

Schools For Spirituality: Philosophical Analysis and Practical Suggestions (version 8.0)

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Spirituality has theoretically played a central role in the nation's schools since the 1988 Education Reform Act, which required schools to 'promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils.'¹ However, this requirement has been mired in definitional imprecision, resulting in practical difficulties for both implementation and assessment. This paper draws upon the biblical tradition to formulate truly inclusive definitions of 'spirituality' and 'spiritual development' before applying these within the context of education and making some practical suggestions for overcoming the difficulties posed by the former lack of philosophical clarity on these subjects.

The Spiritual State of Play

According to the latest Department of Education advice, issued November 2011:

All national curriculum subjects provide opportunities to promote pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Explicit opportunities to promote pupil's development in these areas are provided in religious education and the non-statutory framework for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. A significant contribution is also made by school ethos, effective relationships throughout the school... and other curriculum activities. Pupil's spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. As their curiosity about themselves and their place in the world increases, they try to answer for themselves some of life's fundamental questions. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material wellbeing.²

From this rather vague statement one might glean that 'spirituality' is related to religious education and philosophical reflection upon the big questions of existence, but that it may or may not relate to personal, social or health education; that 'spirituality' has something to do with the ethos of and relationships within a school, but not the wider community; that 'spirituality' has to do with the 'inner-lives' and 'non-material wellbeing' of students (even students who don't believe in anything non-material), but not their outer lives or material flourishing.

The Education (Schools) Act 1992 required Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools to keep the Secretary of State informed about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; and literature from the Office for Standards in Education

¹ Quoted www.stapleford-centre.org/Charis/introduction.html.

² Department of Education, November 2011.

(Ofsted) emphasises that: ‘spiritual development is emphatically not another name for religious education [it] is the responsibility of the whole school and of the whole curriculum, as well as of activities outside the curriculum.’³ According to the Chief Inspector’s Annual Report for 2006:

Provision for pupil’s Spiritual Development... is now good or better in about one-third of schools but unsatisfactory in a similar proportion of schools. Good schools do much to enable pupils to gain insights into matters of faith and belief. The notion of spirituality is taken seriously and schools generate a respect for people’s spiritual perceptions... Where provision is poor schools typically offer little reflective, open-minded examination of questions of belief or faith. Collective worship is often poorly planned and hurried so that there is little of substance to cause other than superficial attention. Many teachers fail to cope satisfactorily with the ‘Thought for the Day’ that typically passes for the spiritual element in tutor periods.⁴

I welcome the Inspector’s emphasis on the reflective, open-minded examination of substantive questions about belief; but this report (inevitably, given the 1992 Act) compartmentalizes spiritual development from the issues of moral, social and cultural development; a compartmentalization that is deeply unhelpful.

In 2004 Ofsted lamented that:

what is meant by... ‘spiritual’ ...development has not always been clear. ‘Spiritual’ can be interpreted in different ways. There is also the added complication that any definition has to be acceptable to people of faith, people of no faith, and people of different faiths.⁵

Ofsted subsequently proposed the following definition of ‘spiritual development’:

Spiritual development is the development of the non-material element of a human being which animates and sustains us and, depending on our point of view, either ends or continues in some form when we die. It is about the development of a sense of identity, self-worth, personal insight, meaning and purpose. It is about the development of a pupil’s ‘spirit’. Some people may call it the development of a pupil’s ‘soul’; others as the development of ‘personality’ or ‘character’.⁶

Unfortunately, this rather vague definition conspicuously fails to meet Ofsted’s own criteria of being acceptable to people of ‘no faith’, since its specification of belief in a ‘non-material element of a human being which animates and sustains us’ excludes metaphysical naturalists. Marilyn Mason, Education Officer of the British Humanist Association, sums up the difficulty posed by the spirituality requirement for schools:

3 Ofsted, ‘Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (February 1994), 8.

4 Annual Report of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/hoc/157/157-pf.htm; cf. ‘Secondary Schools’, subsection 138 www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/hoc/157/157-02.htm (18/12/06).

5 Ofsted, ‘Promoting and evaluating pupil’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development’, March 2004 www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubs.displayfile&id=3598&type=pdf.

6 *ibid.*

In England and Wales, ‘spiritual development’ in the National Curriculum has meant that educationalists have had to decide what ‘spiritual’ means in schools. But despite some useful interpretations from SCAA, Ofsted et al, nuances from the outside world creep in through the school gates and keep the confusion going. The word is tainted, ambiguous, and difficult to pin down or use with confidence, leaving teachers wondering what exactly they are supposed to be developing and inspectors scratching around, sometimes quite imaginatively, for evidence of it...⁷

Defining ‘Spirituality’

Part of the difficulty with defining spirituality is that people have different ideas about what spirituality should involve. While some people think that spirituality should involve God, plenty of people (e.g. Buddhists and Secular Humanists) engage in spirituality without any reference to God.⁸ Alexander W. Astin *et al* state that ‘Spirituality points to our inner, subjective life, as contrasted with the objective domain of observable behaviour...’⁹ However, many people associate spirituality with certain *spiritual practices* (e.g. prayer, fasting, yoga or recycling). Astin *et al* imply a distinction between spiritual and non-spiritual activities that Christian spirituality, for one, rejects (cf. Romans 1:12; Colossians 1:10 & 3:23). Hence I suggest that the attempt made in the National Curriculum to delineate the ‘spiritual’ from the ‘moral’, ‘social’ and ‘cultural’ is fundamentally flawed. Mason’s complaint is partially on target:

we might all agree what moral, social and cultural development mean. That’s the M, S and C bits of SMCD. But how do we deal with that first S – what would a spiritually developed citizen be like, I wonder? The place of ‘spiritual’ in the list of desirables suggests that it must be something distinct from moral or social or cultural... [Yet] What, that schools can realistically nurture, is left..?¹⁰

Rather, spirituality should be seen as *encompassing* the middle letters of SMCD. That is, morality, society and culture are best conceived as being part and parcel of spirituality.

A *general* definition of spirituality must avoid prescriptions about the *specific content* of spirituality; which means that it must focus instead upon the *general structure* of spirituality. The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) was thus on

7 Marylin Mason, ‘Spirituality - What on earth is it?’
www.humanism.org.uk/site/cms/contentviewarticle.asp?article=1264

8 cf. Julian Baggini, ‘You don’t have to be religious to pray’
www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2012/jan/12/belief-benefit-prayer; Alain de Botton, *Religion for Atheists* (Hamish Hamilton, 2012); Robert C. Solomon, *Spirituality for the Skeptic: The Thoughtful Love of life*, new edition (Oxford University Press, 2006); Andre Comte-Sponville, *The Book Of Atheist Spirituality: An Elegant Argument for Spirituality Without God* (London: Bantam Press, 2008).

9 Alexander W. Astin, Helen S. Astin & Jennifer A. Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Student’s Inner Lives* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 4.

10 Mason, *op cit*.

the right track to suggest that spirituality ‘has to do with relationships with other people and, for believers, with God.’¹¹ However, I propose that the focus on relationship with other people (and perhaps God) is too narrow, and that a better definition of spirituality is as follows:

- Spirituality concerns *how humans relate to reality* - to themselves, to each other, to the world around them and (most importantly) to ultimate reality – *via their worldview beliefs, concomitant attitudes and subsequent behaviour.*

In other words, *spirituality is about how one relates to reality through the combination of one’s head, heart and hands.*

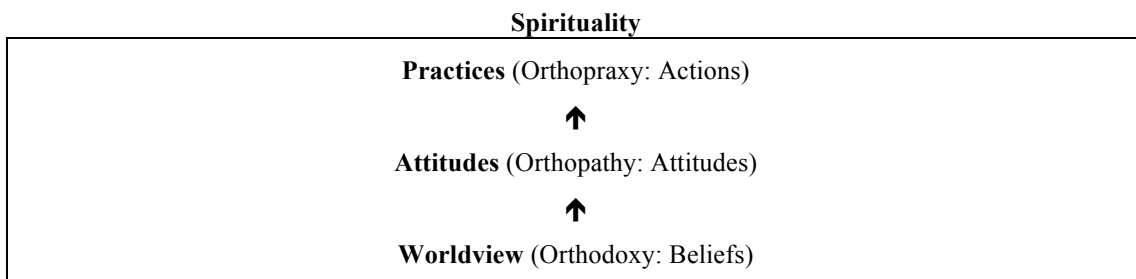
This entirely general definition of spirituality comports with the Biblical understanding of how humans learn, found in Deuteronomy 31:10-12:

Then Moses commanded them: ‘At the end of every seven years... when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose, you shall read this law before them in their hearing. Assemble the people - men, women and children, and the foreigners residing in your towns - so they can listen and *learn to fear* [i.e. respect] the LORD your God and *follow* carefully all the words of this law.’ (my italics)¹²

Educationalist Perry G. Downs comments:

Moses states that he wanted the people to learn to fear the Lord. The word translated ‘learn’ (*lamath*) is the most common Hebrew word for learning. It implies a subjective assimilation of the truth being learned, an integration of the truth into life. Learning was to be demonstrated in two ways, by a change of attitude and by a change in action.¹³

What Bill Smith says of Christian spirituality goes for *all* spiritualities: ‘Biblical spirituality is holistic in the truest sense. It encompasses reason and feeling... we need to proclaim and live a... Christianity that integrates the mind (orthodoxy), the heart (orthopathy) and the hands (orthopraxy).’¹⁴ All spiritualities can be analyzed in terms of this generic three-part structure:



11 SCAA Discussion Papers: No. 3, ‘Spiritual and Moral Development’, September 1995
www.qca.org.uk/downloads/6149_re_spiritual_and_moral_develop.pdf.

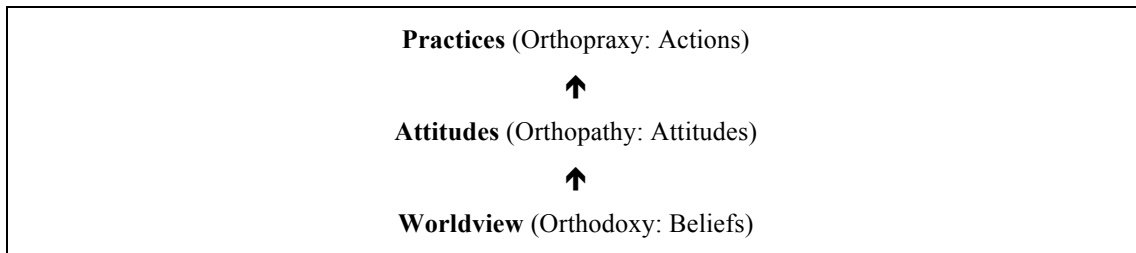
12 Unless otherwise specified, all scriptural quotations are from the TNIV.

13 Perry G. Downs, *Teaching For Spiritual Growth* (Zondervan, 1994), 25.

14 Bill Smith, ‘Blazing the North-South Trail’, *Just Thinking*, Winter 2001, 11.

The tripartite understanding of spirituality as a matter of orthodoxy, orthopraxy and orthopathy should have a familiar ring to those acquainted with Jesus' response to a teacher of the law about the requirement to 'Love the Lord your God with all your *heart* [i.e. your will, your attitudes]... and with all your *mind* [including your worldview], and with all your *strength* [i.e. your actions]' (Mark 12:30, my italics).¹⁵ Jesus' God-centred principle commandment is of course immediately and organically followed by the self-and-other-centred command to 'love your neighbour as yourself' (Mark 12:31 & 33, cf. Leviticus 19:18). The following diagram represents the resultant inner structure of Christian spirituality:

Christian Spirituality = Love God, and thus your neighbour, with all your:



The same structure is seen in the crowd's response to Peter at Pentecost:

When the people heard this [i.e. when they believed the truth-claims about Jesus and his resurrection], they were cut to the heart [their attitude was one of positive response] and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' [they acted in response]. (Acts 2:37)

1 Peter 3:15 urges Christians:

In your *hearts* [broadly construed as a matter of both mind and attitude] set apart Christ as Lord and always be prepared to *give* [this is something one must be prepared to *do*] an answer [*apologia*] for the reason for the *hope* that you have [in your heart]. But do this with [a heart attitude of] gentleness and respect. (my italics)

Paul advises the Colossians:

¹⁵ In point of fact, Mark 12:30 reads: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart [*kardia*] and with all your soul [*psyche*] and with all your mind [*dianoia*] and with all your strength [*ischus*].' However, Mark includes the response to Jesus' answer from the scholar who prompted it: 'we must love God with all our heart, mind, and strength.' (Mark 12:33) In Matthew 22:37 Jesus says: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind'. In Luke 10:27 Jesus says: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind.' While the synoptic gospels present us with the *authentic voice* of Jesus, they don't present us with his *precise words* here (indeed, in Luke it isn't Jesus, but the teacher of the law, who is quoted). However, in each case there's a clear reference to Deuteronomy, which contains the tripartite command to 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.' (Deuteronomy 6:5, cf. Joshua 22:5) We may take 'soul' here as synonymous with 'mind', although 'soul' can be used to refer to the specific capacity of the human mind or spirit to relate to God (cf. Psalm 42:1-2, Psalm 103:2). It may be that 'heart' and 'soul' were paired by Jesus in the sense of 'I love you heart and soul' (i.e. 'with all that I am'), while 'strength' and 'mind' were paired to suggest both the inner (mind) and outer (strength) aspects of a person's life.

And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And *let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts* [‘all your heart’], to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom* [‘all your mind’], singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And *whatever you do* [‘all your strength’], in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians. 3:14-17, ESV, my italics)¹⁶

As Douglas Groothuis warns: ‘Christianity makes claims on the entire personality; accepting it as true is not a matter of mere intellectual assent, but of embarking on a new venture in life.’¹⁷ Once again, *this is true of all spiritualities*. All spiritualities are rooted in truth claims about reality that organically produce the fruit of different behavioural practices via different attitudes or value commitments. Hence we can draw upon the Biblical tradition to formulate *an entirely generic definition of spirituality*. This analysis of spirituality (unlike that proposed by Ofsted) is truly ‘inclusive’, in that it is ‘meaningful to all types of school and acceptable to people of all faith as well as those of no [religious] faith... a common denominator with which most of us can agree.’¹⁸

The Foundational Role of Worldview

A person’s actions are ‘spiritual’ insofar as they are a natural outworking of their beliefs about reality and their attitudes towards what they believe about reality. Spiritualities embody different answers to the question of how people can best relate to reality (or how they *ought* to relate to reality – hence spirituality encompasses ethics). Spiritualities make distinctive and mutually contradictory claims to truth (even those that, self-defeatingly, repudiate truth). As atheist philosopher Stephen Law acknowledges: ‘Religions make claims that are incompatible. Christians believe Jesus is God and also that he was physically resurrected. Muslims, on the other hand, deny both these claims.’¹⁹ Michael Hand from the Institute of Education argues:

Pupils should be given opportunities to consider religious propositions, and be equipped to make informed, rational judgements on their truth or falsity, on the grounds that some of those propositions *may in fact be true*. Religions [i.e. spiritualities] make claims about the world with far-reaching implications for the way life should be lived; if there is a genuine possibility that some of those claims are true, pupils have a right to be made aware of them and provided with the wherewithal to evaluate them.²⁰

16 The context of Paul’s discussion puts the emphasis on the heart-attitude of the Colossians; but it’s clear that this attitude is formed in response to a strong and specific knowledge¹⁶ of the *word (logos) of Christ*, and that the appropriate attitude to this *word* (i.e. not only Christ’s teachings, but to the very person of Christ who makes them ‘one body’) results in actions reflecting the nature (‘in the name’) of Christ.

17 Douglas Groothuis, *On Pascal*, (Thompson Wadsworth, 2003), 41.

18 Ofsted, ‘Promoting and evaluating pupil’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development’, March 2004.

19 Stephen Law, *The War for Children’s Minds* (Routledge, 2006), 96.

20 Michael Hand, ‘What is RE for? Event Report’

www.ippr.org.uk/uploadedFiles/research/events/Education/RE%20Event%20Report.pdf.

Of course, it's not only 'religions' (e.g. Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, etc.) that make truth claims with far-reaching implications, but *all* spiritualities, irrespective of their religious status. Metaphysical naturalists like Richard Dawkins make just as far-reaching philosophical truth claims as do theists. SCAA was absolutely correct to affirm that: 'Pupils should be challenged by hearing the claims to truth offered by people with a different religious or philosophical perspective on life.'²¹

Much educational discussion of spirituality has placed greater emphasis on *feelings* than upon philosophical *beliefs*. For example, HMI's 1985 discussion of *The Curriculum from 5 to 16* says that spirituality concerns: 'feelings and convictions about the significance of human life and the world which pupils may experience within themselves...'²² Though feelings and beliefs are by no means mutually exclusive categories, and while feelings would be included within the category of 'heart' in our definition of spirituality, our analysis of spirituality suggests that philosophical questions are foundational to spirituality, and should therefore be given greater educational emphasis. Mason acknowledges:

Understanding the beliefs of others, even when one does not share them, is a worthwhile aim, and one that many humanist pupils appreciate... Discussing other people's beliefs can, of course, help one to formulate one's own, another important aspect... for personal development and self-esteem, even for the non-religious...²³

Stephen Law cogently advocates placing greater emphasis on philosophical debate:

Children should be encouraged to scrutinize their own beliefs and explore other points of view... Acquiring these skills involves developing, not just a level of intellectual maturity, but a fair degree of emotional maturity too... Judging impartially involves identifying and taking account of your own emotional biases. By thinking critically and carefully about your own beliefs and attitudes, you may develop insights into your own character. By stepping outside of your own viewpoint and looking at issues from the stance of another, you can develop a greater empathy with and understanding of others. So by engaging in this kind of... critical activity, you are likely to develop not only the ability to reason cogently, but also what now tends to be called 'emotional intelligence'... The approach [I am advocating] might loosely be termed 'philosophical', though I should stress that doesn't mean children should be given an academic course on the history of philosophy. What it means is that they should be trained and encouraged to approach questions in a particular kind of way. We should get them in the habit of thinking in an open, reflective, critical way, so that these intellectual, emotional and social skills and virtues are developed... there's good evidence that children, even fairly young children, *can* think philosophically. And... there's a growing body of evidence that it's good for them academically, socially and emotionally. The

21 SCAA Discussion Papers: No. 3, 'Spiritual and Moral Development', September 1995, *op cit*.

22 HMI, *The Curriculum from 5 to 16*, (Curriculum Matters 2) DES (1985).

23 Marilyn Mason, REC Seminar, 7th November 2000, 'Creativity, culture and humanist spirituality' www.humanism.org.uk/site/cms/contentviewarticle.asp?article=1263.

kinds of skills such philosophy programmes foster are, surely, just the sort of skills we need new citizens to develop.²⁴

I join with Mason in hoping that such a philosophical emphasis ‘could begin to address the relativism too often seen in RE, where talk of “different truths” or “subjective truth” seems to have become the accepted way of demonstrating tolerance and mutual respect.’²⁵ The pre-requisite of genuine tolerance is the belief that what one is tolerating is in fact wrong, but to be admitted to the intellectual marketplace nonetheless. It is the self-contradictory, post-modern rejection of the belief that mutually contradictory beliefs cannot all be true that is genuinely intolerant, because it seeks to exclude everything besides itself from the intellectual marketplace.²⁶

Glen Schultz explains that: ‘At the foundation of a person’s life, we find his beliefs. These beliefs shape his values, and his values drive his actions.’²⁷ What we believe about the answers to the fundamental questions affects our attitudes, decisions and actions in life. That is, *our worldview is the foundation of our spirituality* (cf. Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 10:5). A worldview provides answers to fundamental questions, such as:

- The fundamental question of *Ultimate Reality* (is it personal or impersonal, natural or supernatural?)
- The question of *Meaning and Purpose* (what is the meaning or purpose, if any, of existence?)
- The question of *The World around Us* (is it created or un-created, chaotic or orderly, matter, mind, or both?)
- The question of *Human Origin, Nature and Destiny* (are we intended or unintended beings? Are we complex machines, creatures made in God’s ‘image’, or what? Do we have free will? What, if anything, happens to us after we die?)
- The question of *Ethics* (is there such a thing as objective right and wrong? How should we live?)
- The question of *Knowledge* (what is knowledge? How is it possible for us to know?)

Note that questions about values, both in the realm of ethics and meta-ethics, are elements of a worldview which grounds a given spirituality, and is not separate from spirituality as is implied by current curriculum standards.

A *belief* is someone’s view of how reality is. According to J. Moreland: ‘A belief’s impact on behaviour is a function of three of the belief’s traits: its content, strength, and centrality.’²⁸ The *content* of a belief is *what* is believed. Reality is indifferent to what we believe about it, or how sincere our beliefs are. Our beliefs about reality are

24 Law, *op cit*, 35-36 & 39.

25 Marilyn Mason, ‘What is RE for? Event Report’

www.ippr.org.uk/uploadedFiles/research/events/Education/RE%20Event%20Report.pdf.

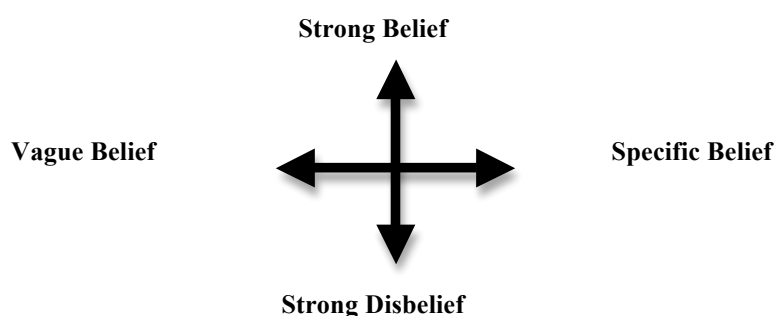
26 cf. Stephen Law, *The War for Children’s Minds* (Routledge, 2006), 94-98.

27 Glen Schultz, *Kingdom Education* (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 1998), 39.

28 J.P. Moreland, *Love Your God With All Your Mind* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1997), 73.

true or false depending upon the way reality actually is.²⁹ A belief's *strength* is 'the degree to which you are convinced the belief is true... The more certain you are of a belief... the more you rely on it as a basis for action.'³⁰ The *centrality* of a belief 'is the degree of importance the belief plays in your entire set of beliefs, that is, in your worldview.'³¹ The more central a belief is in our noetic structure, the greater the effect would be on one's spirituality were the belief in question to be revised or abandoned: 'In sum, the content, strength and centrality of a person's beliefs play a powerful role in determining the person's character and behaviour.'³²

Following James W. Sire³³, we can plot beliefs on a spectrum with two axes measuring *strength* and *content*, from strong belief to strong disbelief, and from vague belief to specific belief. Beliefs can be simultaneously more or less vague and more or less strong components of our noetic structure:



For example, if you disagree with me about God's existence you may have a vague or a specific idea of what 'God' means; and you may disagree with me strongly or only weakly. Agnostics who say they do not (rather than cannot) know whether God exists would place themselves halfway along the spectrum of belief-strength on this question, having no strong belief either way. However, a cross-sample of agnostics might place themselves at different points on the *content* spectrum.

The content, strength and centrality of what we believe is and isn't true about reality affects what attitudes we take towards reality and what practices our spirituality includes (e.g. atheists are unlikely to adopt a spirituality involving prayer):

- Our worldview *beliefs* ground our spiritual *attitudes* which thereby jointly sustain spiritual *practices*.

Faith and Works

Neo-atheists like Richard Dawkins persist in the delusion that 'faith' is automatically 'blind trust, in the absence of evidence, even in the teeth of evidence.'³⁴ But as

29 cf. Douglas Groothuis, *Truth Decay: Defending Christianity Against The Challenges Of Postmodernism* (Leicester: IVP, 2000); J. Moreland, 'What is Truth?' www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOJ9GDpQBUI&feature=related.

30 Moreland, *Love Your God With All Your Mind*, 74.

31 *ibid.*

32 *ibid.*, 75.

33 cf. James W. Sire, *Why Should Anyone Believe Anything At All?* (Leicester: IVP, 1994), 22.

34 Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford, 1989), 198.

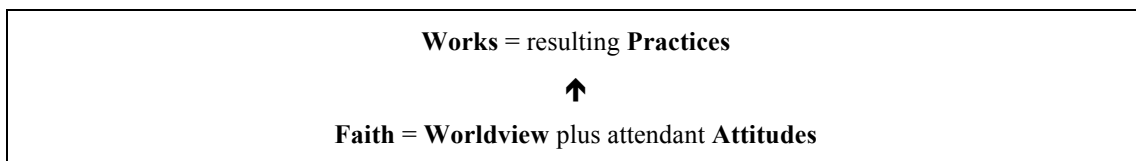
theologian Alister McGrath responds: ‘This arbitrary and idiosyncratic definition simply does not stand up to serious investigation. In fact, it is itself an excellent example of a belief tenaciously held and defended “in the absence of evidence, even in the teeth of evidence.”’³⁵ Rather, faith is a decided *attitude* of trust grounded on the *belief* that the object of trust is both real and trustworthy. In other words: *faith is trusting belief*. With this definition in mind, we can say that *every spirituality involves faith*, because every spirituality involves an act of trusting belief in something, in someone (even if that someone is yourself), or in some community of persons. There is no necessary competition between faith and reason.

The New Testament letter of James argues that true faith naturally results in faith-filled actions (i.e. works):

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith; I have deeds.’ Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that - and shudder. (James 2:14-19)

Any spirituality can be understood in terms of attitudes based upon worldview beliefs (i.e. the combination of belief *that* with belief *in* which constitutes ‘faith’), that in turn jointly result in various spiritual actions (i.e. ‘works’):

Spirituality as Faith & Works



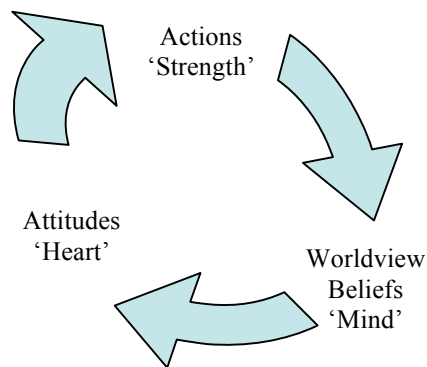
Hence C.E.M. Joad affirms that:

action always presupposes an attitude of mind from which it springs, an attitude which, explicit when the action is first embarked upon, is unconscious by the time it has become an habitual and well established course of conduct. When I act in a certain manner towards anything, I recognize by implication that it possesses those characteristics which make my conduct appropriate... If I cannot find good grounds for my beliefs, I shall certainly not persuade myself to act in conformity to them; thus, if I do not accept the attribution of personality to God I shall not succeed in inducing myself to act towards him as if he were a person... Thought, in other words, precedes action in the religious as well as other spheres, and the practical significance of the precepts of religion is not separable from the theoretical content from which they derive. It is, then, because my intellect is on the whole convinced that I made such shift as I can to live conformably with its dictates... intellect, faith, will and

³⁵ Alister McGrath, *Dawkins’ God* (Blackwell, 2005), 91.

desire... co-operate to produce religious belief and the endeavour to act conformably with it.³⁶

That is, spiritual practices are not only the *result of* our spiritual beliefs and their attendant attitudes, but also constitute additional *openings to* the object of faith (whether real or imagined), openings that re-enforce our initial beliefs and attitudes. Spiritual practices are not just the natural, practical outworking *of* faith, but also positive aids *to* faith. Spiritual practices are part of a spiritual ‘positive feedback loop’ (this is obvious when one thinks of practices such as prayer; but spiritual practice encompasses the whole of life *insofar as it is lived out of our spiritual beliefs and attitudes*). Our attitudes not only reflect what we believe, they can restrict the range of truth-claims we will even actively consider for belief. In light of this fact, it would be appropriate to represent spirituality as a dynamic loop:



As C. Stephen Evans writes: ‘True faith... is a trust that must express itself in such things as actions, emotions, and attitudes as well as beliefs.’³⁷

Intrinsic and Integrative Spirituality

Elizabeth A. Dreyer and John B. Bennett comment that:

Much of [a person’s] worldview is inherited from family, education, society, relationships. But as adults, we have the opportunity to name, reflect on, and shape these values in freedom. No authentic spirituality is simply a ‘construct’ that we have mindlessly appropriated from the world around us – whether from a religion or our consumer culture. Nor is genuine spirituality coerced in any way...³⁸

36 C.E.M. Joad, *The Recovery of Belief* (London: Faber, 1952), 16-17.

37 C. Stephen Evans, *Why Believe? Reason and Mystery as Pointers to God* (Eerdmans/IVP, 1996), 146.

38 Elizabeth A. Dreyer & John B. Bennett, *Spirituality in Health and Education Newsletter*, Volume 3, issue 1, September 2006 www.spirituality.ucla.edu/newsletter/3.html.

One can thus distinguish between ‘intrinsic’ and ‘extrinsic’ spirituality. Intrinsic spirituality is self-consciously accepted and internalised by an agent as an end in itself (rather than as a pragmatic means to an end) and is hence far more transformative than an extrinsic spirituality that’s a matter of mere external conformity.³⁹ Robert Winston explains that:

Extrinsic religiosity [is] defined as religious self-centredness. Such a person goes to church or synagogue as a means to an end - for what they can get out of it... Going to church (or synagogue) becomes a social convention. [Gordon] Allport thought that intrinsic religiosity was different. He identified a group of people who were intrinsically religious, seeing their religion as an end in itself. They tended to be more deeply committed; religion became the organising principle of their lives, a central and personal experience. In support of his research, Allport found that prejudice was more common in those individuals who scored highly for extrinsic religion. The evidence generally is that intrinsic religiosity seems to be associated with lower levels of anxiety and stress, freedom from guilt, better adjustment in society and less depression. On the other hand, extrinsic religious feelings - where religion is used as a way to belong to and prosper within a group - seem to be associated with increased tendencies to guilt, worry and anxiety.⁴⁰

Sociologist Steve Fuller suggests that ‘most people rarely *decide* to believe anything in particular, simply because it is more convenient to move through a world already equipped with default beliefs. Active rejection takes work, passive acceptance does not.’⁴¹ Nevertheless, personal integrity demands an intrinsic spirituality; for any spirituality that’s merely ‘extrinsic’ will produce cognitive dissonance.

How *integrative* or *disintegrative* one’s spirituality is depends in part upon whether it is an intrinsic or an extrinsic spirituality. However, it also depends upon the extent to which a) one’s spiritual practices cohere with and flow from one’s spiritual attitudes and the extent to which b) one’s spiritual attitudes stand in a positive or negative relationship to one’s worldview beliefs. A fully integrative spirituality is an intrinsic spirituality in which all one’s practices naturally flow from (and hence cohere with) a positive affective relationship with one’s worldview beliefs. A disintegrative spirituality, by contrast, is one in which dissonance is engendered by conflict within or between the three elements of spirituality (i.e. mind, heart and strength). For example, the person who believes that God exists but who reacts to this belief with an attitude of resentment and deliberate malfeasance will have a disintegrative spirituality. The tension generated by this lack of spiritual integration can be resolved either by removing (or repressing) the belief that God exists, or by changing the

39 cf. Theodore J. Chamberlain & Christopher A. Hall, *Realized Religion: Research on the Relationship between Religion and Health* (London: Templeton Foundation Press, 2000); Mark Baker & Richard Gorsuch, ‘Trait Anxiety and Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religiousness’, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Jun., 1982), 119-122
www.psicometria.unich.it/data/uploads/Leo/Arcolo%20Religion.pdf; Tara Joy Cutland, ‘Intrinsic Christianity, Psychological Distress and Help-Seeking’, PhD Thesis, University of Leeds (2000)
www.psuche.co.uk/Intrin-Christianity-Psych-Distress-and-Help-seeking.pdf.

40 Robert Winston, ‘Why do we believe in God?’ www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,,1590776,00.html;
cf. B.A. Robinson, ‘The relationship between church membership and prejudice’
www.religioustolerance.org/chr_prej.htm.

41 Steve Fuller, *The Intellectual* (Cambridge: Icon, 2006), 27.

orientation of the heart. The danger in seeking spiritual integration is thus that we will resolve spiritual tension by aligning our beliefs with our actions and/or attitudes, rather than aligning our actions and/or attitudes with our beliefs, thereby flouting our epistemic responsibilities (cf. Psalm 14:1 & 53:1).

The Importance of Community

Community is an almost inevitable component in the positive feedback loop of spirituality. Sociologist David Burnett reminds us that: ‘Worldviews are incarnated in the actual ways of life of a person and his society.’⁴² W. Jay Wood explains:

we are not alone in our efforts to become morally and intellectually virtuous persons; our careers as moral and intellectual agents are developed in a community context... What goals are worth pursuing, what goals should be subordinated to others, what practices ought to be avoided and which pursued, and what resources are available to assist us in moral and intellectual growth are matters shaped in large measure within families, churches, schools and other social frameworks.⁴³

The synagogue, church, mosque, scientific society, humanist association, school or university is a ‘plausibility structure’, a community that makes the faith and works of a given spirituality a more plausible or ‘live’ option (to borrow a term from William James) than it would otherwise be. As Charles Colson writes: ‘A community is a gathering around shared values; it is a commitment to one another and to common ideas and aspirations.’⁴⁴ In other words:

- A community is the social embodiment of its spirituality, with shared beliefs, shared attitudes, and consequently, shared practices.

For example, the belief that God exists and is personally known through a revelation which culminates in the incarnation, atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ can lead to an *attitude* of loving worship in response to God, an attitude that informs the *practice* of Christian spirituality as life lived as part of a community centered upon and guided by God’s loving self-revelation, and which reaches out with that loving revelation to non-Christians. As Colson succinctly puts it, the church is: ‘the community called by God to love him and to express that love in service to others.’⁴⁵ Christian community is thus the spiritual fellowship of interests and common liabilities practiced by a body of people worshipping Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. That is: *Christian community* (rather than any other sort of community) *happens* (community is an active thing) *when a group of people love each other and ‘the world’ because they love God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit with all their mind, heart and strength.* Note that this definition doesn’t presuppose the truth of Christian spirituality, only that the members of the community *believe* certain things to be true *and respond accordingly.* While I have drawn my analysis of spirituality and spiritual community from the biblical tradition and illustrated it using Christian theism as an example, this analysis is *entirely general* in nature; it applies to the spirituality of

42 David Burnett, *Clash of Worlds* (Monarch, 2002), 13.

43 W. Jay Wood, *Epistemology, Becoming Intellectually Virtuous* (Apollos, 1998), 20.

44 Charles Colson, *Against the Night* (Vine, 1999), 95.

45 *ibid*, 130.

metaphysical naturalists just as much as it applies to the spirituality of Christian theists, of atheists and agnostics as well as of religious believers, and of the school as much as of the church.

Although different spiritualities contradict one-another, spiritualities can also overlap. Hence, although different spiritualities will have different ideas about which specific worldview beliefs correspond with reality, and hence which attitudes and practices spirituality should include, a pluralistic educational community can (indeed must) be established around a shared educational spirituality (a spirituality that overlaps with the different spiritualities that come together to form the school community). A school community necessarily aspires to certain shared beliefs (e.g. in the know-ability and communicability of truth about reality; in ethical standards which facilitate co-operative truth-seeking), certain shared attitudes (e.g. a commitment to co-operative truth-seeking) and hence certain shared practices (e.g. attending lessons, doing homework, etc). Again, a school may commune in shared beliefs, values and activities built around the importance of genuinely tolerant intellectual debate concerning the truth-value of different spiritualities and worldviews, around the belief that spiritual integration is preferable to spiritual disintegration, that personal integrity requires that the search for spiritual integration be chaperoned by a commitment to fulfilling one's epistemic obligations, and so on.

Schools face a particularly strong form of a problem faced by many communities: that the members of a community do not necessarily share exactly the same beliefs, attitudes or practices (or at least, not with the same strength). Schools face this problem in a particularly strong form because they are less organic communities than other types of community. One doesn't opt into the school community in the way one opts into the scientific community; hence the former community has to work harder at fostering its sense of community. This must be done through actively inculcating acceptance of its beliefs, attitudes and practices. It is noteworthy that attempting to force compliance with the spiritual practices of the school community may well be less effective than attempting to inculcate a rational acceptance of the beliefs from which those practices ultimately flow. Disruptive behavior on the part of pupils can therefore be seen as an educational opportunity to help students to explore their spirituality in a manner fruitful for both teacher and student.

Spiritual Development

To recap: Spirituality can be understood in an inclusive manner as being about *how humans relate to reality* - to themselves, to each other, to the world around them and (most importantly) to ultimate reality – *via their worldview beliefs, concomitant attitudes and subsequent behaviour*. Beliefs may be more or less precise, subjectively certain and noetically central. These three qualities have knock-on effects upon attitudes and behaviour. We have noted the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic spirituality and the difference between integrative and disintegrative spirituality. Spirituality is both authentic and transformative when it is intrinsic rather than extrinsic. Personal integrity requires that our spirituality should be integrative and that

integration should not be bought at the price of flouting our epistemic responsibilities.⁴⁶

Taking these definitions and distinctions into account, it becomes apparent that to undergo ‘spiritual development’ means:

- *making progress towards the goal of self-consciously informing all of one’s relationships (with oneself, other people, the world and ultimate reality) through the wise internalization of (precise and strongly held) worldview beliefs, coherent concomitant attitudes and behavioural practices (i.e. in an integrative manner that respects one’s epistemic responsibilities).*

With the qualifications taken as read, we can define ‘spiritual development’ as:

- making progress towards the goal of self-consciously informing all of one’s relationships through the wise internalization of worldview beliefs, appropriate concomitant attitudes and behavioural practices.

Stratford Caldecott appears to me to be thinking along the same lines when he writes that: ‘knowledge can only be attained through the systematic ordering of the soul or personality in pursuit of integrity; that is, the discipline or thought (by logic) and will (by virtue).’⁴⁷

There’s an overlap here with two ancient perspectives upon the goal of education and of spirituality. First, consider the Greco-Roman tradition of ‘liberal arts education’ as announced by Donald A. Crosby:

the most important course at the university... is the course of each student’s own life, what in Latin is called *curriculum vitae*. This is where the tradition of the liberal arts puts its emphasis. The proper answer to the oft-heard question “What can a person do with a liberal education?” is to respond that the more appropriate question is “What can a liberal education contribute to the formation and development of a person’s life as a whole?” A liberal education is more than a means to obtaining and keeping a good job, as undeniably important as that is. It is intended to equip a person to live life in all its dimensions... and to live it responsibly and to the fullest as a human being... Proper development of a student’s character can enable that student to see beyond education merely as certification and preparation for a job to the critical importance and value of a life that is lived well in all of its dimensions, a life that continues throughout its course to develop and sustain a sense of purpose and fulfillment in oneself and the satisfaction of contributing responsibly and effectively to the wellbeing of others. The focus of a liberal education is on what the philosopher Aristotle called *eudaimonia*, the flourishing of a complete human life. This flourishing includes being qualified for the workplace but sets that commendable goal in the total context of an

46 Different spiritualities may estimate our epistemic responsibilities differently, but there nevertheless exists a shared core of essential epistemic wisdom. For example, any spirituality that ignores the law of non-contradiction rules itself out of discussion. Moreover, any spirituality that proposes a self-contradictory epistemology rules itself out of serious contention for our allegiance.

⁴⁷ Stratford Caldecott, *Beauty for Truth’s Sake: On the Re-enchantment of Education* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos, 2009), 21.

enriching, challenging, and contributing human life.⁴⁸

Arthur F. Holmes summarises:

Liberal education is an open invitation to... become more fully human. Its general goals include the ability to read and write and thereby think independently, an appreciation of lasting values coupled with the ability to make sound judgements and live by them, a critical appreciation of the past and responsible creative participation in the future... Liberal arts education is the education of responsible agents for the vocation of life itself.⁴⁹

Second, consider the Biblical ideal of human flourishing captured by the concept of *shalom*, as explicated by Nicholas Wolterstorff:

There is in the Bible a vision of what it is that God wants for God's human creatures – a vision of what constitutes human flourishing and of our appointed destiny... It is the vision of *shalom* – a vision first articulated in the poetic and prophetic literature of the Old Testament, but prominent in the New Testament as well under the rubric of *eirene*, peace... Shalom incorporates right relationships in general... right relationships to God, to one's fellow human beings, to nature, and to oneself. The shalom community is not merely a community but it is the responsible community, in which God's laws for our multifaceted existence are obeyed... To dwell in shalom is to find delight in living rightly before God, to find delight in living rightly in one's physical surroundings, to find delight in living rightly with one's fellow human beings, to find delight even in living rightly with oneself.⁵⁰

The general concept of 'eirenic relationships' or 'relationships conducive to human flourishing (*eudaimonia*)' as the goal of spirituality is one that we can abstract from both of these ancient traditions.⁵¹ Of course, even Christian tradition contains a diversity of views on the details of an *eirenic* relationship with God, and some spiritual traditions obviously wouldn't even recognize the existence of a God with whom one could have an *eirenic* relationship; but any spirituality is (by definition) a matter of relationships conducted via the head, heart and hands. As C.J. Ducasse defined it: 'a liberal education is one which endows the mind with perspective and habituates the man to judge and feel and act in the light of it.'⁵² Every spirituality has an interest in getting the inter-relationship between head, heart and hands 'right' with respect to every relationship it recognizes; and getting such relationships 'right' in a

⁴⁸ Donald A. Crosby, 'The Most Important Course in the University', *Journal of College and Character*, Volume IX, NO.2 (November 2007)
<http://journals.naspa.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1126&context=jcc&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2F>

⁴⁹ Arthur F. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, revised edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1975), 35 & 38.

⁵⁰ Nicholas Wolterstorff, 'Teaching for Shalom' in *Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2004), 23.

⁵¹ cf. Paul D. Spears & Steven R. Loomis, *Educating for Human Flourishing: A Christian Perspective* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2009).

⁵² C.J. Ducasse, 'Liberal Education and the College Curriculum', *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. XV, No. 1 (January, 1944), 1-10 www.ditext.com/ducasse/lecc.html.

manner conducive to *eudaimonia/shalom/eirene* is surely as trans-spiritual a definition of human flourishing as one could hope for.

Practical Suggestions

To place spiritual development at the core of education it is necessary to construct the process of education, and hence the institutions that deliver educational opportunities, around a communal spirituality conducive to this end. There may be more than one spirituality capable of performing this function, but most educational establishments should adopt a spirituality that incorporates a range of different spiritualities within the learning community; a spirituality which focus upon beliefs, attitudes and values that can be accepted by a wide range of different spiritualities. Hence while a so-called ‘faith school’ may properly aspire to be a community organically grounded in a single shared spirituality (be it Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, etc.), a ‘secular’ educational institution (a label which may include faith-based institutions that wants self-consciously open their doors to a pluralistic constituency) simply aspires to be a community grounded in a shared educational spirituality. After all, as Mason writes, “‘Spiritual’ is not synonymous with ‘religious’...”⁵³ A ‘secular’ educational establishment (whether or not it has a religious foundation) should begin with worldview beliefs, values and practices relevant to the goal of education, a goal that I suggest should include *as one of its core goals* the spiritual development of its members (teachers and students alike). Alexander W. Astin *et al* suggest that:

the secular institution is the ideal place for students to explore their spiritual sides because, unlike many sectarian institutions, there is no official perspective or dogma when it comes to spiritual values or beliefs. Students are presumably free, if not encouraged, to explore and question their values and beliefs, no matter where such questioning might lead them.⁵⁴

However, I dispute the assumption that a religiously grounded institution must be ‘sectarian’ rather than ‘secular’ *in the sense of* encouraging students ‘to explore and question their values and beliefs, no matter where such questioning might lead them.’ In this I wholeheartedly endorse J.M. Hull’s comment that:

Christian faith... may approach education... without trying to turn it into evangelism, nurture, instruction and so on. This would be a Christian faith... willing to take up the basin and the towel and be a servant... Christian faith can generate and justify an understanding of an educational process which is not intended to create, deepen or foster Christian faith and commitment. It is possible for Christian faith to extend beyond concerns for its own transmission and become the partner of an education concerned with the growth into maturity of persons, whether they adopt Christian faith or not.⁵⁵

On the basis of the foregoing I would advocate a ‘spiritual’ approach to education within which the centre of the educational programme is an understanding of the nature and influence of ‘spirituality’, and in which every subject is taught in relation

53 Mason, ‘Spirituality - What on earth is it?’, *op cit*.

54 Astin *et al*, *Cultivating the Spirit*, *op cit*, 6.

55 J.M. Hull, ‘Practical theology in a pluralist Europe’, *British Journal of religious Education*, Volume 26, Number 1 (March 2004), 15-16.

to the basic worldview questions. This approach facilitates the understanding of spirituality, both educationally and institutionally speaking.

The generic definition of ‘spirituality’ offered in this paper organically combines with the three traditional ‘transcendental’ values (of truth, beauty and goodness)⁵⁶ and the three elements of classical rhetoric (*logos*, *pathos* and *ethos*)⁵⁷ to form a conceptual foundation for the educational project. These categories deep roots in both classical and Judeo-Christian tradition.

Spirituality	Judged by	Transcendental Values	Communicated Through	Classical Rhetoric
Actions	Judged by	Goodness	Communicated Through	<i>Ethos</i>
↑ Attitudes	Judged by	Beauty	Communicated Through	<i>Pathos</i>
↑ Beliefs	Judged by	Truth	Communicated Through	<i>Logos</i>

Education should encourage critical communal reflection upon different worldview beliefs, attitudes and practices. This project requires a shared commitment to judging

56 Caldecott writes that ‘Praise (of beauty), service (of goodness), and contemplation (of truth) are essential to the full expression of our humanity.’ – *Beauty for Truth’s Sake*, 17. cf. Peter S. Williams, *I Wish I Could Believe in Meaning: A Response to Nihilism* (Southampton; Damaris, 2004) & *A Faithful Guide to Philosophy: A Christian Introduction to the Love of Wisdom* (Forthcoming - Paternoster, 2013). See also: Francis J. Beckwith & Gregory Koukl, *Relativism; Feet firmly planted in mid-air* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998); Francis J. Beckwith, ‘Why I am Not A Moral Relativist’, www.lastseminary.com/moral-argument/Why%20I%20am%20Not%20a%20Moral%20Relativist.pdf; John Cottingham, ‘Philosophers are finding fresh meanings in Truth, Goodness and Beauty’, *The Times* (June 17, 2006) www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/faith/article675598.ece; Steven B. Cowan & James S. Spiegel, *The Love of Wisdom: A Christian Introduction to Philosophy* (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H, 2009); Thomas Dubay, *The Evidential Power of Beauty: Science and Theology Meet* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1999); Douglas Groothuis, *Truth Decay: Defending Christianity Against The Challenges Of Postmodernism* (Leicester: IVP, 2000); Peter Kreeft, ‘The True, the Good and the Beautiful’ www.peterkreeft.com/audio/27_good-true-beautiful.htm; ‘Lewis’ Philosophy of Truth, Goodness And Beauty’ in *C. S. Lewis as Philosopher: Truth, Goodness and Beauty* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2008) & ‘A Refutation of Moral Relativism’ www.peterkreeft.com/audio/05_relativism.htm; Russ Shafer-Landau, *Whatever Happened to Good and Evil?* (Oxford, 2003); C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (London: Fount, 1999); Michael P. Lynch, *True To Life: Why Truth Matters* (London: MIT, 2004); Colin McGinn, *Ethics, Evil and Fiction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999); Roger Scruton, *Beauty* (Oxford University Press, 2009); Joseph D. Wooddell, *The Beauty of Faith: Using Aesthetics for Christian Apologetics* (Wipf & Stock, 2010).

57 For an introduction to rhetoric cf. Joe Carter & John Coleman, *How To Argue Like Jesus: Learning Persuasion From History’s Greatest Communicator* (Wheaton, Illinois; Crossway, 2009).

beliefs against the transcendental value of truth, and to debating the merits of this or that belief using good *logos* (i.e. good logic and critical thinking skills). Note that, far from undermining a communal commitment to tolerance and diversity, a shared commitment to truth and reason is the only possible guarantor of these values. Likewise, our spiritual attitudes should be judged by the transcendental value of beauty and communicated through good *pathos*, whereas our spiritual actions should be judged against the transcendental value of goodness and communicated through good *ethos*.

The tripartite structure of beliefs, attitudes and actions (as well as the associated transcendental values and elements of classical rhetoric) can be easily remembered, communicated and used as a structure for assemblies, the spiritual element of tutor times, etc. For example, an assembly can easily raise a worldview question, introduce one or more perspectives on that question, help students think about the matter (e.g. equipping them with a critical thinking tool), provide an opportunity to reflect upon how a given answer to a worldview question (which may or may not be the pupil's own answer) makes them feel, what attitude it inspires, and lead pupils to contemplate what practical difference this might make in their day to day lives. All this can be done with reference to Christian spirituality and/or any other spirituality on the one hand and to wider contemporary culture (e.g. in arts or politics) on the other hand.

To cater for the spiritual development of its students an educational establishment should seek to:

- a) Equip staff and students with an understanding of 'spirituality' (i.e. its organic tripartite structure of belief, attitude and action; the distinctions between *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* spirituality and between spiritual *integration* and *disintegration*), 'rhetoric', 'transcendental values' and 'community'
- b) Give staff and students access to intellectual tools, information and experiences that will help them to critically consider and measure changes in their own worldview, attendant attitudes and consequent behaviour co-operatively with their peers and with others (e.g. their teachers and parents)
- c) Encourage staff and students to integrate their subject specific learning into their exploration of spirituality in both general and personal terms
- d) Provide an environment which promotes this task by adopting and promoting an educational spirituality of shared beliefs, attitudes and practices conducive to this end.

'Spiritual development' can indeed be measured. Beliefs can be rated in terms of their specificity, strength and centrality. Repeated measuring can show how beliefs change over time. Attitudes and behaviour can be self-reported and reported upon by others. One might list various actions that would appear to flow coherently out of a pupil's beliefs and values before measuring the proportion of time each week they actually spend upon those actions. Changes in behaviour, attitudes and even beliefs might then be inferred from a comparison of past and present time commitments.

I think it worth noting that the requirement in the Education Reform Act 1988 for non-faith schools to hold acts of corporate ‘worship’ appears *wholly inappropriate* in light of the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic spirituality (one cannot worship someone if one doesn’t actually believe they exist), and should be dropped at the earliest opportunity.

Teachers already have opportunities to help pupils to consider what they think about worldview questions, what attitudes toward reality various answers to those questions produce, and what ‘works’ such ‘faith’ would produce. It is my hope that taking the notion of spirituality seriously in this way will enable school communities to gain insight into matters of faith and works on both the individual and corporate levels, generating an understanding of people and their worldviews by enabling reflective, open-minded but critical examination of various spiritualities.

Recommended Resources

Peter S. Williams, ‘A Vision for Spiritual Education’ www.damaris.org/cm/podcasts/418

Damaris Schools www.damaris.org/schools