

Speaking the Language of Ethics; Can Biblically Centered Teaching Use the Ideas of the Philosophers?

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ABSTRACT: *This article describes a method for teaching business ethics using philosophical terms and ideas as it has been developed by a Protestant professor in a Catholic institution. In this approach, philosophy is used to identify issues which are then compared with Catholic teaching. A method is then developed for use in biblically centered Protestant schools. In the biblically centered Protestant approach, Scripture is the final authority and philosophy is used to frame and develop questions that are then asked of Scripture.*

INTRODUCTION

Appropriate pedagogy for the integration of Christian ethics in business has been an important topic in the Christian business literature for some time. Lantos (2002) develops the issue of character education, arguing from classical philosophers as well as from Christian perspectives for the need of character transformation and motivation. He develops an understanding of virtue ethics in the context of sanctification and a focus on the character of God. Chewning and Haak (2002) make use of case studies to help students identify what they believe, as well as to biblically defend their beliefs. Surdyk (2002) advocates the use of the Bible as a required text. The topic of appropriate hermeneutics when making such direct use of Scripture is also well treated in the literature and includes the contributions of Lynn and Wallace (2001), Lemler and Young (2001), Chewning (2000), Porter (2000), Smith (2000), and Carson (2002). These contributions comprise only a partial representation of the rich discussion concerning the appropriate pedagogy for the integration of Christian ethics in business.

While there is a substantial academic conversation concerning the relationship of faith to philosophy, the discussion of such a relationship is less well developed in the bib-

lically centered Christian business conversation.¹ Vander Veen (1997) draws upon Kierkegaardian existentialism in a call to Christian action. Hoover (1998) demonstrates an understanding of philosophical categories through the use of such terms as positive injunction, negative injunction, and categorical imperative. Porter (2000) identifies the critical philosophical question of improper means to gain desired ends. Dotterweich (2000) characterizes an honors course which accomplishes its objective "... by emphasizing that moral philosophy is the foundation for the development of sound economic policy." Lantos (2002) develops his Christian arguments in the context of the ideas of Plato, Socrates, Kant, positivism, intuitionism, and relativism while noting that according to some, ethics and moral philosophy are seen to be synonymous. Can the biblically centered teaching of business ethics make greater use of the terms and ideas of philosophical ethics?

The appropriate use of formal philosophy is an issue that has divided Christianity for centuries. Catholic tradition holds philosophy to be prerequisite to a more complete understanding of the faith while most Protestant traditions make substantially less use of it. The Catholic position is that:

... the church considers philosophy an indispensable help for a deeper understanding of the faith and for

communicating the truth of the gospel to those who do not yet know it.

John Paul II, 1998, p. 9

At the same time many protestant traditions embrace the idea of "Sola Scriptura," which according to Wheeler (1998, p. 98):

... simply means that all truth necessary for our salvation and spiritual life is taught either explicitly or implicitly in Scripture.

What will be described here is an approach to the teaching of business ethics which has been developed by the author for use in a Catholic school. Then, a biblically based approach which makes use of philosophy is suggested to those experienced instructors who wish to make use of the rich discussion and shared discovery potential inherent in the design. The Bible is used as the primary text, and it is suggested here that using the terms and ideas of philosophical ethics in a biblically based business ethics course can sharpen the understanding of the Scriptural lessons themselves. This approach will, at the same time, give students the vocabulary needed to communicate ethical ideas in the terms used by many academic and professional communities.² The exposition will proceed in a step-by-step fashion through the major components of a Catholic approach which has been used in several different courses. It will then proceed in similar fashion through a suggested approach which uses the Bible as text and ultimate authority. Faculty in the Christian teaching community are invited to consider whether either course design taken as a whole might work for them or whether an individual idea found in a course design might be useful in their teaching.

LEARNING

The author was not predisposed to respect philosophical ethics. He would learn to respect those ideas through his life's journey, and so it would seem useful to share that journey.³ As a young person the author was not an academic learner, but learned from experience. When his family moved to a new town and looked for a Baptist church, they did not find one. It seemed that the state had widened the highway through the center of the little prairie town, right between the Methodist and Baptist churches. To make way, one or both of the churches would have to come down. In the spirit of agape, the two groups moved one church across the street and joined it to the other, forming a Methodist-Baptist Federation. There the author developed an ecumenical spirit as he learned the

Scriptures.⁴ His ecumenism did not then extend to Catholics and he learned nothing of philosophy.

And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the Garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

Genesis 2: 16 and 17, NIV

As philosophers have often spoken to issues of good and evil utterly without any reference to God, and as Scripture warns against reliance upon "the philosopher of this age" (1 Corinthians, 1:20), the author had Scriptural support for a certain level of skepticism concerning philosophy. This skepticism was strong when, as a young destroyer officer, he approached a visiting officer from the task group's aircraft carrier. It was a black night in the Gulf of Tonkin and the destroyer was in a moderate sea. The bridge was dark and the carrier was for the time being in a safe position on the destroyer's starboard bow, moving on the same course. Sensing another recent college graduate, he asked the visitor:

"What was your college major?"

"Philosophy," came the reply.

"Oh, what would you do with that?"

"What would you do without it?"

What indeed. Twenty years after the encounter on the bridge of the destroyer, the author was a part of the teaching team for a graduate management ethics course in a Catholic college. He spent months in the Scripture and presented his results to the class. The team teacher, who held a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Notre Dame, listened attentively and then commented to the effect that while she admired the work, she could not see what it had to do with ethics. She displayed no arrogance, only an earnest curiosity, and an expectant concern for how he might relate his research to the great human discussion of ethics. It was a powerful teaching question, as it motivated the author to learn the rudiments of philosophical ethics.

Communicating without knowledge of the philosophical touchstones and unaware of how the Scriptures played into the conversation, the new Protestant instructor found out what one does without philosophy. One has great difficulty discussing ethics with those who reason differently or with those who see the discussion of right and wrong to be a province of philosophy. He was simply unable to communicate the truth he had. He could not speak in the terms of ethics.

Communicating In the Terms of Ethics

Ethics has been defined as “the field of study that has morality as its subject matter” (from “Ethics,” 1993). In this context, the new instructor knew one system of morality in depth, but he could not put it into effective conversation with the others. He knew nothing of them. He was not yet involved in the great human discussion of right and wrong. He did not have the language. It was like conversing with a person he could not hear. It was like playing chess without being able to see the opponent’s pieces, or like taking his old destroyer into battle without switching her radars on.

Scripture teaches, but then so does experience. Here the lesson was to understand how others reason and to learn to speak their language. If a student has eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, a Christian instructor of business ethics should be able to reason with that student. Knowledge of philosophical positions allows a sharper understanding of exactly what it is the student believes or assumes, and what logical counterarguments to that position exist. Knowledge of Scripture then allows the instructor to relate the student and the argument she is making to the Scripture.

TEACHING

How might this be applied? Two methods of approaching Christian business ethics will be described here. The first is an approach which has been successful as developed and utilized for many years by the author, a biblically centered Protestant instructor who has enjoyed a 28-year career in a Catholic school.⁵ The second is a logical modification of that process for use in biblically centered Protestant schools — those schools reflecting the traditions which comprise the author’s roots. The difference is that the first approach reflects the Catholic tradition, which sees philosophy as a love of wisdom and therefore in no long run conflict with the wisdom of God. The second reflects the twin Protestant traditions of Scriptural primacy and skepticism concerning worldly philosophy. Both approaches seek to derive advantage from an interaction between Scripture and reason where reason is empowered by the insights of philosophy.⁶

A Catholic Approach

The graduate management ethics course had been a problem for years in the Catholic college. Many instructors from different academic disciplines had tried to teach the course and student affect had been almost uniformly negative. Finally the school experimented with the assignment of a Protestant instructor to the course who in turn developed

the approach described here. Student affect improved substantially and the approach was then applied to undergraduate courses.⁷ The pedagogy allows each student the freedom and integrity to find his or her own position while the instructor very gently advocates the Christian position. The class proceeds in an atmosphere of discussion and shared discovery, using no formal text in business ethics.⁸ Instead, the approach uses a reading to allow an understanding of the terms, ideas and issues in ethics, two sources of Christian positions on these issues, and a source which allows the discussion of applications. This reading and these sources are described under steps two and three below.

If success is defined as a student experience which is positive, which broadens the student and sharpens the ability to reason while encouraging and affirming the commitment to a Christian view of life’s purpose, then the following approach has been successful. In a recent class survey using a five-point Likert scale, 82.6% (24 of 29) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I can now apply Christian ethics to business situations better than I could before I took this class.” This general approach has been used in four different graduate and undergraduate courses.⁹

Step One: Ask the Question.

After a day of introductions and assignments, the instructor enters the classroom and begins asking the question, “What is the good?” Students have been warned by the instructor during the first class session that this question is coming and have been asked to think of responses. They have been assured of their “adulthood” and promised that the grade does not depend upon agreement with the instructor. This approach cannot get anywhere without candor, and so it is never in any way costly to be candid. A positive discussion atmosphere is further encouraged by the strict application of a rule concerning class interaction. Disagreements are always to be expressed in terms of a positive statement about what a student believes to be true. Attacks on others are thus avoided and the students are challenged to simply present the better argument. These seem to be important keys to the improved student attitudes about the ethics course. Previous ethics instruction had been about the instructor being “right” and the students needing to learn from the instructor. This approach is about adults learning together; with the instructor (and some students) gently advocating Christianity.

Some students take the discussion seriously and some do not, some are orthodox and some are not. The instructor is ready with a working knowledge of the basic terms and ideas of philosophical ethics, Scripture, traditions within Christianity, as well as an understanding of

Catholic moral and economic thought. For every student response, the instructor is accommodating and tries to draw the student into the great human discussion concerning right and wrong.

For example, a non-serious response in an undergraduate class might be offered in terms of a party the student is anticipating. What is the good? Why, the party this weekend of course! After the students and instructor enjoy a laugh, the instructor then inquires as to whether the student follows the Carvaka school of thought, whether he is more of an Epicurean, or whether he perhaps sees himself as the young Augustine.¹⁰ The student probably doesn't know this, but the place of such pleasure is a classic issue, treated by philosophers as well as by Scripture. The instructor now has the student's attention. The student has been asked to select a label for himself, and like the young Protestant instructor in the Catholic school the student doesn't know the language. This can frustrate a student, but if treated with love and a laugh it rarely does. The more common result is that the student is drawn into the discussion, if only a little at a time.

Step Two: Look At Some Answers, Considering Christianity.

Most people harbor some curiosity about how others view things. This, together with a concern for what might happen to the student's own idea of "the good," keeps students fairly attentive through an overview of ethics. The student's reading assignment is the extensive article entitled "Ethics" which is found in the "macropedia" section of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1993). This is a real treasure. It is the "Rosetta Stone" which allows biblically centered instructors without philosophical training such as the author to achieve a reasonable conversational usage of the terms and ideas of philosophical ethics.¹¹ It also has a very rich bibliography. It is comprised of 29 pages of small print in the hard copy or will come off of a computer printer filling about 77 pages. Using this as a source, each class period is about half lecture and half discussion. As the classic positions from the history of ethical thought are reviewed, the instructor commits energy to lecture, then pauses to reflect and draw students into conversation.¹² "Is that what you meant by your idea of the good? What do you think of this counterargument? What did you discover today that you liked?"

Just as the students have been assured of their "adulthood" to encourage candor and the rich conversation this produces, the instructor then asks for his adult rights as well. He is candid about his background and asks for the right to speak "too." One introductory statement often

used by this instructor is "I'm a Methodist. That's two steps from Catholicism — first, the reformation in England, and second, Wesley's evangelical revival within the Church of England" (from Olson, 1999). When challenged about Henry's motives in creating the Church of England, the instructor might respond to the effect that Henry did have his faults. This kind of thing usually brings a laugh. Undergraduate Catholic students are good hearted, quick to laugh, and a joy to work with.

Throughout this consideration of the great discussion the instructor remains an honest but gentle advocate of a Christian point of view, always seeking the Christian truth in the various points of view presented. For example, Buddha is usually popular. In the discussion of nirvana the instructor might ask about the "peace of God, which transcends all understanding." (Philippians 4:7, NIV)

Sometimes a point of view that will be presented simply cannot be reconciled to Christian thought. For example, in pure forms of Consequentialism, where "whatever" means are advocated to bring the desired results, a Christian instructor must take issue.¹³ "What would Jesus have said about that, do you suppose? Would he have us do 'whatever' brings a desired result?"

Business majors in particular may be drawn to Consequentialism. After all, business is "results" oriented, is it not? Such students are encouraged to review William Paley's Utilitarianism.¹⁴ Here they find a Consequentialist who uses the classic greatest good or happiness for the greatest number utilitarian criterion. But Paley did not advocate the use of "whatever" means as would be necessary to achieve these results. He argues that morality was determined by God. His sense of morality was parallel to that of Ockham and Luther.¹⁵ In other words, morality was to be derived from Scripture. Here is a Consequentialist with whom a Christian instructor can be at least somewhat more comfortable.

Step Three: Advocate the Christian Position

The third step brings the class closer to intellectual closure. What kind of instructor would ask a question and then not suggest an answer? In secular colleges and universities leaving a class open with only the "great questions" described might be appropriate, but in Christian schools the students and their parents are owed more.

In the Catholic context it is appropriate to present the Christian position using the teachings of the Catholic Church as put forth in encyclical letters. These are generally quite well grounded in Scripture and read a bit like a thoughtful Protestant sermon, although they are more lengthy and involved. The documents used here are *Veritatis*

Splendor (John Paul II, 1993) and *Centesimus Annus* (John Paul II, 1991). The first sets out the moral teachings of the Catholic Church using both Scripture and formal philosophical argument. The second discusses economics and business in terms of Christian morality. These are offered in a conversational spirit but with authentic advocacy. In some class sections the encyclicals are augmented by a JBIB article which overviews Scripture as it directly applies to business (see Hoover, 1998). In *Veritatis Splendor* (John Paul II, 1993), students find a Christian response to the opening question about what constitutes “the good.”

The good is belonging to God, obeying him, walking humbly with him in doing justice and in loving kindness.
John Paul II referring to Micah 6:8

Disagreements about the way works are seen to relate to a person’s salvation and psychology are left to the theologians by the Protestant teaching in a Catholic school, although the instructor will respond to questions concerning the Protestant view of such things. Agreements are emphasized and the external, observable nature of the Christian works themselves (where there is nearly perfect agreement) comprises the core of these courses in Christian business ethics.

A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Jesus as quoted in Matthew 7: 18-20, NIV

Step Four: Student Synthesis

After reviewing ethical positions and putting the Christian position forward in a positive light, the class design encourages students to draw their ideas together and apply them. For example, in the classes titled “Ethics in Business Application,” there is a substantial portion of the class devoted to competitive case presentations. The cases are drawn from Newton and Ford’s *Taking Sides, Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in Business Ethics and Society* (2004). Students form groups and engage in formal debates with each group taking one of the positions put forward in the casebook. In classes titled “Business and Society,” students are asked to discuss the role of business in the society after absorbing the ideas of several key economists as summarized in Brue’s *The Evolution of Economic Thought* (1994). In classes titled “Ethics and the Ecology of Commerce,” students are asked to discuss the relationship of business to the natural ecology after reading Hawken’s *The Ecology of Commerce* (1993). In the graduate

management course, “The Ethics and Social Responsibility of Management,” students are asked to develop and present for class discussion cases from their personal experience. Finally, students are asked to write a paper which may be presented to the class. They are asked to integrate the perspectives they prefer and advocate their resulting position. The exact form of this work differs somewhat by specific class syllabus, but the idea remains the same: “Make it your own.”

A Scriptural Approach: Business Ethics as Bible Study

What form might this discussion take if it were to be enjoyed in a biblically centered school? Can the love of wisdom be one with the love of God? Can reason be used to enable rather than to destroy faith? Scripture teaches that the mind is invited to worship, as we love the Lord with all our heart, soul and mind. (Matthew 22:37).¹⁶ The following teaching approach attempts to bring the rich perspectives of the Catholic discussion into conversation with, while remaining subordinate to, the Protestant commitment to Scripture.

This approach is only recommended for use by experienced instructors who wish to enjoy and to risk a lively discussion. The instructor should also have solid knowledge of Scripture and an ability to guide the class in appropriate hermeneutics as the Bible is used as the primary text. The general approach has only been tested in its Catholic form, and so the instructor also takes on the role of the test pilot in something like an experimental aircraft. If it performs as its Catholic forerunner performs, it will deliver an exhilarating classroom experience at the cost of some stability. Shared discovery describes the spirit of the conversation. What are these philosophers arguing about? What do you think about that? What does the Scripture teach? How would the Scriptural teaching then apply to business? As the Catholic form of the design appeals to the Papal rendering of philosophy and Scripture as Christian teaching, the Protestant form appeals to the Scripture itself.

Step One: Opening Advocacy; Establishing Daily Relevance

In the Catholic school the instructor may use what sales trainers call an “assumptive close” when it comes to the use of philosophy.¹⁷ “Of course” ethics uses philosophy. Depending upon the particular tradition of a Protestant school, the use of philosophy might require advocacy. So the instructor may want to be ready with a few ideas.

The following describes approaches and ideas which have proven useful to this instructor when encouraging stu-

dents to see the relevance of philosophy. Such advocacy is necessary from time to time even in the Catholic environment where the use of philosophy is traditional. These approaches and ideas are joined by the direct appeal to Scripture which would be used in biblically centered schools.

There is not much in this that you can't hear at a truck stop or in a coffee shop.

Instructor's introduction to normative ethics

Students need to see the immediate daily relevance of the philosopher's questions, so the ability to relate philosophy to everyday terms and choices is critical. Coffee-shop wisdom and debate embody a great deal of what is actually found in the branch of philosophical ethics called normative ethics. Normative ethics involves ideas concerning how to act or live and what kind of person to be.¹⁸ Coffee-shop arguments will ensue over whether someone should have told a lie to get a particular result, whether one should do as the Romans do "when in Rome" and so forth. Using everyday terms such as these, coffee-shop or kitchen-table debates are often critical in shaping people's lives.

The problem is that such conversations are often uneducated and so must constantly reinvent old ideas. They lack clarity because they do not reflect the careful nature of the philosophers' discussion. Why shouldn't the discussion of life's choices take points from the arguments of great thinkers? Why lead one's life in a way which might be regretted because one did not consider such arguments early enough in life? Why fail to ask important questions of Scripture?

What is proposed here is a form of Scripture study which incorporates at least some of the precision embodied in the philosophical discussion of normative ethics. The study begins by discerning questions and continues by posing them to Scripture. Of the hundreds of questions that might be derived from the discussion of normative ethics, a few will be selected which seem particularly relevant to the topic of business ethics. For example, students should identify as relevant to international business the question of whether statements concerning what is right or wrong are absolute, regardless of culture.

Step Two: Ask About the Great Questions

In an opening conversation similar in tone to the opening conversation in the Catholic institution the instructor would ask, "What do people disagree about when they discuss right and wrong?" Again, student responses are respectfully considered, but in this class the goal is a list of questions to be asked of Scripture. The class functions as a discussion team, focused upon the discern-

ment of appropriate questions. The instructor encourages the identification of such critical questions as whether the end justifies the means.

The discussion is directed toward the generation of questions in order to ensure a connection with Scripture as the ultimate authority. In the Catholic discussion such a connection is assured because the Papal encyclicals will speak directly to the philosophical argument using the terms and ideas of the philosophers, thus tying those arguments to the Catholic rendering of Scripture.

Step Three: Research the Great Questions.

Philosophical review and discussion are embodied in this step. The reading assignment is the same as that used in the Catholic school (the extensive Britannica article entitled "Ethics"). Here, students would be asked to discern which issues find the philosophers in disagreement with one another. If there is a disagreement or a difference in philosophy there may be an important question to be answered or an issue to be explored.

The task of philosophical overview is to identify and clarify such questions or issues. Here the instructor would again pour energy into lecture, and again stop to reflect with the students in conversation. How are these people disagreeing or differing? Does the disagreement or difference seem important to business ethics?

To create a limited example, the following questions might logically be derived from the discussion found in the Britannica article:

1. If Plato believes that there are absolute rights and wrongs, and the Sophists believe that right and wrong is relative to culture, which more nearly reflects the Christian position and why?
2. If the Consequentialists believe that right and wrong is about ends, and if Kant believes that right and wrong is about means, which more nearly reflects the Christian position and why?
3. If some philosophical principles are stated as positive injunction and some as negative injunction, how are Christian principles stated and what does this say about the Christian life?
4. If Jaina philosophy advocates poverty, Rand's Objectivism advocates selfishness, and Buddhism advocates a middle road, what view of material things is Christian?

Step Four: Taking Questions to Scripture; Fostering a Dialog with the Bible

The following discussion demonstrates the kind of dialog with the Bible that could be fostered when the philosophers become a part of the conversation. The discussion with Scripture will be initiated by questions of the philosophers as represented by example questions one through four above. The conversation begins with the discussion of question one alone, but then becomes cumulative, synthesizing responses to all four example questions by the time the illustration has been completed.

Suppose the students have now come to *example question one*: the disagreement between Plato and the Sophists. Here the coffee shop statement of the Sophist position would be:

“When in Rome, do as the Romans do.”

Love and concern for other cultures might lead well-meaning students to this position. The statement about what to do in Rome is the common understanding of the classic Sophist position which holds that what is commonly good and bad is a matter of social convention (see Guthrie, 1971, chapter 7).

This issue would be a good one for the students to experience early in the class, where the natural chronology would find it, because the Scriptural guidance concerning morality will be quite clear. Core Christian morality remains the same throughout the teachings of Jesus, Paul, and the other New Testament teachers, regardless of to whom they communicated. No matter where Paul traveled, nothing changes in the Ten Commandments and nothing changes in the love teachings of Jesus. Christianity is not about moral relativism. Paul died in Rome as a result of what he believed, what he taught, and the way he lived. Many Christians shared his fate there. Had those Christians done as the Romans had done, they would have had fewer problems in Rome.

Resolution of any real or apparent conflicts in the Scriptural mandates discovered in this discussion should be dealt with according to the instructor’s preferred understanding. For example, many would agree that there is a hierarchy in the teaching, and one is bound to the higher teaching. As the highest commandment is to love God and neighbor, such love might be seen to override a lesser injunction in Scripture if there is an actual and irresolvable conflict.

Now suppose the class has come to *example question two* and wishes to *add* the issue between Kant and the Consequentialists to the conversation. In order to begin this exploration it might be useful to simply ask:

“Do the ends justify the means?”

In other words, should Christians agree with the Consequentialists of which the Utilitarians form a prolific example (teleology), or should Christians agree with Kant (deontology)? Teleology is about the goals that guide something (Bunge, 2003). It is about design or purpose. “Telos” or “teleos” is Greek terminology referring to ends or ultimate destiny, so a teleological ethical theory focuses upon appropriate ends. “Deon” is the Greek for duty so a deontological ethical theory is about duty and focuses upon appropriate means.¹⁹ As business people are proud of their no nonsense “results” orientation, it is easy for them to default to consequentialism or other teleological ethical positions.

Business people who take this road will find some support among philosophers, usually in the form of a Utilitarian arguing that what is good and right is that which provides the greatest good or happiness for the greatest number. In other words, what is right is “whatever” provides the greatest good for the greatest number. This position has philosophical respectability. Hutcheson (2004) first put forth this criterion which was then later used by the Utilitarians.²⁰ The Utilitarians would refine the criterion, developing arguments concerning what was actually “good” for people.

Business people would not be dissuaded from teleology by a first inspection of Christianity, either. Scripture clearly teaches about a set of ends following earthly life. The promise of Heaven and the threat of Hell would seem to be so powerful that a person, upon a first encounter with this, would have to ask what might be done to avoid hell and to enter heaven. Such a person might, upon hearing an opportunity to say the sinner’s prayer, simply go through the process. This might be done so as to do “whatever” it takes to assure eternal life.

How might such a teleological approach to Christianity be seen? A study of the book of Job should demonstrate that Christianity as a worldly teleology presents serious problems. The test of Job was to remove from him his excellent earthly results and to afflict him. His faith was to stand the test, as did the faith of Paul, Stephen, and the great host of Christian Martyrs. Paul warned Timothy against those who saw godliness as a means to financial gain:

... men of corrupt mind who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

1 Timothy 6:5, NIV

If a worldly teleology can be rejected, what can be said about the consequences of heaven and hell? There is very

substantial Scripture in support of these kinds of ends being attached to life's choices. If a worldly teleology must be rejected by the witness of Job and the Christian martyrs, should worldly choices then be seen in terms of their "results" in heaven and hell? Should a person be Christian *so that* he gets to heaven and avoids hell?

In the Protestant understanding, justification before God comes upon the person's conversion. A crude consequentialist, converting so as to do "whatever" is necessary to achieve life eternal, might believe that he has now made a deal with God to get what he wants. Say the sinner's prayer? Sure, "whatever" it takes. It is still all about ends. It is still all about him.

Many students of Christianity would say there should be something else involved in a conversion. Sincere repentance, recognition of one's inability to lead the Christian life by virtue of one's own effort, and a plea for the spirit of Christ should be involved. The convert asks for and receives forgiveness and grace.

Come into my heart, Lord Jesus.

Component of the sinner's prayer as used by the Jerry Fallwell's Thomas Road Baptist Church²¹

Confessing with his mouth that Jesus is Lord and believing in his heart that God raised him from the dead, the convert is saved (Romans 10:9). There is then Scripture to support the idea that Jesus comes into the heart in concert with the Holy Spirit:

If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own, they belong to the father who sent me. All this I have spoken while still with you. But the counselor, whom the father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have said to you.

Jesus as quoted in John 14: 23-26, NIV

In this way the Protestant conversion involves being born again or born of the Spirit. It is now all about Him; it is not about us.

... I tell you the truth. Unless a man is born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.

Jesus as quoted in John 3:3, NIV

... I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.

Jesus as quoted in John 3:5, NIV

As a person is "born of the Spirit" how would that person then begin to view the Christian walk? Would teleology

remain attractive? Life eternal would remain in the mind as hope and assurance, but how would a person now born of the Spirit begin to view daily works; as means to a heavenly end?²² Or would the person simply *want* to follow Christ?

Since Protestants are saved at conversion, it would not seem appropriate for them to see "their" works as means to heaven, something "they" do *so that* they achieve the reward. Different psychologies might be appropriate and Protestants might differ in theological nuance, but many would agree that Christian works are fruits of the indwelling spirit. The Christian is enabled and empowered by the grace of God.

So I say live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature.

Galatians 5: 16-17, NIV

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Galatians 5: 22-25, NIV

Just as the witness of Job and the Christian martyrs should discourage a worldly teleology, the justification provided to the Protestant convert should discourage a teleology of heaven and hell.

In this way, the Protestant view of works provides an important test of the Spirit's presence. If one is justified at conversion why perform works? Not to get to heaven, as that is already given. Protestants who authentically feel justified before God must then perform the works of Christianity for reasons other than the consequences of heaven and hell. Perhaps it is the prodding of the Counselor, the Holy Spirit who reminds the Christian of everything that Jesus said. (John 14:26)

How would the Spirit have Christians view business ethics? In reminding them of the things that Christ has said, the counselor would certainly remind them of the highest commandment:

Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law? Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments.

Jesus as quoted in Matthew 22: 36-40, NIV

The highest commandments comprise a call to love God and neighbor. How does the Christian reconcile this with a career in business?

Business as it is taught in secular schools can be a profit driven teleology. Profit is the end, and every subject in business is subordinate to that end. The other subjects are means to the financial end. Serve customers *so that* one makes profit. Treat workers well *so that* one makes profit. If ethics is considered at all it is considered as the law is considered, as a constraint or a limit. “Maximize profits subject to legal and ethical constraints or limits” is often the model in use. This vision of business is reinforced with elegant mathematical examples such as the linear program. Students learn to maximize a mathematically defined profit function subject to mathematically stipulated constraint functions. For many students, such fine precision must imply great accuracy. Morality, like the law, is a limit but not a driver or a motive. Where is the love in this?

Philosophy may now contribute further. As demonstrated by *example question three* philosophers are careful to observe the difference between positive and negative injunction when stating moral maxims or principles. This perspective can now be *added* to the conversation.

A maxim stated as “do” is a positive injunction. A maxim stated as “do not” is a negative injunction. Consider the difference between the golden rule in Christianity and what is sometimes termed the “silver rule” in Confucianism:

Do to others as you would have them do to you

Jesus as quoted in Matthew 7:12, NIV

Do not do to others what you would not like yourself.²³
Confucius (2003)

Positive injunction is generally seen as the more binding form of injunction. If someone says “do,” it allows no freedom to do otherwise. If someone says “do not” it allows great freedom, so long as one avoids the proscribed behavior. In terms of the linear programming example, a negative injunction makes great sense as a constraint or a limit. Do whatever you can do to maximize profit so long as you avoid this or that proscribed behavior; so long as you “do not” do this or that.

In contrast, there is no upward limit to the “do” in the positive injunction of Jesus. Therefore, there seems to be an important logical problem when using the golden rule only as a constraint upon another driving motive, or function, which would then be maximized, in this way limiting the ability to maximize the positive injunction given by Jesus.

No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Jesus as quoted in Luke 16:13, NIV

For Confucians, there would be no problem. Simply maximize profit subject to the constraint that one does not do to others what one does not want done to one’s self. But given Jesus’ use of the more binding positive injunction, it would seem better to put the injunction of Jesus in the position of maximization. The need to make a sufficient profit for corporate viability would then become the functioning constraint. If the business fails, it will serve no one.

The need for viability, to include viability in the financial markets, would seem to place a certain practical limit upon Christian service using the institution of business when the firm is publicly held. When stockholders need to be considered, management must avoid charges of failure to execute their fiduciary responsibility (Friedman, 1970).

The publicly held firm could operate to deliver a constrained maximization of profit, where the constraints reflect appropriate treatment of employees, customers, stakeholders, and the environment. The management’s responsibility to stockholders would then include a straightforward communication of any such constraints upon profit maximization. Capital is a necessary input and inputs have costs. If the market niche of the firm is sufficiently robust to allow the satisfaction of all such constraints while still allowing the attraction of capital, Christians might find a satisfying walk in this way. They would know that in providing good returns for investors they are simultaneously providing products and services to satisfied customers and an income for their families. They would know that they are of service to their community in an environmentally sustainable way.

Other Christians may experience different walks in business and not be able to find this kind of balance. Even if the market niche of a firm begins with enough strength to allow the satisfaction of all the interests described, the niche may deteriorate and management may be faced with ugly choices concerning whether to serve capital or the other interests involved. Or management might simply decide to improve returns to capital at the expense of the other interests. Capital as input now becomes capital as master.

In such situations Christians who are called to love their neighbor might find that the pressure to provide returns to stockholders has resulted in their becoming involved in actions toward other people which they simply cannot reconcile to the powerful positive injunctions of Jesus.

Sometimes you have to do things in business you just don't feel good about.

Vice President, Fortune 500 Company
(Conversation with the author)

Should the positive injunctions of Jesus be made subject to any constraint whatsoever? Here again the phenomenon of the Christian martyr should be considered. Perhaps the financial constraint should not be seen as anything absolute. After all, in the terms of the model used here, a Christian martyr is one who has maximized love of God without observing even the minimal constraint that he remains alive on the Earth. Paul did as Jesus would have him do. He did not do what the Romans would have had him do.

Jesus died for you, would you die for him?
Bible study question

For most people their Christian commitment will never come to this kind of hard choice. Christians are called to love others "as" themselves. Christians are not called to a Lemming-like drive toward martyrdom, although Saint Augustine (1950) did suggest that love of God could take people "even" to contempt of self. The Christian businessperson no doubt intends to live comfortably and many will. But at the same time, some will be faced with important choices which will test the authenticity of their Christianity.

A person may not know what choices tomorrow will bring. For example, the successful Christian business person may pull his BMW over to the shoulder of the road when he sees the "Air Florida" Boeing 737 stall on take off and crash into the icy Potomac. Seeing those struggling in the water he is called to their aid. It was not his plan, but he died a Christian. On a more subtle level, the Christian business person may be unwilling to curtail employee health benefits when the competition does so. It may not cost her life, but it will cost something. What constraints should be placed upon the commitment to do as Jesus would have us do?

The philosophers again have some different and interesting positions to consider as set forth in *example question four*. These positions may now be *added* to the conversation as questions about the appropriate place of wealth. In contrast with Ayn Rand (1960), who argues that selfishness is a virtue, Indian Jaina philosophy insists that giving to the poor is an important positive injunction. The positive injunction is so important in Jaina thought that even the possession of wealth is seen as depriving the poor.²⁴ The Jaina philosopher might ask, "You had a positive injunction to give? Why did you hold back?"

As the students go to Scripture, they will find much direct guidance concerning wealth. Using Hoover's (1998) summary, they should find that:

Stewardship of wealth is not negative per se or in and of itself as it is seen to be a blessing (Genesis 24:35, 26:12, 39:2, 39:23, Proverbs 13:21) but people are to take a balanced view of wealth and place many things ahead of wealth in the selection of life's effort or work. People are expected to place wisdom before wealth (Proverbs 4:7, 8:10 and 11), peace before wealth (Proverbs 17:1), friends before wealth, (Proverbs 19:4, Luke 16:9), integrity before wealth (Proverbs 22:1, 28:6) and practice moderation in the acquisition of wealth (Proverbs 23:4), as the accumulation of great wealth is unlikely to bring piece of mind (Ecclesiastes 5:9, 6:12). While some degree of prudent frugality can be expected in making provision against hunger (Genesis 41:35 and 36, Proverbs 21:20, John 6:12), faith in wealth should be renounced for faith in the higher values of the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:19-34, 19:18-24, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 12: 13-21 and 18: 18-30).

Ever the teacher, John Paul II (1991) has the idea down to one sentence:

It is not wrong to want to live better, what is wrong is a way of living that places having ahead of being.

Being what? What should now be said of motivation? Should Christians see these Scriptures as simply a set of rules or precepts that one must follow no matter how onerous, as constraints upon their goal of personal profit maximization, or should these Scriptures be seen as reflective of the orientation and heart condition of the Beatitudes? Responding in the context of John Paul II's, statement, what would a Christian disciple *want to be*?

As the disciple slowly puts Jesus uppermost in life, responding to his positive injunctions, what is happening? What happens to selfishness? Philosophers again have useful terminology and questions, as do Christian theologians. As one grows in Christ, reflecting a sanctifying grace, moving toward "perfection" to use Wesley's term, how is the philosophy of life changing?²⁵ If the Christian walk might begin in teleology, a selfish soul seeking life eternal, might it then become deontology?

As discussed, the term deontology comes from the Greek "deon" which means duty. In Kant's classic deontological argument, he distinguishes between two types of imperatives. A hypothetical imperative is something done "so that" something else will happen. A categorical impera-

tive is something done simply because it is the right thing to do. Kant believed that the categorical imperative was appropriate morality. A person should do her duty simply for its own sake. The general maxim or principle describing appropriate duty as stated in one form of Kant's categorical imperative is:

So act as to use humanity, both in your own person and in the person of every other, always at the same time as an end, never simply as a means.

Immanuel Kant, as cited in Patton (1967)

How might Scripture respond to this suggested imperative? The parallel with Jesus is striking:

Love your neighbor as yourself

Jesus as quoted in Matthew 22:39, NIV

It would seem reasonable that a person growing in the Spirit, even if first called to Christianity by the teleology of heaven and hell, will in time prefer a daily working deontology. The person will prefer to just do it.²⁶ The preference would no longer be due to teleological calculations. In Kant's view, the person simply chooses to do the right thing because it is the right thing, in and of itself. It is the person's "deon" or duty (see Stackhouse, 1995, p. 21).

Does this describe the Christian walk? Would growth in the Christian life take a person in this direction? It would seem that it does, but in an important psychological sense it would also seem to take a person through Kantian duty to something higher. This is because, in modern usage, duty can connote something imposed or onerous; something met with unenthusiastic compliance. So Christianity may take a person well beyond the imposed or onerous sense of duty to a real pleasure or joy in performance of Christian works. A Christian will just do it because it is what she prefers doing. She must do it, but not because of the law or because of some coercion. She must because the Spirit growing in her must. Grace and the resulting love of God within the person become so powerful that duty becomes joy while the Christian loves and serves. Wesley defended this sanctification perspective against his critics using the following terms:

We allow, we contend that we are justified freely through the righteousness and the blood of Christ. And why are you so hot against us because we expect likewise to be sanctified wholly through His Spirit?

John Wesley (undated)

Step five: Translation to the terms of business; cases and dilemmas

How might this perspective translate to the terms of business? In the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries there was in use in the United States a term for a person of wealth. There was much Christian influence in the U.S. during that era, and this term probably reflected that Christian influence:

A man of means

Nineteenth and twentieth century nomanclature for a person of wealth

This would seem to reflect appropriate priorities. Wealth should not constitute the ends a person seeks. Nor is wealth useless. Wealth is appropriately the means to higher ends, those of Christ.

The Christian will certainly encounter other perspectives and priorities in the practicing business community. The growing Christian wants to do the right thing, and loving service is the right thing. Yet the business world is often found to be engaged in "acts of the sinful nature:"

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5: 19-21, NIV

Who has not observed at least some of these acts in corporate America?

The genius of the market would seem to be that it puts both kinds of people to work. A person driven by selfish ambition must find somebody in the market to serve, or he has no customer. A person acting out of love will naturally serve, but must find a way of serving which is sufficiently relevant, innovative and efficient to be profitable. Their service will differ in character, as the first person serves only as a hypothetical imperative. He serves *so that* he makes profit. His selfish ambition is the driver or objective, while the need to serve a customer constrains him in some kind of service to society. The second person makes life's choices as categorical imperatives, perhaps in the higher spiritual sense of Christian sanctification and joy while the need to make ends meet constrains her. Adam Smith (1776) seems to have had the first type of person in mind when he defended the idea of harmony of interest as follows:

It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard for their own interests.

Book 1, Chapter 2

Smith makes the point that the interests of the supplier and the customer may be in harmony, and the selfish restaurateur might deliver a fine meal. But harmony of interests would seem to work in the other direction as well. Could someone first wish to serve, and because interests may be in harmony also make money?

Would not a Christian husband and wife who owned a bed and breakfast take great joy from the customers' satisfaction with their meals, from families reconciled while on holiday in their hospitality, from marriages well begun on honeymoon? Of course such owners must charge money, but the motivation is different. The money is needed to sustain life and family, to buy insurance, to pay tuition, to provide a retirement that does not burden their children. It brings the occasional joy of new clothes, or a better car. Money is not what drives these people; it is the necessity that limits them. It is not their end or goal; it is their *means* of continuing their service.

Christian business ethics should be of this kind. While reasonable consideration of predictable worldly outcomes is only prudent, the confusion of means with ends must be avoided. A Christian must not love money (Luke 16:13, 1 Timothy 6: 3-10). Money is only a means. A Christian loves Christ and so by the grace of God, a Christian will serve God and neighbor. Because of this orientation, there are kinds of businesses and business practices to which the Christian is drawn and some a Christian will simply avoid (see "The Use of Money" in Wesley, 1988). The questions of the philosophers can help to more clearly identify these choices as they are taught by Scripture. The result is a better understanding of Christian business ethics.

Once love of God and neighbor is fully felt, understood, and translated in these terms of business, the discussion of particular dilemmas experienced in business by those who would love their neighbor can further enhance the student's understanding.

The following dilemmas are real situations with names and details changed so as to ensure the privacy of those involved. They are selected from both public and private sources so as to demonstrate the kinds of difficult decisions encountered when the interests of the stockholders and the interests of others, such as customers, employees, and community might fail to come together in harmony.

1. The new industrial salesman spends many months getting to know the industrial buyers and executives

responsible for the purchase of his industrial material. After the sales territory is in fairly good condition and the buyers are trusting the new salesman with substantial orders there is an energy shortage. Because of this, the salesman's company declares "force majeure" on the contracts. This declaration, roughly translated as "act of God" allows the company to reduce the amount of material delivered. The salesman spends a difficult two weeks explaining the situation to buyers and is relaxing at home when the phone rings. His company wants to know if he "has a home" for any more of the industrial material. He answers to the effect that of course he has a home for some more material; he has just cut all of his contracts to two-thirds of the contracted amount. The person on the phone tells him that the "extra" material is not available at contract price, but at spot market price which is substantially above the contract prices. What does the salesperson do?

2. The market research department is responsible for recommending the pricing of a patented life saving hospital pharmaceutical product. The product is extremely profitable with a manufacturing contribution margin above ninety percent. Research indicates that the people responsible for buying the product in the hospitals are positively irate about the price. The pharmaceutical firm has few products of this nature and needs the contribution margin, as the company has serious internal inefficiencies. The patent expires in two years. What does the market research department recommend?

3. The pension fund manager has been studying the new law governing the funding of pensions and has discovered a loophole such that the firm may be able to divert a substantial amount from pension funds to the bottom line. He has studied it with the corporate attorney and has been assured that this action is in all likelihood legally defensible. Corporate actuaries however, advise that use of this interpretation is likely to result in at least a partial default on promised employee pensions. Top management is eager to improve the bottom line and has a reputation for both rich rewards and draconian punishments depending upon a person's contribution to profit on a quarterly basis. The pension fund manager has a mortgage, a son and a daughter in college, and a newly hired MBA employee who will in all likelihood tell top management about the loophole if the pension fund manager does not. What does the pension fund manager do?

4. The successful athlete realized that he was aging and would not be competitive in his sport much longer.

He leveraged everything he had to buy a small chain of sporting goods stores in the industrial city where he had grown up. His stores specialized in equipment for his much loved sport. For a time things went well, but one year sales began to slide. His investigation determined that another chain was selling sporting goods at retail prices which were equal to or below his costs. As the other chain was no bigger than his and did not belong to a larger firm, he could not understand how they were achieving their buying economies. He had lunch with an old high school friend who had not left their home town and had gotten to know it well. The friend told him that the competing firm was laundering drug money and so did not need much profit on the sporting goods. What does the athlete do?

5. The human resources manager at the chemical plant is notified that one of their production floor workers has just been diagnosed with a terminal cancer. This troubles him because this is the third production worker in as many years with the diagnosis. The worker is 35 years old and has four young children. His family is poor, nearly illiterate, and unlikely to think of litigation. As the manager considers this, his office receives a report from the company's trade association warning that older scientific findings linking the handling of the chemicals on their floor with this form of cancer seem to be supported in this year's newly published research. The worker's meager health insurance policy will not begin to cover the costs of his cancer treatment. What does the human resources manager do?

Cases which pose dilemmas such as these should result in a rich class discussion of responsibility, governance, agency, and the real purpose of the firm. A critical question would seem to be whether Christians can be comfortable with a pure stockholder model, a constrained stockholder model, or a stakeholder model.²⁷ The discussion might also entertain the idea that some Christians may elect to limit themselves to participation in sole proprietorships or family held businesses such that responsibilities to anonymous absentee stockholders can have no adverse effect upon the firm's service to community.

Step Six: Final Student Synthesis

To ensure that this kind of discussion is retained by individual students, a final step would be desirable. As in the Catholic approach, students should be encouraged to make this class discussion "their own." This can be accomplished through the writing of a paper and its presentation to the class. A useful topic might be "How a Christian

Views Business." Written cases might be used wherein the student is asked to apply their ethics. In graduate classes, students might be asked to design and defend an ethics policy. These kinds of assignments can bring the lessons home to students.

Specific Class Designs

In the Catholic versions of this general approach, the instructor should plan to take about one third of the semester in the general philosophical discussion, about one third in the discussion of the Catholic teachings, and about one third in the application material, such as cases. The instructor in the biblically centered school might anticipate a similar allocation of time, excepting of course that the philosophical discussion would now be followed by Bible study.

There would be many class designs which might encourage the identification of questions, the dialog with Scripture, the translation to business and the student synthesis described here. Some instructors might prefer to leave philosophy out of the discussion in any formal sense; only using key questions in their readily identifiable form as found in daily usage, for example "do the ends justify the means?"

The author would use the philosophers by name and idea in order to derive the questions for Scripture. The preference for this approach is based upon the author's experience in the Catholic classroom which suggests that students are often more insightful than the instructor when deriving ideas, issues, and questions from the philosophers. Direct student exposure to the philosophers can yield surprising and gratifying results.²⁸ At minimum, 25 heads are better than one.

This approach may also enable a stronger case for Christ. An argument can be more effectively made as it honestly puts forward the counterarguments and then explains why the position advocated is preferred in that full context.²⁹ Using this instructor's approach, the class might take the following form:

1. The class discusses right and wrong. What are the issues?
2. The class formulates a preliminary list of questions for Scripture.
3. The instructor presents the philosophers. The first half of each class is lecture; the second half is discussion and derivation of questions for Scripture. The instructor's presentation is derived from the "Ethics" (1993)
4. The class finalizes the question list.

5. Following Surdyk (2002) in using the Bible as text, small student teams research answers in Scripture, using time both inside and outside of class to develop their interpretations. The students might use something like a keyword search in Bible Gateway to facilitate this while the instructor should provide a guide concerning what constitutes appropriate hermeneutics in the college.³⁰
6. Groups present their findings and suggested interpretations.
7. The class discusses interpretations. The instructor fosters the “dialog with the Bible.”
8. The class discusses how Scriptural teaching applies

to business. The instructor guides the class in a discussion of Smith’s harmony of interests as developed earlier in this article.

9. The class discusses specific applications. Student groups take sides in presenting issues such as those found cases, dilemmas, or observable business situations. The instructor leads a discussion of governance and agency.
10. Students write and present a term paper — “How a Christian Views Business,” or “Christian Ethics in Business” (presented to the class when time allows). This might take the form of a written case or a recommended ethics policy.

CONCLUSION

Those teaching business ethics in biblically based institutions should make themselves aware of the great questions posed by the philosophers. The formal arguments together with their authors may be used in class, or the instructor might simply use the essential questions. In either case Scripture would be the final arbiter of philosophical dispute.

Scriptural teaching concerning such questions might only reinforce ways of understanding the Christian walk with which the instructor is already comfortable. For example it is unlikely that Christian instructors would consider appropriate business ethics to be fully relative to culture in the Sophist sense, even when taught in international business courses.

At the same time, the questions of the philosophers will take Christians to the very core of the faith, to question motivation and thus eventually to question models of business and its ethical practice. Questions of motivation have been a part of the Christian discussion since the early era.

Accordingly, two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God: the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self.

Saint Augustine, 1950

Jesus led his followers to the love of God and neighbor (Matthew 22: 34-40). Love is the Christian way. If a vocation in business tempts Christians toward other ways of viewing and treating people, the Spirit will remind them of

the strong positive injunctions of Jesus. Christians are called to a distinct way of life and love is the Christian way.

ENDNOTES

¹There is at least one journal devoted to this. Consider the implications of an entire journal titled *Faith and Philosophy*. There must be a substantial discussion in order to support a journal with the focus. The philosophical thread in biblically centered Christian business discussion is exemplified by Vander Veen (1997), Hoover (1998), Porter (2000), and Lantos (2002). It is an important thread in the discussion but would not by itself support a journal. This article is intended to contribute to this latter conversation. As another example of Protestant integration of faith with philosophy, consider also the works of Herman Dooyeweerd in Strauss and Botting (2000). The author is indebted to a reviewer for pointing out Herman Dooyeweerd and his line of reasoning.

²Consider the observation shared by Fessler (2002, p. 131). “The Golden Rule provides a good philosophical starting point for any discussion of ethical behavior, and this philosophical argument is all I talk about in a public university classroom setting.” Consider also the observation shared by Lantos (2002, p. 33). “To know what is moral, academia and the professions typically rely on philosophy”

³See this approach used by Johnson (1995).

⁴Here the word ecumenical is used in its sense of promoting or fostering Christian unity.

⁵In this context, success means high enrollment when the classes are not required and a positive student experience as measured by high student evaluations. It also implies an increased student ability to see the Christian implications of business decisions as measured by exams, case study questionnaires and class discussion. Some increase in positive affect concerning Christianity and its teaching has also been observed. This latter increase is as observed by the professor over the period of a semester.

⁶A primary difference in the two approaches will reflect the freedom Protestants have to apply personal reasoning to Scripture. Catholic teaching makes substantial use of both Scripture and philosophy. However, in the Catholic tradition the church retains the authority to provide appropriate Scriptural interpretation and teaching through its “magisterium.” Catholic teaching often clarifies an argument by identifying the formal philosophical positions with which the church is in agreement or disagreement. Thus, the Catholic approach to the ethics course uses encyclical letters wherein these interpretations and teachings are set forth explicitly.

⁷Student affect is as measured by the college’s standard class evaluation form as completed by students in the final week of each class.

⁸The term “shared discovery” is intended to describe a classroom atmosphere wherein the instructor is a learner, sharing the excitement of discovery with students. In more traditional settings, the instructor is clearly the expert and the students are expected accept truth according to that expertise. In this setting, the student’s ideas and opinions are given more weight, and the instructor learns with the students. This is not to say that the instructor does not lead the students. The instructor leads using logic, argument, and appeal to Christian teaching, but makes minimal use of any authority found in the position of the professor. In an ethics course, this spirit encourages candor in the conversation of issues often deemed too risky to entertain.

⁹These are titled: “Business and Society,” a macro ethics course concerning the role of business in the society; “Ethical Applications in Business,” a micro ethics course focused upon the ethical management of the firm; “Ethics and Social Responsibility of Management,” a micro ethics course for graduate students; and “Ethics and the Ecology of Commerce,” a course focused upon environmental issues.

¹⁰The Carvaka was an Asian school of thought which advocated seeking pleasure here and now. The Epicureans based their idea of the good around pleasure, while Augustine lead a life directed toward pleasure prior to his conversion.

¹¹This refers to the stone found in Egypt in 1799 which allowed the deciphering of hieroglyphics. The “Ethics” (1993) article itself features a chronological development of ethical thought, exploring such themes as Greek thought, summarizing the ideas of Plato, Aristotle, the Sophists and others. A chronology of Christian thought includes Jesus, Augustine, Aquinas and Luther. Other important themes include British thought, which includes Hobbes, Hume, the Intuitionists, the Moral Sense School and Utilitarianism. A summary of continental thought includes the ideas of Spinoza, Kant, Hegel, Marx and Sartre.

¹²The reader is encouraged to review the “Ethics” (1993) article. It is characterized by considerable breadth, depth and rigor. A class review of the concepts is encouraged here, as only the best students will absorb the “Ethics” article without some help from the instructor.

¹³For example consider the greatest happiness for the greatest number criterion as developed by Francis Hutcheson (2004, p. 125-126). See also the development of the principle of utility in Jeremy Bentham (1970, p. 1-7). See also the contribution of John Stuart Mill (1998, p. 54-72).

¹⁴See Paley (1978, p.34) for the relationship between his happiness criterion and virtue.

¹⁵See Paley (1978, p.32) for his definition of virtue as “the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness.” See p. 331-398 concerning duties toward God. See p. 431-440 for an example of his direct use of Scripture.

¹⁶The author is indebted to a reviewer for pointing these Scriptures out. The reviewer included John 20: 30-31, Acts 1:3, Philippians 9-10, Isaiah 1:18, I Peter 3:5, I Corinthians 15: 3-8, I Thessalonians 5:21, 2 Peter 3:18, I John 4:1.

¹⁷In sales training, the use of an assumptive close means that the salesperson assumes the decision to buy has been made and then proceeds to tie down the details such as delivery date.

¹⁸Note the definition of normative ethics as involving substantial proposals concerning how to act, how to live, or what kind of person to be in Kagan (1998, p. 2).

¹⁹See Bunge (2003) under deontologism. See also “deontological ethics” as defined in *The Random House Compact Unabridged Dictionary* (1996, p. 533).

²⁰See the discussion of Hutcheson, Bentham, and Mill in note 13 above. See also the discussion of “Utilitarianism” in Rachels (1976, p. 101-181).

²¹Observed in television broadcasts by this ministry.

²²This combination of inevitable reward and punishment in the afterlife coupled with a sometimes self-sacrificial duty in this life may be the reason Bunge (2003, p. 71-72) characterizes Christian ethics as a deontologism which is Consequentialist and religious. Both aspects occupy Christian thought.

²³See Confucius (2003, p. 126). This translation uses "Do not impose upon others what you yourself do not desire." See also Confucius (1980, p. 90). This translation uses "Do not do to others what you would not like yourself."

²⁴See the characterization of this position in Sharma (1970, p. 138): "A person who hoards wealth deprives poor and hungry persons of their wants. Surplus wealth could be used to provide food and clothing to the needy." See also the characterization of Jaina ethics in Mohanty (2000, p. 114-115).

²⁵Consider the Christian walk as described in John Wesley (undated).

²⁶This may be seen in the context of Vander Veen's (1997) argument.

²⁷For an argument supportive of the stockholder model see Friedman (1970). For a Christian Characterization of a constrained stockholder model see Hoover (1998, p. 70-72). The stakeholder model argues that business decisions should take into account all parties having a stake in the decision, or all parties affected. See R.E. Freeman (1984).

²⁸An important parallel in wording and thought observable between Immanuel Kant and John Paul II was introduced to the professor and the class by an undergraduate student during a class discussion.

²⁹Useful reading in preparation for this is Lee Strobel (1998). This book straightforwardly presents and examines counterargument.

³⁰The author is indebted to a reviewer for the idea concerning the use of Bible Gateway. When recommending appropriate hermeneutics, the instructor may wish to consider any of the numerous articles concerning hermeneutics referenced in the introduction to this article. The introduction section does not comprise a complete review and further useful articles may be found in *The Journal of Biblical Integration in Business*.

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