S J L T

Scandinavian Journal for Leadership & Theology

2025
volume 12
www.sjlt-journal.com
ISSN: 1894-7875

Christian Leadership in 3D

Leading and Following in the Spiritual Footsteps of Jesus

Peter S. Williams
NLA University College

Abstract

This paper combines my previously published 3D-model of spirituality in general, and Christian spirituality in particular, with a constructivist understanding of leadership, to define and explore Christian leadership as serving followers by exercising a virtue-orientated rhetorical influence over their spirituality in a way that flows from the leader's own spirituality as a follower of Christ. I also explore how Christian spirituality offers leaders and followers resources for mitigating against the abuse of leadership.

Keywords: Leadership, Followers, Spirituality, Christianity, Rhetoric, Transcendental Values, Virtues, Humility, Love

With thanks to: Professors Jan Inge Jenssen & Bård Eirik Hallesby Norheim, and everyone attending the symposium on Christian leadership they convened in Oslo, October 6th - 7th 2022 (especially those who commented on my presentation); the anonymous reviewers for the *Scandinavian Journal for Leadership & Theology*, for their comments on prior versions of this paper; the European Leadership Forum, for inviting me to speak to their volunteer team on "Leading and Following in the Footsteps of Jesus" on 21st May 2023; to the online meeting of the "RITHM/CAP" research group on December 4th 2024, for feedback on a prior version of this paper; and to the English L'Abri Fellowship, for asking me to speak on "Leading and Following in the Spiritual Footsteps of Jesus" on 7th February 2025. For an audio of my Oslo presentation, see Williams, (2022) Leadership in 3D: Paper Presentation in Oslo. For an audio of my European Leadership Forum talk, see Williams, (2023) Leading and Following in the Footsteps of Christ. For an audio of my L'Abri Fellowship presentation, see Williams, (2025) Leading and Following in the Spiritual Footsteps of Jesus.

https://doi.org/10.53311/sjlt.v12.95

Introduction

This paper combines my previously published "3D" model of spirituality in general, and of Christian spirituality in particular,[1] with a constructivist definition of leadership, to define and explore the nature of Christian leadership, and to investigate how Christian spirituality offers leaders and followers resources for mitigating against the abuse of leadership.

In Part One, I define "spirituality" as a holistic "way of life" intended to virtuously integrate one's assumptions, concomitant attitudes and consequent actions.

In Part Two, I define "leadership" as the relational process of serving followers by exercising a virtue-orientated influence over their spirituality (i.e. their assumptions and/or attitudes, and hence their actions). Leader's exercise an influence upon followers that necessarily operates through one or more communication channels, which can be categorized under the classical rhetorical headings of logos, pathos and ethos. The spirituality and rhetorical influence of the leader, the spiritual "way" in which they influence the follower to "walk," and the ends prioritised in this relationship, should all be judged by the classical "transcendental" values of truth, goodness and beauty. This definition rounds out a "constructivist" or "follower-centric" understanding of leadership (Chaleff, 2009; Grint, 2010; Haslam, Iszatt-White & Saunders, 2017; Reicher & Platow, 2020) by locating it within the consilience of spirituality with rhetoric and the transcendent values.

In Part Three, I define "Christian spirituality" as a God-centred way of life that virtuously influences and integrates our assumptions, attitudes and actions through faithfulness to Jesus Christ as Lord. I also explore the communal dimension of spirituality in general and of Christian spirituality in particular.

In Part Four, I define "Christian leadership" as the exercise of a virtue-orientated rhetorical influence over the spirituality of followers that flows from the leader's own followership of Christ (i.e. from their Christian spirituality).

In Part Five, I delve deeper into the three-by-three conceptual "leadership matrix" formed by the consilience of spirituality with rhetoric and the transcendental values.

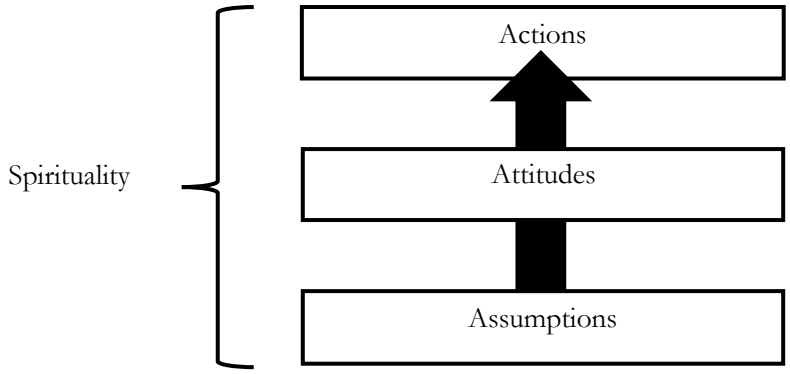
In Part Six, I draw upon the preceding discussion to explore how Christian spirituality offers leaders and followers resources for mitigating against the abuse of leadership, through encouraging "constructive dissent" and "humble love" grounded in transcendent values.

Part One: Spirituality "in 3D"

In a series of publications and talks, I have developed a generic definition of a "spirituality" or "way of life" as a holistic, putatively virtuous way of relating to reality via one's assumptions, concomitant attitudes and consequent actions (see fig. 1, and Williams, 2021b).

[1] My publications on spirituality include a series of papers in *Theofilos* journal, revised versions of which form the bulk of my book *Apologetics in 3D* (2021), in addition to material in my books *Behold the Man* (2024), *A Faithful Guide to Philosophy* (2019) and *Understanding Jesus* (2011).

***Figure 1**: Spirituality in 3D*



No properly functioning human can avoid holding assumptions about reality (be these doxastic beliefs or non-doxastic propositions they act on the basis of). Nor can they avoid having attitudinal, conative responses to reality as they assume it to be. And the combination of assumptions with attitudes is the soil from which actions grow, albeit in a non-deterministic fashion (see Williams, 2019a. See also Moreland and Craig, 2017; Swinburne, 2013). In other words, to have a spirituality is to have a particular "way" of relating to reality via one's "head, heart and hands," or one's *Herz, Kopf und Hand*, as 18th century pedagogist Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746 – 1827) put it (see Andersen, 2020, p. 51).

Philosopher Daniel McKaughan (2017) uses alternative terms for the same categories, analyzing what it means to have "a faith" (i.e. a "way of life" or "spirituality") by:

> attending to the *cognitive*, *affective*, and *behavioral* aspects that the complex stance of faith/faithfulness involves. We can understand what it is to have faith … by asking about what is distinctive or characteristic about what one thinks, what one cares about, and what one does when one has faith.

A "faith" or "spirituality" is a holistic "way of life" that is intended to be both integrative and virtuous. Of course, these intentions are not necessarily fulfilled in practice (see Williams, 2024b; 2021b, Chapter Two).

Many writers on leadership pick up on the same generic structure of spirituality. For example, Peter Koestenbaum (1991, p. 2) writes that: "Leading requires changing not only the way you think and the way you act but the way you will." Robert K. Greenleaf (2002, p. 28) observes: "The forces for good and evil in the world are propelled by the thoughts, attitudes, and actions of individual beings." Christopher P. Meade discusses the "core competencies" or virtues "of the head, hands, and heart" (Meade, 2010, p. 160). According to Howard Garner (2011, p. 14), leaders "influence the thoughts, behaviors, and/or feelings of others." Rob Nielsen et al. lay out "three fundamental levels through which a leader with humility relates to others: cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally" (Nielsen, et al. 2014, p. 42). Stephen Tierney summarizes his approach to leadership by noting:

> Practical wisdom involves acting thoughtfully and virtuously and encouraging others to do the same … Virtue, thought and action, which coalesce in effective leadership, I have termed the Way of Being, Way of Knowing and Way of Doing. (Tierney, 2021, p. 15)

Likewise, Peter G. Northouse (2022, p. 10) states that: "People have power when they have the ability to affect other's beliefs, attitudes, and courses of action."

My "3D" model of spirituality manages to be generic by focusing upon the *structure* of spirituality rather than the *content* that different spiritualities place within this structure. To

specify a "way of life" as Buddhist, Christian, Communist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Secular Humanist, etc., requires one to specify a distinctive set of assumptions, attitudes and activities.

My "3D" model offers a nuanced description of spirituality. For example, under the heading of "attitudes", I include a person's choices and commitments alongside their attitudinal and emotional responses to reality. Moreover, the category of "assumptions" can be filled out with a variety cognitive attitudes, of which doxastic "beliefs" are only one example (McKaughan, 2017; Williams, 2022a).

Following philosophers Daniel Howard-Snyder and Daniel McKaughan (2020), we can define what it means for someone's "faith/spirituality/way of life" to include faith *that* some proposition *p* is true, or faith *in* some proposition or person *p,* as: a) for them to have a positive (doxastic or non-doxastic) cognitive attitude toward the truth or trustworthiness of *p* (e.g. to believe that *p* is probably true or trustworthy, or to assume *p* whilst neither believing nor disbelieving *p*), b) for them to have a positive conative attitude toward *p* (seeing *p* as worthy of choice and/or admiration), and c) for them to be disposed to live in light of their cognitive and conative stance towards *p* (e.g. being disposed to act on this basis, trusting and/or giving allegiance to *p*, whilst being disposed to be appropriately resilient in the face of challenges to living in this way).

PART TWO: LEADERSHIP

"A leader … is someone who commands a following." - John Stott (2002, p. 9).

In an episode of cartoon comedy-horror *Be Cool*, *Scooby Doo!* (2015, Series 1, Episode 26), the perennially hungry and frequently frightened "Shaggy" (best friend of talking dog "Scooby Doo") lays a home truth upon "mystery-gang" leader Fred Jones: "You may be the leader of our gang, but that's only because we choose to follow you, for some unfathomable reason." In the words of Keith Grint, the serious point here is that "leadership is a relationship … the property and consequence of a community rather than the property and consequence of an individual leader" (Grint, 2010, p. 85).

The etymological roots of the English word "leadership" include the old Norse "Leid", which means "to find the way at sea" (Grint, 2010, p. 6). Similarly, "The Chinese character for leader means a 'pointing leading person'" (Meade, 2010, p. 19). This way-finding/pointing isn't a solo occupation (talk of "leading oneself" is metaphorical). Rather, its an act of service to the person or persons who look to one to show or help them find "the way" to "walk" (these being common biblical metaphors for spirituality, seen in passages such as Deut 8:6, Ps 119:1-3 & 128:1, Mic 6:8, Eph 4:1 and 2 Jn 1:6). Hence, it's not the fact that one knows or shows others the way that makes one a leader. One can be "a leader" in the nominal sense of having a leadership position, without managing to lead anyone. If no one follows your lead, you aren't leading (only *attempting* to lead).

In other words, it is the fact that people look to someone to show or to help them find "the way" that makes that looked-to someone "a leader." Leadership is an "interpersonal relation in which others comply because they want to, not because they have to." (Meade, 2010, p. 13. See also Haslam, et al., p. 144). As Northouse explains: "Without influence, leadership does not exist … Leaders and followers must be understood in relation to each other" (Northouse, 2022, pp. 6-7).

Here we see why the final clause of Shaggy's comment is a joke: people don't follow people without having a reason for doing so. People follow people on the assumption that

following them will increase their chances of "getting where they want to go," that is, of obtaining one or more (real or apparent) goods (see Adler, 1978, pp. 73-96; Williams, 1999, pp. 321-324). As Franziska Frank observes: "Humans wish to develop their efficacy in life and therefore seek relationships that have the potential to further them" (Frank, 2023, p. 234).

Of course, a leader's arguments and/or example may convince followers to want a particular "destination." As Haslam, et al. comment:

> great leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela show us what to value – peace, justice, loving one's neighbor, and even reconciliation with one's oppressors – and not only how to obtain what we valued before … They can expose followers to the broader values that contradict narrower ones or inconsistent behavior. They can redefine aspirations and gratifications. (2020, p. 30 & 35)

That said, in many if not in all cases, what redefinition of aspirations a leader can catalyze in their followers depends upon those followers trusting that following the leader in this matter increases the odds that some more fundamental aspiration or aspirations they have will be satisfied. For example, a leader may convince them that, despite their natural reticence about reconciling with their former oppressors, doing so is the best way to satisfy their more fundamental desire for peace and/or "doing the right thing."

The literal or metaphorical "destinations" followers hope leaders will help them find are ends the followers consider desirable and thus valuable in some way (for a philosophical analysis of "ends," see Adler, 1978; Williams, 1999, pp. 321-324). Given that the transcendental values of objective truth (and hence rationality), goodness and beauty provide the correct philosophical account of value, it follows that the "ends" followers desire (or can be convinced to desire), are properly assessed in terms of these categories.

As philosopher John Cottingham writes (2006): "The true is that which is worthy of belief … the beautiful is that which is worthy of admiration; and the good is that which is worthy of choice." (On the objectivity of these "transcendental" values, see Williams, 2021b, 2019a, 2004, 1999. See also Alston, 1996; Beckwith & Koukl, 1998; Cowan & Spiegel, 2009; Lewis, 2015; Nagel, 1997; Wooddell, 2011.)

Assuming their trust well-placed, the increased chance of "getting where they want to go" gained by a follower results from the influence their leader has upon their spiritual "walk." This influence necessarily operates through one or more communication channels, which can be categorized under the categories of classical rhetoric (i.e. logos, pathos and ethos). The leader's use of rhetoric should be judged against the transcendent values in which it is grounded. Hence, the leader-follower relationship functions within the categories that describe the consilience of spirituality with rhetoric and the transcendent values (see Table 1).

Table 1: *The co-incidence of spirituality, transcendent values and rhetoric.*

Spirituality		**Rhetoric**		**Values**
Actions	Communicating	*Ethos*	Properly aimed at & assessed by	*Goodness*
Attitudes	Communicated through	*Pathos*	Properly aimed at & assessed by	*Beauty*
Assumptions	Communicated through	*Logos*	Properly aimed at & assessed by	*Truth/Rationality*

In sum, leadership is a relationship in which a leader serves people who let themselves be influenced by them concerning "the way" they "walk" in pursuit of things they value. Leaders embody a spirituality (a set of assumptions, attitudes and actions) which shapes their use of rhetoric (logos, pathos and ethos) to influence the spirituality of followers in a putatively virtuous (i.e. truthful/reasonable, good and beautiful) way.

It follows that *good* leaders embody assumptions, attitudes and actions that *are* true/reasonable, good and beautiful, and which shape their exercise of a virtuous rhetorical influence upon the spirituality of their followers, in pursuit of valuable and virtuous ends (on moral and intellectual virtue, see Austin & Geivett, 2012; Baehr, 2021; Dowe, 2013; Harrington & Keenan, 2002; King, 2021; Kreeft, 1992; Miller & West, 2020; Newstead & Riggio, 2023; Wood, 1998; Wright, 2010; Zagzebski, 1996).

Part Three: Christian Spirituality

> Thus says the LORD: 'Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls.' (Jeremiah 6:16, ESV)
>
> Jesus answered him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one goes to the Father except by me.' (John 14:6, Good News Translation).

The "3D" understanding of spirituality given above is consistent with the nature of spirituality taught and exhibited within biblical tradition. A prime example of this is Jesus's endorsement of the need to "Love the Lord your God with all your *heart* … and with all your *mind*, and with all your *strength*" (Mk 12:30 & 33, my italics; see also Deut 6:5).

Jesus calls people to enter into a spirituality that exhibits faith in "the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" (Mk 12:26) *as purportedly revealed in and through his own person* (Mt 11:29; Jn 3:16, 14:6 & 17:3; see Williams, 2011). Although the "salvation" of right relationship with God comes through faith in Jesus, and not through performing "works" (i.e. it is not *earnt* through good works – Rom 9:32, Gal 2:16), this faith is by nature a faith which "has works [*echē erga*]" in it (Jas 2:17).

As suggested by its earliest self-designation as "The Way" (Acts 11:26 & 22:4; see Stern, 1992, pp. 39, 107 & 200-201), Christianity is a God-centred "way of life" that integrates out assumptions, attitudes and actions through faithfulness to Jesus as Lord. In the early 60's AD, the apostle Peter described Christianity as a "good way of life [*anastrophē*]" (1 Pet 3:16, World English Bible). Likewise, writing in the early 60's AD to the Ephesian church, the apostle Paul said the faithful had been "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life" (Eph 2:10, NRSV). In the mid 50's AD, Paul exhorted followers of "The Way" in Corinth to "Be imitators of me as I also of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1), and to this end sent them "Timothy, who … will remind you of my ways which are in Christ" (1 Corinthians 4:17, ESV. See also Phil 4:9).

To employ the Greek terminology adopted by later Christian tradition, the three-dimensional "orthodoxy, orthopraxy and orthopathy" (Smith, 2001, p. 11) structure of Christian spirituality, as well as its Christocentric focus, are seen in the crowd's response to Peter's address to the crowd at Pentecost summarised in Acts 2:

> When the people heard this [i.e. Peter's claims about Jesus and his resurrection], they were cut to the heart [i.e. their attitude was one of positive response] and said to Peter

> and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do? [i.e. what practical response should we make?]" (Acts 2:37)

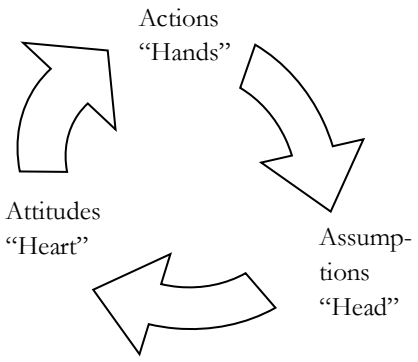
Indeed, once one has this "3D" structure in mind, one notices it throughout the Bible (e.g. Deut 31:10-12; Mk 4:1-20; Col 3:14-17; 1 Pet 3:15-16).

Spiritual Formation "in 3D"

There is a formational dynamic to the "3D" structure of spirituality, whereby worldview assumptions ground spiritual attitudes, which jointly ground and sustain spiritual actions. As Corey and Mary Crossan write: "The development of character is practiced between thought and action requiring both strong intention and conscious frequent exercise to develop targeted virtuous behaviors" (Crossan & Crossan, 2023, p. 225).

Spiritual actions are part-and-parcel of a spiritual "positive feedback loop" (which is obvious when one thinks of liturgical worship, but spiritual actions encompass the whole of life insofar as it is lived out of our assumptions and attitudes). Our attitudes not only reflect our assumptions, they can restrict the range of propositions we will even consider embracing. Spiritual actions are not just the practical outworking *of* faith, but also positive aids *to* faith. Thus, it is appropriate to represent spirituality as a dynamic loop (Fig. 2):

Figure 2: *Spirituality as a dynamic loop.*



As theologian Mark Earey (2009, p. 65) observes:

> it is not just that we express with our bodies or voices what we think in our minds or feel in our hearts: on the contrary, what we do with our bodies or say with our mouths can change or influence how we feel and what we think, as individuals and communities.

That said, spirituality is more firmly rooted in our worldview than in our actions, for as philosopher Dallas Willard (2016, p. 4) observes: "Thoughts determine the orientation of everything we do and evoke the feelings that frame our world and motivate our actions." After all, in general one "can't evoke thoughts by feeling a certain way. However, we can evoke – and to some degree control – our feelings by directing our thoughts." Hence: "what we think, imagine, believe, or guess sets boundaries to what we can or will choose, and therefore to what we can create [i.e. what we can do]."

Spirituality is bound up with the sort of people we see ourselves as being and/or becoming. As psychologist Joanna Collicutt (2015, p. 16) explains:

> our idealized self-image … is expressed in terms of certain principles, which are in their turn expressed in action programs. A less technical way of describing this is as who I want to be; rules for living this out; and what I actually try to do in order to keep to those rules.

That is, our worldview includes *ideas* about the sort of people we *want* to be, and this combination of head and heart leads us to commit ourselves to certain ways to live (to certain "rules for living this out"), commitments we translate into actions that, over time, can become habitual (see Table 2). It is easier to find a different way of acting upon our commitment to a given rule for living than it is to commit to a different rule, and harder still to change our idealized self-image.

Table 2: *Three Dimensions of Spiritual Formation.*

Actions (Orthopraxy) ↑	**Specific Programmes of Action** (What I do to keep to my principles)
Attitudes (Orthopathy)	**Commitment to General Principles** (Principles expressing my idealized self-image)
↑ **Worldview Assumptions** (Orthodoxy)	**Idealized self-image**

Relating the schema in Table 2 to Christian spiritual formation, we can observe with Collicutt that Christians begin "with the character of Christ (who we want to be)," explore "Christ-like virtues (the rules we aim to live by)" and grapple with "how these are to be lived out in habitual practice and attitudes (what we try to do)" (Collicutt, 2015, p. 23). Such intentional cooperation with God's leadership influence in the process of forming and integrating Christian assumptions, attitudes and actions, is "discipleship":

> just as a student is someone who is being educated and cooperates with the process by engaging in study, a disciple is someone who is being formed and cooperates with the process by engaging in discipleship. (Collicutt, 2015, p. 6)

Hence Willard (2016, p. 73) explains Christian formation as a matter of "the right vision of reality and goodness, the right intention and decision (to become Christ-like), and adequate means to carry out the intention" via spiritual disciplines (see Wright, 2020). In the words of Abbot Christopher Jamison (2006, p. 79), Christian discipleship is thus a matter of "the conscientious exercise of choice leading to obedient freedom" in Christ.

Communal Spirituality

Sociologist David Burnett (2002, p. 13) reminds us that: "Worldviews are incarnated in the actual ways of life of a person and his society." Community and culture are almost inevitable concomitants of spirituality. As philosopher W. Jay Wood comments:

> we are not alone in our efforts to become morally and intellectually virtuous persons … 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. (Wood, 1998, p. 20)

A community is a spiritual fellowship of common interests and liabilities that results from shared assumptions and attitudes that support shared activities. Every "social framework" that influences people's spirituality functions according to a communal spirituality.

It is important to note that the spiritualities of different individual and communal "ways of life" can overlap to varying degrees, and that people with different spiritualities can therefore have fellowship with integrity in any social framework that has a communal spirituality they perceive as being compatible with their personal spirituality.

For example, Christian spirituality can support and include the institutional spirituality of an educational community such as a University, thereby over-lapping with a plurality of spiritualities adopted by members of that same community. The intersection of the different spiritualities involved delineates the spirituality of the educational community as such. An educational community can and should have a communal spirituality that nurtures the mutual fellowship of a "civil public square" (Guinness, 2013, p. 180) which facilitates robust but respectful, constructive disagreement (Williams, 2017).

Of course, its important to note that inconsistent spiritualities, or elements thereof, can and do co-exist in socio-cultural space, and that they can and do exert an influence upon people and communities regardless of their formal spiritual commitments. Hence Meade describes leadership as "a three-way dance of sorts. The three dance partners are: (1) the leader, (2) the follower, and (3) the unique cultural context in which we are called to lead" (2010, p. 6).

As New Testament scholar Richard B. Hays (1996, p. 122) affirms: "from the beginning of Luke's Gospel, it is evident that God's saving action intends the formation of a people, not merely the salvation of individuals." The Christian community is a spiritual fellowship of assumptions, attitudes and actions shared by people who mutually recognize one another as Christ's disciples. Ultimately, it is Christ in whom Christians commune and thus find spiritual fellowship as his "body" (Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:12-14; Eph 4:11-16). As atheist philosopher Andre Comte-Sponville helpfully explains:

> to commune is to share without dividing. This may sound paradoxical. Where material goods are concerned, it is indeed impossible. People cannot commune in a cake, for instance, because the only way to share it is to divide it … In a family or a group of friends, on the other hand, people can commune in the pleasure they take in eating a delicious cake together: all share the same delectation, but without having to divide it up! (Comte-Sponville, 2007, p. 15).

Part Four: Leading and Following in the Footsteps of Jesus

> The role of a spiritual leader isn't just to teach information; it's to actually model a way of life. (Meade, 2010, p. 161)

There is a distinctively Christian way to be a leader because being a Christian means having a distinctive "way of life" (1 Pet 3:16) that informs (or at least should inform) how adherents engage in leadership. Every Christian is by definition a follower or disciple of Jesus Christ (Mt 11:29). Consequently, "Christian leadership" is a matter of leading followers *in the way that one's spiritual discipleship to Christ leads one to lead.* Moreover, the fact that Christian faith typically involves Christian community (Acts 2:42-46; Heb 10:25) highlights the existence of a communal dimension to Christian leadership, even beyond the fact that leaders require followers.

The historical Jesus of the New Testament was a spiritual leader who was himself a follower of God the Father (for a critique of the common distinction between the "Jesus of History" and the "Christ of Faith," and a defence of the traditional Christian understanding

of Jesus, see Williams, 2024, 2020, 2019b and 2011. See also Blomberg, 2007; Evans, 2004; McGrew, 2021 and 2017; Williams, 2018). In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed: "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." (Lk 22:42, ESV; see also Mk 14:36 & Mt 26:39). Likewise, in the fourth gospel, Jesus says: "the Son can do nothing on his own initiative, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise" (Jn 5:19, NET. See also Jn 5:30, 6:38, 7:28, 12:49 & 14:10).

Although there is an obvious sense in which Jesus provides a model of both leading and following, Christian leadership cannot mean leading *exactly* as Jesus led his disciples, any more than Christian discipleship can mean following Jesus *exactly* as he followed God the Father. In either case, the attempt would be both blasphemous and hubristic! Consequently, Christian leadership is *not* leading as Jesus led, but *leading in the way one's discipleship to Christ leads one to lead*. The correct question for Christian leaders in not "What would Jesus do?" but "What would Jesus have me do?"

As Alison Reynolds et al. observe, the leadership-conferring trust of followers is "a gift from others with associated duties" (2020, p. 106. On the New Testament language of spiritual "gifts," see Berding, 2006). These duties point to relevant moral and intellectual virtues. However, the Christian's leadership duties are *primarily* owed not to their followers, but to God (through Christ), and their pursuit of these duties and associated virtues must be rooted in and contextualized by the person, teaching and example of Jesus as incarnating the truth, goodness and beauty of God (Ps 12:22, 25:7, 27:4, 86:11 & 119:160; Jn 1:14, 7:18 & 10:11; Heb 1:3).

Leading and Following in Community

Leaders and followers form relationships that influence their mutual spiritual formation in community. These relationships exist either within the context of a particular spirituality (intra-spiritual relationships), or across different spiritualities (inter-spiritual relationships), and may be more or less focused upon an explicitly religious spiritual formation. It is of course within the context of Christian community that many formal and informal roles offering both inter-spiritual and/or intra-spiritual Christian leadership are situated.

The New Testament norm is for Christians to participate in a process of mutual formation through community (Acts 2:42-46; Heb 10:25). Hence, the apostle Paul appealed to the Corinthians to "be imitators of me," and sent them Timothy, "to remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor 4:16-17, NRSV). Likewise, Paul called upon the Philippians to: "join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us" (Phil 3:17, NRSV).

One sees this communal dynamic of mutual spiritual formation in the holistic description given by the early church father Tertullian (c. 155-220 AD) of Christians as: "a body knit together as such by a common religious profession, by unity of discipline, and by the bond of a common hope." (*Apology*, Chapter 39). Tertullian explained how Christians:

> assemble to read our sacred writings … with the sacred words we nourish our faith [which is both a matter of cognitive assumptions and conative attitudes], we animate our hope, we make our confidence more steadfast; and no less by inculcations of God's precepts we confirm good habits [i.e. spiritual actions].

Through the shared expression of assumptions and attitudes, and the shared inculcation of "good habits," the community as a whole acts as a metaphorical leader to its members. In the

case of Christian community, this corporate leadership depends upon the member's joint followership of Christian leaders and, first and foremost, of Christ.

Haslam et al. argue that "leadership is … about leaders and followers as members of a social group" because "it is social identity that allows people both to lead and to be led" (2020, p. 43 & 45). For example, although they mistakenly assert that the apostle Paul "institutionalized … baptism and the Lord's supper" and thereby formalized "a Christian church that had not hitherto existed,"[2] they rightly approve of Philip Francis Esler's observation that in Paul's letter to the church in Rome:

> Paul's position is that he epitomizes the social category of Christ-follower (that is, he both defines it and is defined by it) and that other believers … should copy him; thus he exercises leadership. To do this he needs to persuade his audience that he is an exemplary Christ-follower, encapsulating all that such identity entails. (Esler, 2003, p. 2)

However, the emphasis Haslam et al. place upon group-defining identities in "organizations, politics, or religion" (2020, p. 144) and in "mass categories such as nations, religions, and ethnicities" (2020, p. 148) seems at odds with the fact that having a single follower is enough to make someone a leader, and in tension with the fact that the "identity" involved in a follower-leader relationship might be very specific and limited, rather than wide ranging and open-ended (after all, the collective self that specifies the "social identity" at the core of Haslam and co.'s leadership theory might be as "thin" as "People interested in arguments for God").

Reflective Leadership in Community

As Grint (2010, p. 13) argues, leadership is a relational phenomenon: "without followers, you cannot be a leader." Consequently, leadership emerges from the mutual interaction of the leader and their followers. To illustrate the point, Grint offers parenthood as a model of leadership, arguing that parents are in effect taught to parent by their children: "if they don't feel comfortable with the way we are holding them as infants, they cry and we adjust our hold" (Grint, 2010, p. 63). Of course, parents may have gained applicable knowledge from their own parents or guardians, from parenting books, etc. Nevertheless, good parents need the humility to learn how best to parent their children "by listening and responding to their children" (Grint, 2010, p. 63).

Grint's general point is that a leader's followers pay a similar role in teaching them how to lead. What the leader needs to develop is not just experience, but "reflective experience" (Grint, 2010, p. 63). Leadership is not just a matter of "how much charisma you have, or whether you have a vision or a strategy for achieving that vision, but whether you have a capacity to learn from your followers" (Grint, 2010, pp. 64-65).

This reflective-leadership occurs through "a 'community of practice' in which engagement in a social practice constitutes a social community and thus an identity which can then be led" (Grint, 2010, p. 62). The "3D" model of spirituality alerts us to the fact that a community of practice (see Wenger-Trayner, 2015) is not merely a community of shared *practices*, but of shared assumptions and attitudes, as well as of mutual and corporate spiritual formation.

---

[2] Christian Baptism was practiced before Paul's conversion (see Acts 2:38 & 8:36-38), and Paul "passed on/delivered" what he had "received" with respect to the rite of the Lord's supper (1 Cor 11:23), which was established by Jesus (1 Cor 11:23-25; Mk 14:22-23; Mt 26:26-28; Lk 22:17-20). Haslam, Reicher and Platow also inaccurately describe Paul's Damascus road encounter as a "dream" (2020, p 167, cf. Williams, 2019b). On the relationship between Paul and Christianity, see Barnett, 2008; Wenham, 2002; Wenham, 2010.

Applying this to the nature of intra-spiritual Christian leadership, people's engagement in Christian spirituality constitutes a community with shared actions, attitudes and assumptions, and thus an "identity" (individual and corporate) "which can then be led." Christians will look to Christian leaders whom they trust to help them flourish within their individual spiritual identity as Christians, and their corporate spiritual identity as Christians-in-community.

With respect to inter-spiritual Christian leadership, one would look for social frameworks with a spiritual culture able to include people with different but overlapping spiritualities within the same community of practice. To return to a previous example, a University can be a social framework that includes people with different spiritualities within the same community of practice, as long as the spiritualities of those who constitute that community have sufficient overlap with the communal spirituality inherent to being a University as such (Williams, 2017).

Christian Leadership Illustrated by Apologetics and Preaching

I have previously drawn on my "3D" analysis of Christian spirituality to give a holistic definition of and vision for Christian apologetics (Williams, 2021b, 2024a, 2025a & 2025b; see also Gould, 2019), and to illuminate the formational purpose of Christian preaching (Williams, 2021a). These ministries are closely aligned examples of intra and/or inter-spiritual Christian leadership that are explicitly focused upon spiritual formation. Both ministries involve Christians in leading other Christians and/or non-Christians, through a virtue-orientated rhetorical influence (see Eves, 2019; Gentry II, 2020).

Northouse (2022, p. 6) defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal." However, the leader and followers (or follower) may have goals that are more strictly speaking overlapping rather than held in common. For example, the non-Christian may look to a Christian to lead them in exploring whether or not the canonical gospels are viable sources of information about Jesus, and the Christian may seek to satisfy this desire (Blomberg, 2007; McGrew, 2021 & 2017; Williams, 2018; Williams, 2024, 2019b & 2011). In a general sense, there is a common goal here. Nevertheless, each party may have different but overlapping goals in mind (e.g. while the Christian may hope to satisfy the non-Christian that this issue is to be resolved in the positive, the non-Christian may hope to satisfy themselves that it is to be resolved in the negative).

Likewise, the apposite goal of preaching is the same as the apposite goal of apologetics: the virtuous exercise of a rhetorical influence that initiates, maintains and/or develops a Christian spiritual formation (see 1 Corinthians 14:26). As J. De Waal Dryden observes, we should see "the function of the biblical text as primarily defined by wisdom formation … shaping and sustaining our deepest convictions, desires, and practices" (Dryden, 2018, p. xix). The liturgical function of the sermon is the virtuous use of rhetoric (including the Bible's own rhetoric) to help an audience grasp what scripture conveys about truth/rationality, goodness and beauty (as well as about falsehood/irrationality, evil and ugliness), with the ultimate goal of influencing them either to become disciples of Christ, or to maintain and/or deepen a pre-existing discipleship to Christ (Williams, 2021a; see also Dryden, 2018; Eves, 2019; Keller, 2015; MacBride, 2016). Meanwhile, the non-Christian "in the pew" may simply be hoping the preacher will help them understand why the friend who invited them to church is so enamored with Jesus. Hence the preacher and the non-Christian can have different goals that overlap sufficiently to enable the former to lead the latter.

Part Five: Delving Deeper into the Leadership Matrix

As examples of Christian leadership, the closely aligned definitions of preaching and apologetics that I have offered both draw upon the consilience between the assumptions, attitudes and actions structure of spirituality and two other conceptual triads: the transcendental values (truth, goodness and beauty), and the three elements of rhetoric (logos, ethos and pathos) that communicate these values with the intent to influence others. Together, these concepts form a three-by-three conceptual "leadership matrix" (see Table 1).

This paper defines "Christian leadership" as the exercise of a virtue-orientated rhetorical influence over the spirituality of followers that flows from the leader's own followership of Christ (i.e. from their Christian spirituality). Further unpacking the virtue-orientated use of rhetoric in Christian leadership will lead us to a deeper description of the transcendent values by which Christian leaders, and their use of rhetoric to influence followers, should be judged.

Delving Deeper into Rhetoric

Northouse (2022, p. 10) observes that:

> The concept of power is related to leadership because it is part of the influence process … People have power when they have the ability to affect other's beliefs, attitudes, and courses of action.

Influence operates through communication channels that can be understood through the categories of rhetoric. As James A. Herrick explains (2008, p. 5): "when we express emotions and thoughts to other people with the goal of influencing (persuading) them, we engage in rhetoric." On Herrick's definition, rhetoric includes, but isn't limited to, the use of words. As Haslam, et al. (2020, p. 150) observe: "There are many forms of language, not all of them involving words." (On rhetoric, see Carter & Coleman, 2009; Herrick**,** 2008; Koukl, 2019; McBride, 2016; Schultze, 2020.)

Rhetoric points us to attractive or repellant values, and thus to the true, the beautiful and the good (the repellant values being parasitic upon the attractive values). To quote the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle, rhetoric is "the power to observe [and to help others to observe] the persuasiveness of which any particular matter admits" (Aristotle, 2004, p. 70), and good leaders will virtuously exercise their rhetorical influence "at the right times, about the right things, towards the right people, for the right end, in the right way" (Aristotle, 1908, Book II, Chapter Six, para. 3). In other words, Aristotle's conception of rhetoric is about service rather than manipulation, being virtue-orientated and grounded in the transcendental values.

Such a virtue-orientated rhetorical influence draws upon the moral and intellectual virtues of the leader, which are exercised across the three-dimensional structure of their spirituality (see Narvaez, 2019, p. 118; Wright, 2019, p. 152). As Nathan L. King observes, "like moral virtues, intellectual virtues involve a person's thoughts and motivations" (King, 2021, p. 232). King describes specifically intellectual virtues as requiring "excellence in thought, motivation, and action in relation to knowledge" (King, 2021, p. 21). In sum: "a practically developed disposition to exercise influence [is] what the virtuous leader gets right" (Price, 2023, p. 37).

Augustine of Hippo affirmed that the duties of a preacher (who, as we have seen, attempts to exercise a form of Christian leadership) includes not only "probare" - to instruct and prove, but "delectare" - to rivet and delight, as well as "flectere" - to move people to action (see Keller, 2015, p. 13). That is to say: "the eloquent should speak in such a way as to instruct, delight, and move their listeners" (Augustine, 1999, p. 117).

In giving this advice, Augustine drew upon Aristotle's account of rhetoric, which explored how best to virtuously communicate observations of objective persuasiveness to an audience using words: "For a speech is composed of three factors – the speaker, the subject and the listener – and it is to the last of these that its purpose is related" (Aristotle, 2004, p. 80). Aristotle (2004, p. 74) taught that spoken rhetoric encompasses three inter-related areas:

> Of those proofs that are furnished through the speech there are three kinds. Some reside in the character of the speaker, some in a certain *disposition* of the audience and some in the *speech* itself, through its demonstrating or seeming to demonstrate.

These three aspects of rhetoric are referred to by the Greek terms "ethos" (how the character and credibility of a speaker, as seen through their actions, influences people to consider them trustworthy, see Gist, 2020, pp. 9-10), "pathos" (the use of emotional appeals to affect an audience's judgment, e.g. through storytelling, or otherwise presenting the topic in a way that evokes appropriate positive or negative affections in the audience, see McGrath, 2019) and "logos" (the use of reasoning to construct good arguments - see Sinnott-Armstrong, 2018; Moreland & Craig, 2017; Williams, 2019a).

Interestingly, the Apostle Paul gives rhetorical advice on what we might call "persuasive evangelism" (May, 2016, pp. 56-57) that lists the same rhetorical categories in the same order as Aristotle:

> When you are with unbelievers, always make good use of the time. Be pleasant [ethos] and hold their interest when you speak the message [pathos]. Choose your words carefully and be ready to give answers to anyone who asks questions [logos]. (Col 4:5-6, CEV)

According to Aristotle, there are three (overlapping) components of ethos (character) that one can establish with an audience:

1. *Eunoia* is about the personal "good will" (Eph. 6:7) one can legitimately establish with an audience that creates in them a state of appropriate receptivity. In the context of Christian leadership, *eunoia* should principally arise from an authentic exhibition of Christocentric virtues, including neighbour-love and humility (virtues which will feature heavily in Part Six).

2. *Phronesis* combines moral and intellectual virtues with reference to contextual, practical wisdom. Aristotle defines *phronesis* as "a true and reasoned state of capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man." (Aristotle, 1908, Book VI, Chapter Five. See Costello, 2018). In terms of rhetoric, *phronesis* means demonstrating contextual wisdom in how one goes about persuading one's audience. For example: showing that one is drawing upon relevant real-life experience or has relevant qualifications, highlighting common ground with opponents, explicitly referencing recognized authorities, and heeding C.S. Lewis' call "to present that which is timeless (the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow) in the particular language of our own age." (Lewis, 1945).

3. *Arête* is about the moral virtue of your position, and of the way in which one tries to persuade people to share it (thereby demonstrating good will). Authenticity is key here (Aristotle, 2004, p. 141; Aster, 2022; Gaiman, 2021; Williams, 2022b).

Again, Paul exhibits *eunoia* (e.g. Acts 17:22 & 22:2-3; 1 Cor 9:20-21; 2 Cor 11), *phronesis* (e.g. Acts 17:28 & 22:3; 1 Cor 15:8; Gal 2:9) and *arête* (e.g. 2 Cor 11:20-21). Likewise, Jesus models *eunoia* (e.g. Jn 3:2), *phronesis* (e.g. Mk 4:26-29 & 12:18-27) and *arête* (e.g. Jn 8:46 & 10:37-38).

Delving Deeper into Transcendental Values

According to the Roman orator Cicero (1991, p. 55): "the eloquent speaker is he who in the forum and in the courts will speak in such a way as to achieve proof, delight and influence." These outcomes correspond not only to the three rhetorical categories of ethos, pathos and logos, but to the traditional transcendental values of truth (i.e. rational argumentation/logos), beauty (i.e. delight/pathos) and goodness (i.e. influence/ethos).

I have argued elsewhere that truth, goodness and beauty are objective values that we discover rather than invent (Williams, 2021b, 2019a, 2004. See also Alston, 1996; Beckwith & Koukl, 1998; Cowan & Spiegel, 2009; Lewis, 2015; Nagel, 1997; Wooddell, 2011). Given the inter-related nature of the transcendentals (some things are truly good, it is truly good to appreciate beauty, etc.), the more commonly accepted objectivity of truth and goodness naturally carries over into discussions of beauty (Kreeft, 2008). As atheist philosopher J.L. Mackie (1990, p. 15) acknowledged:

> much the same considerations apply to aesthetic and to moral values, and there would be at least some initial implausibility in a view that gave the one a different status from the other.

Indeed, G.E. Moore (1993, p. 249) argued that:

> the beautiful should be *defined* as that of which the admiring contemplation is good in itself … the question whether it is truly beautiful or not, depends upon the *objective* question whether the whole in question is or is not truly good.

As the apostle Paul wrote:

> whatever is true [i.e. morally], whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. (Phil 4:8, ESV)

Part Six: Mitigating Against Abuses of Leadership

The use of rhetorical influence by merely human leaders is rightly subject to "ethical scrutiny" because it is "prone to abuse" (Anderson, 2011; see also Northouse, 2022, p. 207).

Grint (2010, p. 103) worries that although what he calls a "theocratic" understanding of leadership "generates … community spirit in buckets … because the leader is deemed to be a deity … whose disciple followers are compelled to obey through religious requirement," such "consent remains constructive if – and only if – the leader is indeed divine" (Grint, p. 104).

Of course, I am here assuming Jesus is indeed divine as well as fully human (see Swinburne, 2008; Williams, 2024, 2019b & 2011. For a defence of the theism inherent within this assumption, see Beck, 2021; Copan & Moser, 2003; Copan & Taliaferro, 2019; Craig & Moreland, 2009; Evans, 2010; Meyer, 2021; Ruloff & Horban, 2021; Williams, 2022d & 2019a). That said, the Bible repeatedly highlights the fact that merely human leaders are fallible, and therefore should not be accorded the sort of maximal allegiance required by Jesus (e.g. Num 20:2-12; 2 Sam 11; Mk 8:33 & 14:72; Mt 8:21 & 10:34-37; Acts 15:36-39; Gal 2:11-16).

Still, the danger of abusing leadership influence is clearly magnified within the context of any shared social framework that shapes people's spirituality. Hence Ira Chaleff warns that "powerful socialization mechanisms" such as "schools, organized religion, sports teams, the

military, and large corporations … condition followers to obey" (Chaleff, 2009, p. 5). As Iszatt-White and Saunders (2017, p. 282) comment:

> destructive leadership is not just the impact of … one highly influential individual. It is a combination of a selfish, self-centred leader, who is supported by and not challenged by susceptible followers within a conducive environment.

Supporting Constructive Dissent

Given their analysis of how susceptible followers can fail to challenge a selfish leader, Iszatt-White and Saunders (2017, p. 282) declare:

> The onus … is on the followers and the organizations to be able to challenge, check, and balance the leaders so that the impact of a bad or destructive leader is contained at worst, and eliminated at best.

However, there is surely an onus upon leaders to develop a capacity in their followers to serve their leaders (and their communities) by challenging their merely human leaders in appropriate ways on appropriate occasions. Christian leaders should actively address Barbara Kellerman's complaint that there is "no thought given to instructing on following, when following wisely and well is manifestly as important as leading wisely and well." (Kellerman, 2012, pp. 168–169). As Grint observes, while leaders don't need to be perfect, they do need to "recognize that the limits of their knowledge and power will ultimately doom them to failure unless they rely upon their subordinate leaders and followers to compensate for their own ignorance and impotence" (Grint, 2010, p. 104). Although this warning is well taken, one shouldn't overlook the intellectual and moral fallibility of communities. Indeed, the "theocratic" context of Christian spirituality highlights the multi-dimensioned fallibility of merely human leaders and followers, both as individuals and as communities. Likewise, Chaleff warns that "leaders rarely use their power wisely or effectively over long periods unless they are supported by followers who have stature to help them do so" (Chaleff, 2009, p. 1). Consequently, leaders need to "create a climate in which a leader's strengths are magnified, so a leader can better serve the common purpose" (Chaleff, 2009, p. 3).

Key to creating a climate that helps followers to challenge leaders in appropriate ways on appropriate occasions is a mutual recognition of values that transcend the leader, the follower, and the social structure/s in which they commune: "Courageous followers know when it is time to take a stand that is different from that of the leader's. They are answering to a higher set of values" (Chaleff, 2009, p. 7). The "theocratic" context of Christian spirituality is precisely such a value-orientated social climate that promotes this key role of followers, which is valorized by Grint:

> Long-term organizational success requires constructive dissenters – individuals able and willing to provide formal leaders with potentially unpleasant but necessary feedback … who are willing to stay out of the limelight, avoiding the individual heroic model of leadership … but simultaneously do a job that is in many ways "heroic" by providing formal leaders with contrary advice, by refusing to be cowed by the authority of formal leaders, and by putting the needs of the community or organization before their own … It is this paradoxical combination of commitment and independence that provides the most fertile ground for responsible followers. (Grint, 2010, pp. 66-67 & 102-103)

The "theocratic" context of Christian spirituality promotes both a humble, value-orientated "commitment and independence" in followers, and a humility in leaders that should actively

encourage constructive dissent. The biblical concept of humility is rooted in the wisdom of walking with "Humility, the fear of the LORD" (Prov 22:4, CSB), in a spiritual way of life that flows out into our other relationships (Lev 19:2; 2 Chron 7:14; Mic 6:8; Zeph 2:3; Mk 12:30-31):

> The fear of the Lord is love and devotion directed towards God. Other people will benefit from that love and devotion, but God is the chief focus. Such is the case with humility, as those who submit to God will bless others, but God is the ultimate object of devotion… Humility will affect our relationships with others, but is fundamentally rooted in devotion to God." (Edwards, 2023, p. 26-27 & 30)

As Stephen J. Perkins and Susan Shortland (2024, p. 134) observe:

> The character of God calls upon leaders to reflect and emulate God's attributes, such as holiness, justice, mercy, faithfulness, wisdom, love, and grace (Leviticus 19:2; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 103:8; James 1:5; 1 John 4:8) … Biblical leadership is intrinsically tied to the character of God.

The spiritual "way" of Christianity is set by the Jesus of the Bible, and it is up to each individual whether they will "walk" that "way," and whether (and to what extent) they look to any particular Christian leader to help them see "the way" to follow Christ (or to do anything else). This double following, inherent to Christian community, empowers Christians to assess their merely human leaders by reference to Christ and his revelation, and hence to hold them to account by transcendent values (Gal 1:8). As Chaleff observes, because unquestioned loyalty is morally perilous:

> Leaders and followers … need to find a mutual place for their loyalty that transcends … their relationship yet bonds them in a framework of trust … Circumscribed loyalty to worthy values avoids the pitfalls of unlimited loyalty. (Chaleff, 2009, p. 17)

It is precisely by inculcating a humble "love and devotion directed towards God" (Edwards, 2023, p. 26) – *the* transcendent reference point of supreme, authoritative value above all merely human leaders, followers and/or communities - that Christian spirituality finds itself in absolute opposition to any and all worldly "theocratic" authoritarianism.

Moreover, the Bible repeatedly encourages critical thinking (Breshears, 2010; Craig, 2010; Moreland, 1997; Williams, 2019a & 2022a) in passages such as Isaiah 1:18, 1 Samuel 12:7, John 14:11, Acts 17:2-3 & 22-34 (Dahle, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c & 2001), Acts 26 (Dahle & Williams, 2022), Philippians 1:7, 1 Peter 3:15 and 1 John 4:1. Thus, the Christocentric nature of and scriptural resources for Christian spirituality both encourage the formation of followers who:

> can think for themselves. They will intellectually examine and explore the leader's decisions, and positively join in if they agree. If they do not agree, they will engage with positive challenges, and alternate possibilities. (Iszatt-White and Saunders, 2017, p. 273)

Such followers are the "constructive dissenters" discussed by Grint (2010, pp. 67 & 102-103) and dubbed "courageous followers" by Chaleff, who emphasizes "the leader's responsibility to support the conditions of courageous followership and to respond productively to acts of courageous followership" (Chaleff, 2009, p. 8).

A leader who supports the "conditions of courageous followership," and responds "productively to acts of courageous followership," exhibits humility. As Nielsen et al. observe: "Empowered followers are a hallmark of leaders with humility" (Nielsen, Marrone & Ferraro,

2014, p. 88). It is precisely the "theocratic" context of Christian community that both encourages such empowering humility on the part of leaders, and constructive, humble dissent on the part of followers. As Jesus says to his disciples (in the tradition of the law of kingship in Deut 17:14-20, see Lefebvre, 2024):

> You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions act as tyrants over them. But it is not so among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you will be a slave to all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mk 10:42-45, CSB)

The Christocentric Virtue of Humble Love

> "whoever then may humble himself as this child, he is the greater in the kingdom of the heavens." - Mt 18:4 (LSV)

Edward D. Hess and Katherine Ludwig (2017, p. 64) report that a growing body of psychological literature "correlates humility with higher physical and psychological well-being and interpersonal and interpersonal advantages, particularly in the context of intellectual concerns, metacognitive abilities, leadership, and relationship building." In the past few decades, philosophers (e.g. Alfano et al., ed.'s, 2020; Austin, 2018; Baehr, 2021; Dowe, 2013; King, 2021; Kvanvig, 2020; Wright, 2019) and theologians (e.g. Edwards, 2023; Hiestand, ed. 2024; Macaskill, 2019; Williams, 2018; Wright, 2020; Wright, 2010) have shown an increasing interest in discussing humility. Leadership studies has embraced the same trend (Davis, 2018; Frank, 2023; Gist, 2020; Hess & Ludwig, 2017; Murthy, 2023; Nielsen & Marrone, 2018; Nielsen, et al., 2014; Wymore, 2023).

Jesus gave a concrete parable of his teaching on humility (Mk 9:35, 10:42-45; Mt 18:3-4, 20:20-28, 23:1-12; Lk 22:24-27) by washing his disciple's feet:

> Then he poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him … So when he had washed their feet, put his outer garment back on, and sat down again, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me, 'Teacher' and 'Lord.' You say so correctly, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. (Jn 13:5 & 12-15, World English Bible).

Indeed, historian John Dickson traces "the peculiar Western meaning of 'humility'" (Dickson, 2011, loc. 160) as an ethical virtue to the influence of Jesus's example:

> Humility is *the noble choice to forgo your status, deploy your resources or use your influence for the good of others before yourself* … One of the earliest Greek texts on this topic, written about AD 60 to the Roman colony of Philippi, puts it perfectly: "In a humble frame of mind regard one another as if better than yourselves – each of you taking care not only of your own needs but also of the needs of others." (Dickson, 2011, loc. 173)

The Apostle Paul's ethic of "*humble love*" (Roberts & Spezio, 2019, p. 202), quoted by Dickson, is explicitly grounded in Jesus' example (see Williams, 2016). As Dickson explains: "Ancient Mediterranean cultures pursued honour and avoided shame at all costs. Honour was proof of merit, shame the proof of worthlessness" (Dickson, 2011, loc. 1002). Given Jesus's culturally shameful crucifixion, the early church had two options. Either Jesus's crucifixion demonstrated his insignificance, "or the notion of 'greatness' itself had to be redefined to fit with the

fact of his seemingly shameful end" (Dickson, 2011, loc. 1002). While Christianity's opponents embraced the former option, Christians took the latter: "For them the crucifixion was not evidence of Jesus' humiliation … but proof that greatness can express itself in humility" (Dickson, 2011, loc. 1017).

As Catherine J. Wright observes, while some Greco-Roman thinkers valued "living a lifestyle free of conceit and desire for fame," the conception of "humility expressed as imitation of Christ's servanthood and self-emptying is … a uniquely Christian theology" (Wright, 2020, p. 86 & 120. See Edwards, 2023, p. 83-85 & 93; Meyer, 2024; O'Reilly, 2024; Pinset, 2012).

The Christian re-envisioning of humility retains a counter-cultural savor even today. For example, Marylin Gist defines "leadership humility" as "a tendency to *feel* and *display* regard for other's dignity" (Gist, 2020, p. 24), a virtue that rests upon belief in "*intrinsic* human worth" (Gist, 2020, p. 33) and which "generates reasonably consistent behaviors (displaying deep regard) that affirm the value of others" (Gist, 2020, p. 25). Yet Gist's account of humility doesn't explicitly embrace "a willing self-lowering … for the good of others" (Meyer, 2024, pp. 84-85).

The Christian conception of humility was necessitated by the first Christian's belief that, in the face of his humiliating crucifixion, Jesus' resurrection showed he had been vindicated by God (Habermas, 2024a & 2024b; Swinburne, 2003; Wright, 2003; Williams, 2024, 2019b, 2011 & Williams in Blomberg et al., 2019). As Dickson observes:

> What we read in [Phil 2:1-11] is nothing less than a humility revolution. Honour and shame are turned on their heads. The highly honoured Jesus lowered himself to a shameful cross, yet, in so doing became not an object of scorn but one of praise and emulation … If the greatest man we have ever known chose to forgo his status for the good of others, reasoned the early Christians, greatness must consist in humble service. (Dickson, loc. 1044)

Yet, the humble service of Jesus was not a meek servitude lacking authority! As theologians Justin A. Irving and Mark L. Strauss (2019, p. 4) comment:

> In the context of an authoritarian world – where power, dominance and oppression were the order of the day – Jesus introduced a radical new model of leadership. This model has often been called "servant leadership." But it is anything but *subservient* leadership. A better description might be *empowering* leadership. It is a leadership that is other-centered, the goal of which is to enable others to fulfill their calling before God, to be all that God wants them to be.

As Nielsen et al. point out:

> The humble leader is anything but reticent because they experience transcendence and see that there is something beyond themselves, a vision worth moving towards. As a result, they are leaders focused on serving collective interests and the needs of others. (Nielsen, et al., 2014, p. 69. See also Nielsen, et al., 2010)

Jesus's example of "*loving humility*" (Roberts & Spezio, 2019, p. 202) is the basis for the Apostle Peter's communal command that "you who are younger, be subject to the elders. All of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another" (1 Pet 5:5, CSB. On how community and culture can foster humility, see Narvaez, 2019; Kesebir, 2019, p. 193). Peter promulgates a conception of leadership that encompasses authority whilst simultaneously requiring humility (see Leahy, 2010. For analysis of the place and limits of "coercion" in leadership, see Anderson, 2011; Cebul, et al., 2021; Greenleaf, 1998; Tangen, 2019).

Likewise, the apostle Paul describes himself and fellow minister Apollos as "servants" (1 Corinthians 3:5, ESV), and says he tries "to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved." (1 Cor 10:33, ESV). Writing to the Ephesians, Paul urges all Christians (including leaders) to walk "with all humility … bearing with one another in love" (Eph 4:1-2, NET)

Humble Love and Constructive Dissent Grounded in Transcendent Values

Christian leadership means being "called to serve, in humility … through demonstrations of other-regarding love" (Neubert, 2023, p. 86) *in the context of one's own, Christocentric love of God*, whose essential nature is the very ground and measure of the transcendental values (Morris, 1991; Williams, 2019a). Hence theologian John Stott, drawing upon 1 Corinthians 4:1, urged Christian ministers to exhibit:

> humility before Christ, whose subordinates we are; humility before Scripture, of which we are stewards; humility before the world, whose opposition we are bound to encounter; and humility before the congregation, whose members we are to love and serve. (Stott, 2002, p. 131)

As Christian philosopher Michael W. Austin writes:

> Humility and love are vital for us as we seek union with Christ. These virtues orientate us towards God and other people, and they include the desire to honor God and serve both him and our fellow human beings in sacrificial ways. (Austin, 2024, p. 46)

In sum, the virtue of humility, in the context of loving God and neighbor (Mk 12:30-31; Eph 4:1-2), is intrinsic to any authentically Christian leadership.

While merely human leaders can falsely lay claim to the transcendent authority and worthiness of Jesus and his spiritual vision, that authority and worthiness also functions as a bulwark against such misappropriation. All earthly authority is relativized before the truth, goodness and beauty of God, and it is always possible to hold our leaders accountable by invoking the humble and loving authority of Jesus Christ, "the Father's unique Son, who is full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:4b, ISV).

Conclusions

Leadership is the relational process of serving followers by exercising a virtue-orientated rhetorical influence over their spirituality, where "spirituality" is a holistic "way of life" intended to integrate one's assumptions, concomitant attitudes and consequent actions in a virtuous (i.e. reasonable, good and beautiful) manner.

A leader's influence necessarily operates through one or more communication channels, which can be understood through the classical rhetorical categories of logos, pathos and ethos. The spirituality and rhetorical influence of the leader, the spiritual "way" in which they influence the follower to "walk," and the destinations or goals prioritised in this relationship, should all be judged by the classical "transcendental" values of truth, goodness and beauty. This definition rounds out a "constructivist" or "follower-centric" understanding of leadership by locating it within the co-incidence of spirituality with rhetoric and the transcendent values (see Table 1).

Christian spirituality is a paradigmatically communal, God-centred "way of life" that integrates people's assumptions, attitudes and actions in a virtuous (i.e. reasonable, good and beautiful) manner through faithfulness to Jesus Christ. It follows that "Christian leadership" is the (intra and/or inter-spiritual) relational process of serving followers by exercising a virtue-orientated rhetorical influence over their spirituality in a way that flows from the leader's own spiritual followership of Christ. In other words, Christian leadership is an emergent relational process wherein a Christian serves anyone who allows themselves to be influenced by what they, as a follower of Jesus, consider a virtuous use of rhetoric aimed at influencing the spirituality of those they lead, in pursuit of what the leader (and follower/s) regard as true / reasonable / good / beautiful ends.

Christianity offers leaders and followers resources for mitigating against the abuse of leadership, because faithfulness to Jesus encourages both humble love and constructive dissent through a commitment to the transcendent values expressed in Christ's example of loving, humble service grounded in love for God and neighbor.

Christian leaders should seek to nurture their followers' desire for and virtuous pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty, encouraging them to seek the Divine ground and satisfaction of these desires, in and through faithful allegiance to Jesus. Christian leaders should of course pursue the same ends, within an overarching context of Christian love and humility. Moreover, Christian leaders should dissuade their followers from thinking that they (their leaders) or their community are either morally or intellectually infallible.

Finally, Christian leaders should humbly and lovingly seek to equip all their followers (whether Christian or not) to be courageous, constructive dissenters who humbly and lovingly hold their leaders accountable on the basis of the transcendent values, values that were incarnated by the servant king they love and follow.

REFERENCES

Adler, M. J. (1978). *Aristotle for Everybody*. Macmillan.

Alfano, M., Lynch, M. P., & Tanesini A. (Eds.). (2020). *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Humility (Routledge Handbooks in Philosophy)*. New York: Routledge.

Alston, W. P. (1996). *A Realist Conception of Truth*. Ithica: Cornell University Press.

Andersen, L. R. (2020). *Bildung: Keep Growing*. Nordic Bildung.

Anderson, S. (2011). Coercion. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/coercion/.

Aristotle. (1908). *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by William David Ross. Oxford: Clarendon Press. http://nothingistic.org/library/aristotle/nicomachean/index.html.

Aristotle. (2004). *The Art of Rhetoric*. Translated by H. C. Lawson-Tancred. London: Penguin.

Aster, H. (2021). The 3 Elements Of Ethos. http://www.shortform.com/blog/elements-of-ethos/.

Augustine. (1999). *On Christian Teaching*. Translated with an introduction and notes by R. P. H. Green. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Austin, M. W. (2018). *Humility and Human Flourishing: A Study in Analytic Moral Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Austin, M. W. (2024). *Humility: Rediscovering the Way of Love and Life in Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Austin, M. W. & Geivett, R. D. (Eds.). (2012.) *Being Good: Christian Virtues for Everyday Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Baehr, J. (2021). *Deep in Thought*: *A Practical Guide to Teaching for Intellectual Virtues*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Barnett, P. (2008). *Paul*: *Missionary of Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Be Cool, *Scooby Doo!* (2015). Series 1, Episode 26, The People vs. Fred Jones.

Beck, W. D. (2021). *Does God Exist*? *A History of Answers to the Question*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Beckwith, F. & Koukl, G. (1998). *Relativism*: *Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-Air*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Berding, K. (2006). *Spiritual Gifts*: *Rethinking The Conventional View*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel.

Blomberg, C. L. (2007). *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*, second edition. Downers Grove, IL: Apollos/IVP Academic.

Blomberg, C. L., Carrier, R., Stecher, C. & Williams, P. S. (2019). *Resurrection*: *Faith or Fact*? Durham, NC: Pitchstone Publishing.

Breshears, J. D. (2010). *The Problem Of Christian Anti-Intellectualism*: *Why Christians Should Study Apologetics*. Leipzig: Areopagus Publishing.

Burnett, D. (2002). *Clash of Worlds*. Tunbridge Wells: Monarch.

Carte, J. & Coleman. J. (2009). *How To Argue Like Jesus*: *Learning Persuasion From History's Greatest Communicator*. Wheaton, IL; Crossway.

Cebul, M. D., Dafoe, A. & Monteiro, N. P. (2021). Coercion and the Credibility of Assurances. *The Journal of Politics*, Volume 83, Number 3, July.

Chaleff, I. (2009). *The Courageous Follower*: *Standing Up to and for Our Leaders*. Third edition. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Cicero, *Orator*: 75, cited by H. C. Lawson-Tancred. (1991). *The Art of Rhetoric*. London: Penguin Classics.

Collicutt, J. (2015). *The Psychology of Christian Character Formation*. London: SCM Press.

Comte-Sponville, A. (2007). *The Book Of Atheist Spirituality*: *An Elegant Argument For Spirituality Without God*. London: Bantam Press.

Copan, P. & Moser, P. K (Eds.) (2003) *The Rationality of Theism*. London: Routledge.

Copan, P. & Taliaferro, C. (Eds.) (2019). *The Naturalness of Belief*: *New Essays on Theism's Rationality*. Lanham, MD: Lexington.

Costello, G. J. (2018). Aristotle's Phronesis: Putting some Meat on the Philosophy of Innovation. Philosophy of Management Conference University of Greenwich 25-28 June 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325127105_Aristotle's_Phronesis_Putting_some_Meat_on_the_Philosophy_of_Innovation.

Cottingham, J. (2006). Philosophers are finding fresh meanings in Truth, Goodness and Beauty. *The Times* (June 17).

Cowan, S. B. & Spiegel, J. S. (2009). *The Love Of Wisdom*: *A Christian Introduction To Philosophy*. Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Academic.

Craig, W. L. (2010). In Intellectual Neutral. https://www.reasonablefaith.org/videos/lectures/in-intellectual-neutral-johnson-ferry-baptist-church.

Craig, W. L. & Moreland, J. P. (Eds.) (2009). *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Crossan, C. & Crossan, M. (2023). The Practice Of Developing Leader Character To Elevate Judgement. In: *Leadership And Virtues*: *Understanding and Practicing Good Leadership*. Edited by Newstead, T. P. & Riggio, R. E. New York: Routledge.

Dahle, L. (2001). *Acts 17:16-34*: *An Apologetic Model Then and Now*? PhD thesis, The Open University. http://oro.open.ac.uk/58173/1/393206.pdf.

Dahle, L. (2002a). Acts 17:16–34. An Apologetic Model Then and Now? *Tyndale Bulletin* 53.2, p. 313-316. https://legacy.tyndalehouse.com/tynbul/Library/TynBull_2002_53_2_09_Dahle_Acts17Apologetic.pdf.

Dahle, L. (2002b). Acts 17 as an Apologetic Model. *Whitefield Briefing*, Vol. 7, No. 1. March 2002.

Dahle, L. (2002c). Encountering and Engaging a Postmodern Context: Applying the Apologetic Model in Acts 17. *Whitefield Briefing*, Vol. 7, No. 6. December.

Dahle, L. & Williams, P. S. (2022). A Dialogue on the Contemporary Relevance of Acts 26.

Davis, T. (2018). Humility: Lifting Nearly Every Other Important Virtue to Greater Heights. *Community*. Thrive Global. September, 2028. http://thriveglobal.com/stories/humility/.

Dowe, P. E. (2013). *Virtuous Minds*: *Intellectual Character Development*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP.

Dryden, J. D. W. (2018). *A Hermeneutic of Wisdom*: *Recovering the Formative Agency of Scripture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

Earey, M. (2009). *Liturgical Worship*. London: Church House.

Edwards, D. R. (2023). *Humility Illustrated*: *The Biblical Path Back to Christian Character*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Esler, P. F. (2003). *Conflict and Identity in Romans*. 1517 Media/Fortress Press.

Evans, C. S. (2004). *The Historical Christ* & *The Jesus of Faith*: *The Incarnational Narrative as History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Evans, C. S. (2010). *Natural Signs and Knowledge of God*: *A New Look at Theistic Arguments*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eves, J. C. (2019). *Apologetics and Rhetoric*: *The Right Combination for Expositor Preaching to a Post-modern World*. Bloomington, IN: Westbow.

Frank, F. (2023). *The Power of Humility in Leadership*: *Influencing as a Role Model*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Gaiman, N. (2021). What Is Ethos? http://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-ethos-definition-of-ethos-with-examples#how-is-ethos-affected-by-pathos-and-logos.

Garner, H. (2011). *Leading Minds*: *An Anatomy Of Leadership*. New York: Basic Books.

Gentry II, T. J. (2020). *Pulpit Apologist*: *The Vital Link Between Preaching And Apologetics*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.

Gist, M. (2020). *The Extraordinary Power of Leader Humility*: *Thriving Organizations – Great Results*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Gould, P. M. (2019). *Cultural Apologetics*: *Renewing the Christian Voice, Conscience, and Imagination in a Disenchanted World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Greenleaf, R. K. (1998). *The Power of Servant-Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). *Servant Leadership*: *A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power & Greatness*. New York: Paulist.

Grint, K. (2010). *Leadership*: *A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Guinness, O. (2013). *The Global Public Square*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP.

Habermas, G. R. (2024a). *On the Resurrection. Vol. 1*, *Evidences*. Nashville: B&H Academic.

Habermas, G. R. (2024b). *On The Resurrection, Volume 2*: Refutations. Nashville: B&H Academic.

Harrington, D. & Keenan, J. F. (2002). *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*: *Building Bridges between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology*. Sheed & Ward.

Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S., & Platow, M. J. (2020). *The New Psychology of Leadership: Identity, Influence and Power*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hays, R. B. (1996). *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*: *Community, Cross, New Creation*: *A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco.

Herrick, J. A. (2008). *The History And Theory Of Rhetoric*, 4th edition. London: Routledge.

Hess, E. D. & Katherine L. (2017). *Humility Is the New Smart*: *Rethinking human Excellence in the Smart Machine Age*. Oakland, CA: BK.

Hiestand, G. L., Lawrence, J. & Parch E. ed.'s (2024). *Essays on Humility*. *Centre for Pastor Theologians Journal*. GlossalHouse.com.

Howard-Snyder, D. & McKaughan, D. (2020). Faith. In: *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy of Religion* (edited by Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2020). http://www.academia.edu/35582270/Faith_2020.

Irving, J. A. & Strauss, M. L. (2019). *Leadership In Christian Perspective*: *Biblical Foundations and Contemporary Practices for Servant Leaders*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Iszatt-White, M. & Saunders, C. (2017). *Leadership*, Third Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jamison, A. C. (2006). *Finding Sanctuary*: *Monastic Steps for Everyday Life*. London: Phoenix.

Keller, T. (2015). *Preaching*: *Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

Kellerman, B. (2012). *The End of Leadership*. New York: Harper Business.

Kesebir, P. (2019). Humility: The Soil in Which Happiness Grows. In: *The Virtues*: *Humility*. Edited by Wright, Jennifer Cole, ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

King, N. L. (2021). *The Excellent Mind*: *Intellectual Virtues for Everyday Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Koestenbaum, P. (1991). *Leadership*: *The Inner Side Of Greatness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Koukl, G. (2019). *Tactics*: *A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions*. *Updated & Expanded*, *10th Anniversary Edition*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Kreeft, P. (1992). *Back to Virtue*. San Francisco: Ignatius.

Kreeft, P. (2008). Lewis' Philosophy of Truth, Goodness And Beauty. In: *C.S. Lewis as Philosopher*. Edited by Gary R. Habermas and Jerry L. Walls David J. Baggett; Downers Grove, IL: IVP USA.

Kvanvig, J. L. (2020.) *Faith and Humility*. Oxford: Open University Press.

Lefebvre, Michael. (2024). Humility and Deuteronomy's Law of the King. *Essays on Humility*. *Centre for Pastor Theologians Journal*. Edited by Hiestand, G. L. et al. GlossalHouse.com.

Leahy, K. (2010). A Study of Peter as a Model for Servant Leadership. *Inner Resources for Leaders*, Issue: 4, Volume: 2. https://www.regent.edu/journal/inner-resources-for-leaders/peter-as-model-for-servant-leadership/.

Lewis, C.S. (1945.) Christian Apologetics, https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58a73709414fb5ac487511d0/t/5c5f33fb652de-abd42da0caa/1549743103884/Lewis_C.S.+__+Address+on+Christian+Apologetics.pdf.

Lewis, C.S. (2015). *The Abolition of Man*. New York: HarperOne.

Macaskill, G. (2019). *The New Testament and Intellectual Humility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MacBride, T. (2016). *Catching the Wave*: *Preaching the New Testament as Rhetoric*. London: IVP.

Mackie, J.L. (1990). *Ethics*: *Inventing Right and Wrong*. London: Penguin.

May, P. (2016). *The Search for God and the Path to Persuasion*. London: Malcolm Down Publishing.

McGrath, A. E. (2019). *Narrative Apologetics*: *Sharing the Relevance, Joy, and Wonder of the Christian Faith*. Baker.

McGrew, L. (2017). *Hidden in Plain View*: *Undesigned Coincidences in the Gospels and Acts*. Tampa, FL: DeWard.

McGrew, L. (2021). *The Eye of the Beholder*: *The Gospel of John as Historical Reportage*. Tampa, FL: DeWard.

McKaughan, D. (2017). On the Value of Faith and Faithfulness. *International Journal of the Philosophy of Religion*, 81:2-29.

Meade, C. P. (2010). *Leadership Alive: Changing Leadership Practices in the Emerging 21st Century Culture*: *A Research Based Study*. Leadership Alive, Inc., 2010.

Meyer, Jason. (2024). The Humility Revolution. *Essays on Humility*. *Centre for Pastor Theologians Journal*. Edited by Hiestand, G. L. et al. GlossalHouse.com.

Meyer, S. C. (2021). *The Return of the God Hypothesis*. New York: HarperCollins.
Miller, C. B. & West, R. (Ed.'s.) (2020). *The Virtues*: *Integrity, Honest, and Truth Seeking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Moore, G. E. (1993). *Principia Ethica*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Moreland, J.P. (1997). *Love Your God With All Your Mind*: *The Role of reason in the Life of the Soul*. Colorado Springs: NavPress.
Moreland, J. P. & Craig, W. L. (2017). *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. Second Edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
Morris, T. V. (1991). *Our Idea of God*: *An Introduction to Philosophical Theology*. Notre Dame/London: University of Notre Dame Press.
Murthy, P. V. R. (2023). *The Power Of Humility*: *How Humble High Achievers Are Rewriting the Rules of Leadership*. HarperBusiness.
Nagel, T. (1997). *The Last Word*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Narvaez, D. (2019). Humility in Four Forms: Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Community, and Ecological. In: *The Virtues*: *Humility*. Edited by Wright, Jennifer Cole, ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Neubert, M. J. (2023). Contagious and Constructive Virtue Within The Workplace. In: *Leadership And Virtues*: *Understanding and Practicing Good Leadership*. Edited by Newstead, T. P. & Riggio, R. E. New York: Routledge.
Newstead, T. P. & Riggio, R. E. (Eds.) (2023). *Leadership And Virtues*: *Understanding and Practicing Good Leadership*. New York: Routledge.
Nielsen, R. & Marrone, J. A. (2018). Humility: Our Current Understanding of the Construct and Its Role in Organizations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*. January, 2018.
Nielsen, R., Marrone, J. A. & Ferraro, H. S. (2014). *Leading With Humility*. New York: Routledge.
Nielsen, R., Marrone, J. A. & Slay, H. S. (2010). A new look at humility: Exploring the humility concept and its role in socialized charismatic leadership. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 17, 33-43.
Northouse, P. G. (2022). *Leadership*: *Theory & Practice*. 9th edition. Los Angeles: Sage.
O'Reilly, Matt. (2024). Virtue Formation and the Function of Humility in Philippians: A Social Identity Approach. *Essays on Humility*. *Centre for Pastor Theologians Journal*. Edited by Hiestand, G. L. et al. GlossalHouse.com.
Perkins, S. J. & Shortland, S. (2024). Leading with faith and wisdom from the Bible. *Scandinavian Journal for Leadership & Theology*, volume 11, pp. 132-147.
Pinset, A. (2012). Humility. In: *Being Good*: *Christian Virtues for Everyday Life*. Edited by Austin, Michael W. and R. Douglas Geivett. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
Price, T. L. (2023). The Virtue Of Leadership. In: *Leadership And Virtues*: *Understanding and Practicing Good Leadership*. Edited by Newstead, T. P. & Riggio, R. E. New York: Routledge.
Reynolds, A., Houlder, D., Goddard, J. & Lewis, D. (2020). *What Philosophy Can Teach You About Being A Better Leader*. London: KoganPage.
Roberts, Robert C. and Michael Spezio. (2019). Self-Other Concept in Humble Love: As Exemplified by Long-Term Members of L'Arche. In Wright, Jennifer Cole, ed. (2019.) *The Virtues*: *Humility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Ruloff, C. & Horban, P. (Eds.) (2021). *Contemporary Arguments in Natural Theology*: *God and Rational Belief*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
Schultze, Q, (2020). *An Essential Guide to Public Speaking: Serving Your Audience with Faith, Skill, and Virtue*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
Sinnott-Armstrong, W. (2018). *Think Again*: *How to Reason and Argue*. Milton Keynes: Pelican.
Smith, B. (2001). Blazing the North-South Trail. *Just Thinking*, Winter 2001, p. 11.

Stern, D. H. (1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary*: *A Companion Volume to the Jewish New Testament*. Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications.

Stott, J. (2002). *Calling Christian Leaders*: *Rediscovering radical servant ministry*. Nottingham: IVP.

Swinburne, R. (2003). *The Resurrection of God Incarnate*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Swinburne, R. (2008). *Was Jesus God*? Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swinburne, R. (2013). *Mind, Brian, & Free Will*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tangen, K. I. (2019). Servant leadership and power: An introductory theological analysis. *Scandinavian Journal for Leadership and Theology*, Vol. 6 (2019). https://doi.org/10.53311/sjlt.v6.35.

Tertullian, *Apology*. (1885). Translated by S. Thelwall. From *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 3. Edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight. https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0301.htm.

Tierney, S. (2021). *Leadership*: *Being, Knowing, Doing*. [Kindle Android Version.]

Wenham, D. (2002). *Paul And Jesus*: *The True Story*. London: SPCK.

Wenham, D. (2010). *Did St Paul Get Jesus Right*? *The Gospel According to Paul*. Oxford: Lion Hudson.

Wenger-Trayner, E. & B. (2015) Introduction to communities of practice: a brief overview of the concept and its uses. https://www.wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/.

Willard, D. (2016). *Renewing the Christian Mind*: *Essays, Interviews, and Talks*. New York: HarperOne.

Williams, J. (2019). *The Merciful Humility of God*: *The 2019 Lent Book*. Bloomsbury.

Williams, P. J. (2018). *Can We Trust the Gospels*? Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

Williams, P. S. (1999). *The Case for God*. Tunbridge Wells: Monarch.

Williams, P. S. (2004). *I Wish I Could Believe in Meaning*: *A Response to Nihilism*. Southampton: Damaris.

Williams, P. S. (2011). *Understanding Jesus*: *Five Ways To Spiritual Enlightenment*. Milton Keynes, Paternoster.

Williams, P. S. (2016). Sermon: Philippians 2:1-11.

Williams, P. S. (2017). The Spiritual University: A Christian Vision for Pluralistic Spiritual Education.

Williams, P. S. (2019a). *A Faithful Guide to Philosophy*: *A Christian Introduction To The Love Of Wisdom*. Eugene, Or: Wipf & Stock.

Williams, P. S. (2019b). *Getting At Jesus*: *A Comprehensive Critique of Neo-Atheist Nonsense About The Jesus Of History*. Eugene, Or: Wipf & Stock.

Williams, P. S. (2020). *Outgrowing God*? *A Beginner's Guide To Richard Dawkins And The God Debate*. Eugene, Or: Cascade, 2020.

Williams, P. S. (2021). Apologetics in 3-D: Persuading Across Spiritualities with the Apostle Paul. In: *Apologetics in 3D*: *Essays in Christian Apologetics and Spirituality*. Eugene, Or: Wipf & Stock.

Williams, P. S. (2021a). Preaching for Spiritual Formation: Luke 7:36-50.

Williams, P. S. (2021b). *Apologetics in 3D*: *Essays on Apologetics and Spirituality*. Eugene, Or: Wipf & Stock.

Williams, P. S. (2022a). Faith & Rationality.

Williams, P. S. (2022b). Is Christianity Childish? Rhetorical Advice For Christian Apologists From C.S. Lewis's Essay: "On Three Ways Of Writing For Children." *Linguaculture* Journal, vol. 13, no. 1, 2022.

Williams, P. S. (2022c). Leadership in 3D: Paper Presentation in Oslo.

Williams, P. S. (2022d). *A Universe From Someone*: *Essays On Natural Theology*. Eugene, Or: Wipf and Stock.

Williams, P. S. (2023). Leading and Following in the Footsteps of Christ.
Williams, P. S. (2024). *Behold the Man*: *Essays on the Historical Jesus*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.
Williams, P. S. (2024a). Apologetics in 3D (Norway, 2024).
Williams, P. S. (2024b). Christian Spirituality at the Cutting Edge of Contemporary Culture.
Williams, P. S. (2025). Leading and Following in the Spiritual Footsteps of Jesus.
Williams, P. S. (2025a). Practical Apologetics for a Christian Way of Life: Introducing Christian Apologetics.
Williams, P. S. (2025b). Practical Apologetics for a Christian Way of Life: Contexts for Christian Apologetics.
Wood, W. J. (1998). *Epistemology, Becoming Intellectually Virtuous*. Leicester: Apollos.
Wooddell, J. D. (2011). *The Beauty Of The Faith*: *Using Aesthetics for Christian Apologetics*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.
Wright, C. J. (2020). *Spiritual Practices of Jesus. Learning Simplicity, Humility and Prayer with Luke's Earliest Readers*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
Wright, J. C. (2019). Humility as a Foundational Virtue. In *The Virtues*: *Humility*. Edited by Wright, Jennifer Cole, ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Wright, J. C. (Eds.) (2019). *The Virtues*: *Humility*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Wright, N.T. (2003). *The Resurrection of the Son of God*. London: SPCK.
Wright, N.T. (2010). *Virtue Reborn*. New York: SPCK.
Wymore, J. (2023). *Humbler Leadership*: *How to Enhance Your Effectiveness and Enrich Your Life*. Leadership Transformation Lab.
Zagzebski, L. T. (1996). *Virtues of the mind*: *An inquiry into the nature of virtue and the ethical foundation of knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peter Williams, (born 1974), MA, MPhil, PGCert. Assistant Professor in Communication & Worldviews, NLA University College. peterswilliams@gmail.com. www.peterswilliams.com. Main research areas: Christian Spirituality and Apologetics, Worldviews and Natural Theology. Recent publications: *Behold the Man*: *Essays on the Historical Jesus* (Wipf and Stock, 2024); *An Informed Cosmos*: *Essays on Intelligent Design Theory* (Wipf & Stock, 2023), *A Universe From Someone*: *Essays on Natural Theology* (Wipf & Stock, 2022), *Apologetics in 3D*: *Essays on Apologetics and Spirituality* (Wipf & Stock, 2021).