate state; he warns the church to remain within the domain of Scripture's teaching. For example, Calvin states, "Scripture goes no farther than to say that Christ is present with them [believers upon death], and receives them into paradise . . . that they may obtain consolation, while the souls of the reprobate suffer such torments as they deserve."³⁶ Indeed, Calvin maintains that the soul continues a conscious existence of life after death (Luke 16:14–41). In other words, the soul continues to live in the intermediate state between temporal death and the final resurrection of the body. The secondary standards of the Reformed tradition gives testimony to this biblical truth, for example, "The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption; but the souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them . . ." (*WCF* 32:1).³⁷

Furthermore, theologians in the Reformed tradition have readily maintained that the human body must be viewed as an integrated whole with the soul. Herman Bavinck (1854–1921) summarizes the position: "And precisely because the body, being the organ of the soul, belongs to the essence of man and to the image of God, it originally also participated in immortality."³⁸ Bavinck's position that the image of God includes the immortality of the body and the soul in the original state stimulates questions. In order to remain within our own context, however, those questions will remain mute. Rather,

Latin and English versions of Calvin's statement before us: "De animae facultatibus praeclare aliquot locis Plato: argutissime autem omnium Aristoteles disseruit. Verum quid sit anima, et unde sit, frustra ab iis et universa omnino sapientum natione quaeras, quanquam multo certe et prudentius et sinserius senserunt, quam isti nostri, qui se Christi discipulos esse gloriantur" (Calvini, *Psychopannychia* 178); "Plato, in some passages, talks nobly of the faculties of the soul; and Aristotle, in discoursing of it, has surpassed all in acuteness. But what the soul is, and whence it is, it is vain to ask at them, or indeed at the whole body of Sages, though they certainly thought more purely and wisely on the subject than some amongst ourselves, who boast that they are the disciples of Christ" (Calvin, *Psychopannychia* 420).

³⁶ *Institutes* III.xxv.6, 997. "Scriptura (Matth. 5, 8. 26; Ioann. 12, 32) ubi dixit Christum illis praesentem esse et eas recipere in paradysum ut consolationem percipiant, reproborum vero animas cruciatus quales meritae sunt perpeti, non ultra progreditur" (*Institutio* III.xxv.6., 736).

³⁷ See *Heidelberg Catechism*, Q & A #57; also consult the following secondary standards in *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation: Volume I, 1523–1552*: "William Farel's Summary (1529)" 105; "Waldensian Confession of Méridol (1543)" 456; "Large Emden Catechism (1551)," "Q & R, 182" 627; "Vallérandus Poullain (1551), Death" 651, and "The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting" 657–58; and the "Rhaetic Confession (1552)" 669.

³⁸ *Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 2: *God and Creation* (gen. ed. John Bolt; trans. John Vriend; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004) 560; *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek: tweede deel: Vierde Onveranderde Druk* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1928) 552: "En juist, omdat het lichaam als orgaan der ziel ook behoort tot het wezen van den mensch en tot het beeld Gods, daarom deelde het oorspronkelijk ook in de onsterfelijkheid." In terms of Reformed orthodoxy, Bavinck's position is not original with him, e.g. it is definitely implied in Francis Turretin's discussion on Adam and Eve's original "state of innocence" (*Institutes of Elenctic Theology* [trans. George Musgrave Giger; ed. James T. Dennison Jr.; vol. 1; Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1992] 569). G. C. Berkouwer began his discussion about the immortality of the soul with Bavinck (see his *De Mens het Beeld Gods* [Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1957] 259–310; English edition: *Man: Image of God* [trans. Dirk Jellema; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962] 234–78).

we note merely that Bavinck's position accents the antithetical distinction between the biblical view of immortality and Plato's view of immortality. After all, Bavinck acknowledges that Christians had been too accepting of Platonic nuances about the immortality of the soul.³⁹ Under the direction of biblical revelation and the confessional standards, Bavinck demonstrates the teaching of Scripture to be in strict contrast to Plato, that is, for Bavinck the body is not inherently mortal and evil.⁴⁰ Specifically, as disclosed in NT revelation, the immortality of the soul is never to be separated from the resurrection of the body as patterned in the resurrection of Christ's body. In view of the fall into sin, Bavinck, forcefully affirms his point regarding the body and soul "violently torn from the soul by sin, it [body] will be reunited with it [soul] in the resurrection of the dead."⁴¹ Plato's conception of immortality, of course, incorporates no such relationship between the body and the soul.

As we are confronted with Bavinck's position, we could become suspicious as to whether he affirms a traditional understanding of the intermediate state. We even note that he is more reticent to speculate about that condition of existence than Calvin was. In fact, Bavinck admits that, in his view, the Bible is mostly mysterious and silent about the intermediate state. Even so, Bavinck affirms that Scripture teaches that the soul continues to exist as an immortal subsistence after physical death (Luke 16:14–41).⁴² Bavinck wishes to make

³⁹ *Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 4: *Holy Spirit, Church, and New Creation* (gen. ed., John Bolt; trans. John Vriend; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008) 591; *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek: vierde deel*. Vierde Onveranderde Druk (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1930) 566–67. Benjamin B. Warfield expressed the same concern about those in the church who gave greater affinity to Plato than Scripture on the immortality of the soul and the state of the body (see his "The Old Testament and Immortality," in *Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield—I* [ed. John E. Meeter; Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1970], 346–47).

⁴⁰ See *Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 2: *God and Creation* (gen. ed. John Bolt; trans. John Vriend; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004) 554–62; *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek: tweede deel*. Vierde Onveranderde Druk (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1928) 516–24; and *Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 4 591–92; *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek: vierde deel*. 566–67. On this point, Bavinck is clearly in agreement with Augustine (354–430); it is worth noting that Augustine has provided one of the strongest criticisms of Plato's view of the soul and the body in the early church (see *Augustine: The City of God Against the Pagans, Books XII–XV*, with English translation, Philip Levine, vol. 4 [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966] XIV:5, 280–83). Here, in reference to Plato and the Platonists, Augustine wrote: "For when anyone approves the substance of the soul as the highest good and denounces the substance of the flesh inasmuch as it is through human vanity and not divine truth that he holds this view" ("Nam qui velut summum bonum laudat animae naturam et tamquam malum naturam carnis accusat profecto et animam carnaliter adpetit et carnem carnaliter fugit quoniam id vanitate sentit humana, non veritate divina"). See also Bavinck's further insights in *Reformed Dogmatics: volume 4 600*; *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek: vierde deel* 576 ("Voor eene beschouwing, die alleen het lichaam sterven laat en zich troost met de onsterfelijkheid der ziel, is in het Oude Testament geen plaats. De gansche mensch sterft, als bij den dood de geest, Ps. 146:4, Pred. 12:7, of de ziel, Gen. 35:18, 2 Sam. 1:9, 1 Kon. 17:21, Jona 4:3, uit den mensch uitgaat").

⁴¹ Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: volume 2 559*; *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek: tweede deel* 521 ("het behoort zoo wezenlijk tot den mensch, dat het, ofschoon door de zonde gewelddadig van de ziel losgescheurd, toch in de opstanding weer met haar vereenigd wordt"). See also *Heidelberg Catechism Q & A #37* and #11. I mention here 37 prior to 11 to emphasize the believer's eternal state first and those under eternal judgment second (see also Q & A #57–59).

⁴² See his *Reformed Dogmatics: volume 4 600*; *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek: vierde deel* 576–78; *Our Reasonable Faith* (trans. Henry Zylstra; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977) 557–58; Dutch

clear that though the living eternal soul continues to exist after physical death, the intermediate state is not, however, the final state. In this “interim period,” Christ “is not content with the redemption of the soul, but effects also the redemption of the body.”⁴³ What was not completed for Adam and Eve in the garden will be completed in the final consummation. Hence, for Bavinck, the final condition of the intermediate state is the full-orbed projection of Adam and Eve’s destiny as described in Scripture and reflected in the *Heidelberg Catechism*: “That I, with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ; . . .” (Q & A #1; cf. Q & A #26, 37, 57–58, 125; Rom 12:1–2; 1 Cor 6:12–20; 1 Thess 5:23). What belongs to believers in Christ’s redemption is grounded in one’s state of existence prior to the fall, and what was designed in the pre-fall state was predicated upon the final eschatological existence in Christ’s total redemption for all believers of Christ’s bride.

V. CONCLUSION

Scholars who make it their practice to explore the Christian landscape of higher education will find it difficult to prove that the deterioration of a once outstanding orthodox institution has been the result of that body’s stressing the antithesis between Christian thought and non-Christian thought too much. Rather, I would suggest that the secularization of any such institution occurs because the epistemological, metaphysical, ontological, and ethical truth of the integrative and progressive infallible revelation of the triune God of the Bible has been compromised under what Reformed thought refers to as common grace. In reality, as I have attempted to make clear, a particular concept can only be a common grace insight if it agrees with the truth of the inner fabric of progressive biblical revelation. Unfortunately, too many Christian academicians, for the sake of their own conceptual tolerance towards adopting non-Christian thought, have justified their activity under an incorrect representation of the rubric of common grace. Often this misrepresentation follows a popular pattern. Christian academicians adopt into their discipline principles from non-Christian thought, and, while doing so, they

edition: *Magnalia Dei* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1909) 622–23. Charles Hodge does not approach the intermediate state with the same caution as Calvin and Bavinck; he places before his reader clear parameters about what the Scriptures teach on this doctrine (see his, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3 [New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899] 724–30). Likewise, see Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (4th rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972) 674–76, 679–94, and Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* (trans. George Musgrave Giger; ed. James T. Dennison Jr.; vol. 3; Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 1997) 571–74. Although a strong antithesis can find testimony in the Reformed tradition distinguishing between the biblical notion of immortality of the soul and the platonic view of immortality of the soul, this contrast does not mean that Christianity must surrender the term “immortality” because of some scholars’ contention that the term must be viewed as Greek. Even though Oscar Cullmann does not stand in the Reformed tradition, he has challenged scholars with his assessment that the term *immortality* is Greek, whereas the Christian idea of immortality is *resurrection* (*Auferstehung*) (see his “Unsterblichkeit der Seele und Auferstehung der Toten,” *TZ* 12/2 [1956] 126–56).

⁴³ *Our Reasonable Faith* 558; *Magnalia Dei* 635 (“is Hij met de redding der ziel niet tevreden, maar brengt Hij ook de verlossing van het lichaam tot stand”).

synthesize those principles of choice into the distinct methodological structure of their discipline. At this point, such an academic journey is taken with minimal reflection upon a biblically informed, Christ-centered epistemological approach to their discipline. To be sure, perhaps the Christian academician will note this neglect at some point and will act. In consequence, the academic will take the step of baptizing the secular principles and methodology with abstract and isolated proof-texts from Scripture.

Possibly this scenario is too simplistic, but, in my judgment, the truth is in its simplicity. In my estimation, this picture illustrates a dominant trait of the descent of any institution from a Christian education grounded in historic orthodoxy. With abstract biblical proof-texts in hand, without any true integration of their discipline with progressive biblical revelation, such Christian academicians simply justify a methodology that uses selected precepts of rationalism, empiricism, realism, idealism, romanticism, naturalism, materialism, existentialism, structuralism, or post-structuralism without any significant critique of the Archimedean premises of the methodology of their choice. Out of this state of affairs, in combination with the current obsession that Christian higher education must be socially and culturally relevant, it is not surprising that the dominant controlling ethos of Christian higher institutional life has become a critical-social hermeneutic, that is, a method of interpreting the fallen creation by means of a generic metanarrative of impact, renewal, and transformation of social and cultural realms and norms for the sake of a socio-academic construct of Christ's kingdom. After all, it is thought, since the evolving movement of history and culture is so *distant* from the history and culture portrayed in the biblical narrative or the ecclesiastical creeds, the most that can be employed from the Bible and the creeds for the current age is a set of abstract principles which direct and justify a social/cultural agenda for the academic enterprise.

The deterioration of the historic roots of Christian orthodoxy upon the campuses of Christian learning is straightforward. Christian academicians isolate individual concepts and methods of choice from non-Christian thinkers and adopt them into their own Christian worldview.⁴⁴ In contrast, the directive that needs to be followed is that every concept and method presented by a non-Christian thinker must be subjected to a holistic critical analysis within the structure of the thinker's own system. As concepts and methods are scrutinized and subsequently placed along-side a holistic philosophical understanding of the content of the revelation of God's Word, then the non-Christian system under investigation is exposed for what it is—an antitheti-

⁴⁴ Obviously not all Christian academicians arise in a context where they are interacting mainly with non-Christian academics. Some arise within the halls of Christian academia. Herein, the young Christian mind must be made aware that the Christian mentors within those halls may be the product of the scenario that I am outlining here. Christian mentors may already be tainted by non-Christian concepts and methods which have come to expression in the mentor's own Christian perspective of a particular discipline. Hence, in my judgment, all Christian educators, in whatever stage of life they find themselves, must be willing to apply constantly the transcendental critique to their own thought in order to place themselves in service and subordination to the sovereign wisdom of Christ.

cal system at odds with the truth of God's truth. As demonstrated in our Platonic illustration, only after doing this analysis is the Christian academic in the position to truly evaluate the common grace concepts presented by the non-Christian. Recognizing the antithesis running through any common grace insight, the Christian academic can approach the particular concept grasped by the non-Christian and correctly comprehend and commend it within the scope of the revelation of God's truth. In our presentation of Plato's view of the immortality of the soul, we acknowledged that although Plato understood the soul as immortal (a common grace insight), this conception placed within the holistic structure of his thought emerges as one antithetical to the biblical position of the soul's immortality.⁴⁵ Indeed, *we cannot pursue the truth unless we begin with the truth.*⁴⁶

This essay is intended to encourage those who may be marginalized in academia because of their commitment to the historic roots of the theological and ecclesiastical identity of the institution in which they serve. I have attempted to suggest a way to conduct rigorous academic teaching and scholarship in a manner that will not surrender commitment to God's Word and the historic roots of one's tradition. Concerning my own commitment to the Reformed tradition, I have found enlightening the directive of Van Til, which is submissive to God's Word and the exposition of that Word as summarized in the ecumenical creeds and the Reformed secondary standards. Inside the framework of this paradigm, I have found myself, within the frailty of a fallen mind, sufficiently equipped to engage any system of secular thought. In fact, when a biblical transcendental analysis is employed with respect to encyclopedia of thought, the contemporary socio-cultural world will never have the endowment to set the agenda of Christian academia. Rather, the full-orbed message of the gospel always sets the agenda for interacting with culture—entreating conformity and service to Christ through repentance and faith. Such language may seem archaic and foreign to the pluralism embodied within the present halls of the Christian academy. Nevertheless, some within those corridors wish to preserve the historic roots of the Christian religion as grounded in the self-attesting Christ of Scripture. If you count yourself among these, then allow your voice to be heard from your seat in the academy—not from those

⁴⁵ The approach here is candidly and forcefully summarized by Calvin (*Institutio* II.ii.18., 200–201; *Institutes* II.ii.18., 277). Specifically, allow me to remind the reader that Calvin's analysis is found in footnote 20.

⁴⁶ What is mysteriously missing as one reads Anthony Diekema's (Emeritus President of Calvin College) model of the "Socratic Covenant" is the *a priori* objective truth as found in Holy Scripture. The inscripturated Word is the truth of God *already* given to a fallen world. Specifically, the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and obedience (see *Westminster Confession of Faith: Shorter Catechism* #3). Rather than guarding and defending the truth which God has already established in his creation, Diekema's nine points of the "Socratic Covenant" emphasize the guardianship of academic freedom as being the academic's *pursuit* of the truth (see his *Academic Freedom & Christian Scholarship* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000] 101–3). Herein, the freedom to pursue the truth is not conditional upon the truth already established in God's Word; in other words, the freedom to pursue the truth is not grounded upon a corresponding and coherent view of epistemology which maintains that all pursuit after the truth must be found directly or indirectly in conformity with biblical revelation.

seats where even Michel Foucault (1926–1984) would have to endure nausea (*nausée*) as the powerful elites and masses drown you out, but, in the imagery of Christ, from your designated chair of humility (cf. Luke 11:43; 20:46; Matt 16:24–25; 1 Pet 2:21–25). Just perhaps, those who have ears might hear and, thus, Christian education committed to historic orthodoxy will survive as a unique beacon rather than as just another species of the broad secular educational genus. Why should it not be that every institution within Christian academia would participate in the posture of the Queen of Sheba before the encyclopedic wisdom of Solomon, the pre-figure and type of the encyclopedic wisdom of Christ (see 1 Kgs 10:4–5; 2 Chr 9:3–4). Confronted with the picture of the eschatological glory of Christ's wisdom in the temporal life of Solomon, the spirit of Sheba fully dissipated (וְלֹא־הָיָה בָּהּ עוֹד רוּחַ) and was immersed solely and absolutely in the eternal wisdom of the Christ of Scripture.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Thanks to the Library staff of Covenant College who provided much assistance for this project, especially Barbara Beckman, Thomas Horner, and John Holberg. Also, I am very appreciative of Miriam Mindeman for reading the text and making editorial suggestions.

ERRATUM

In the article by Leslie McFall, "The Chronology of Saul and David," *JETS* 53/3 (2010) 500, line 5, the sentence, "This would solve the problem of Saul's age because he could have been 20–25 years of age *when he killed Goliath* and would have been 60–65 years of age when he died, which seems a reasonable chronology," should read: "This would solve the problem of Saul's age because he could have been 20–25 years of age *when he became king* and would have been 60–65 years of age when he died, which seems a reasonable chronology." Also, Dr. McFall resides in Comberton, not Cumberton.