

The exile of the mind:

Christian service in the secular university

by Julian Rivers

Summary

British higher education is increasingly secular in outlook. This paper identifies three aspects of that secularity: specialisation, instrumentalisation and globalisation. As Christians, we can respond by observing the intellectual, moral and theological inadequacy of the university life this generates. But we are also called to take practical beneficial steps to address its weaknesses as well. We can prevent slippage into hostile forms of secularism by promoting Christianity as an object and framework of study, as well as resisting petty forms of oppression. We can improve the quality of our common life by promoting intellectual virtue, scholarly community and the pursuit of public goods. This may not always sit comfortably with current criteria of scholarly 'success', but by promoting such qualities, we can hope to make even the modern secular academy serviceable to Christ.¹

Introduction

Several years ago I found myself in discussion with a colleague about our Examination Regulations. The question was whether there should be an express precept ensuring that observant Jewish students should not be compelled to sit on Saturdays, and that Muslim students should have sufficient time for Friday prayers. She rather indignantly objected, 'I thought we were supposed to be a secular university!' And an interesting conversation followed; granted that the university was in some sense 'secular', did that mean we should, or should not, accommodate students with a distinctive religious affiliation?²

That exchange reminds us of the malleability of the term, 'secular'. The vast majority of institutions of British higher education are secular – in some sense of the word – but in what sense? And what are Christian scholars and students to make of those various senses? How should we serve as Christians in the secular university? My colleague was working from a conception of 'the secular' which was exclusive; she sought neutrality by bracketing off religious aspects of student identity. The rest of us were working from a conception of 'the secular' which was more inclusive; we sought neutrality by way of reasonable accommodation. And that exchange suggests that perhaps one of the contributions we can make as Christians is to ensure that our universities and colleges are secular in the right sort of way.

The question is not only of direct relevance to Christian academics. Around 46 per cent of British young people – and one suspects the majority of young people known to readers of this paper – now take part in higher education.³ Many of these self-identify as Christian, and actively affirm their faith at university.⁴ What sort of intellectual and organisational environment are they reaching maturity in? How can they be supported and encouraged as they, too, seek to find their place in 'secular' institutions potentially hostile to their faith? British universities have a high standing and significant influence on higher education across the globe. And even beyond those directly involved, universities have an enormous long-term impact on wider public culture. If the universities of today are secular, what does that indicate about the society of tomorrow?

A very little history

David Bebbington argues that the period 1850–1920 was decisive for the

1 This paper started life as an address to the Forming A Christian Mind Conference in St. Andrew's Street Baptist Church, Cambridge on 26 April 2014. As always, I am grateful to the Cambridge Papers editorial group for their constructive critiques.

2 The Equality Act 2010 probably now resolves this issue in favour of reasonable accommodation.

3 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Participation Rates in Higher Education: 2006–2013*, 28 August 2014.

4 See Matthew Guest, Kristin Aune, Sonya Sharma and Rob Warner, *Christianity and the University Experience*, London: Bloomsbury, 2013. The authors report that 51.4% students self-identify as Christians, of which 25.9% are 'active affirmers', of which 70% are evangelical and Pentecostal, making 9.3% of the entire cohort. This is almost certainly an overestimate, but not a major one. See pp.211–217. The whole book is a fascinating sociological study of the range of Christian faith and practice among students in the UK.

secularisation of Anglo-American institutions.⁵ In 1850 Oxford and Cambridge Universities – which vastly overshadowed smaller institutions in Durham, London and elsewhere – were overwhelmingly ecclesiastical. The fellows were ordained, four-fifths of the graduates became clergy, and the students were subject to compulsory chapel and mandatory courses in Christian apologetics and ethics. The ethos was one of ‘clerical classicism’.

By 1920, several things had happened. First, the aspiring middle classes had succeeded in their demands for curricula suited for professions other than Anglican ordained ministry. This emphasised the natural and social sciences, and downplayed the liberal arts. Secondly, an alternative model of higher education had gained ascendancy. The founding of the university of Berlin in 1810 under Wilhelm von Humboldt stood as a monument to



a new German ideal of higher education in which expert professors would pursue knowledge (*Wissenschaft*) in distinct fields of study, with their own methodologies. This in turn generated a professionalisation of academia. Back in 1850 only

a small minority of fellows would expect to spend their entire career as a don. By 1920, the career academic was normal.

Finally, as programmes of study for non-clerical careers, specialisation and professionalisation took off, so formal connections with established churches became increasingly anachronistic. The concerns of ‘non-conformist’ technologically-orientated institutes gradually came to be assimilated within Anglican institutions, leading in time to the abolition of religious tests for students and academics in the Universities Tests Act 1871, and the creation of chairs in an increasingly diverse range of discrete subjects – geology, sociology, economics, biology and so on.⁶

In the twentieth century, universities became subject to broader social trends of declining religious observance – secularisation in a different sense – as well as intellectual trends downplaying the significance of religion, but even here there were some cross-currents. The expansion of higher education was so great that although skewed to natural and social sciences, there was also growth in the liberal arts, including theology and religious studies. At times, voluntary religion flourished, particularly in the shadow of the Second World War. Oxford and Cambridge, with their ecclesiastical memories and residues, remained exemplars of British higher education.

The modern global multiversity

The university of 2015 stands in fundamental continuity with these developments, but it is also subject to processes which notably enhance its secular character. Three stand out: specialisation, instrumentalisation and globalisation.

If the universities of today are secular, what does that indicate about the society of tomorrow?

As far as specialisation is concerned, the process of the growth and division of knowledge which took hold in the nineteenth century has continued unabated. In each discipline, there is a historic point (in some cases, within the last two decades) at which the PhD, and even postdoctoral research experience, became the normal entry qualification for academics. New academics are appointed for their specialist knowledge in sub-fields. In the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, submissions were made in 36 Units of Assessment (UoA).

Some of these are extremely broad – UoA (4) embraces psychology, psychiatry and neuroscience; UoA (35) covers music, drama, dance and performing arts. Individual scholars working in these fields would not even claim to have any knowledge of what was going on in the neighbouring subjects with which they have been grouped, not to speak of the various branches of their own subject. Universities today offer thousands of courses, and each of these courses will have enough core and optional subjects to fill decades of study.

Whereas specialisation seems to be an inevitable concomitant of the gradual accumulation of knowledge, the rapidly increasing instrumentalisation of higher education is a more recent development. We should not be unrealistically romantic. People have always gone to university for ends other than the pursuit of knowledge. But higher education is now being deliberately constructed by governments to serve the individual end of vocational training and collective ends such as technological enhancement and economic growth. In name, the polytechnics became universities, but in substance the reverse is happening.

Take some basic figures. In 2012/13 the breakdown of subjects studied by full-time first year undergraduates was broadly as follows:⁷

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics	44%
Law, Business and Administration	20%
Economics, Politics, Sociology and Human Geography	10%
Music, Drama, Design and other Creative Arts	10%
Modern Languages and related studies	5%
Education (first degree)	4%
History, Philosophy and Classics	4%
Communications and Journalism	3%

Even those subjects which are ‘liberal’ in a classic sense are increasingly conceived of as preparation for careers. They have to be to justify the enormous sums expended by students and their parents as they mortgage their future earning capacity to pay tuition fees. So, knowledge becomes random raw material on which students learn ‘graduate skills’ such as analysis, synthesis, critical evaluation, oral and written communication, teamwork, numeracy and so on. In my own subject, a symbol of this development is the founding of the ‘University of Law’ – a university with sites across the UK which is wholly devoted to the delivery of courses in the formation of professional lawyers, in some cases in formal collaboration with the largest multinational law firms. It has no research agenda, and the

5 David Bebbington, ‘The Secularization of British Universities since the Mid-Nineteenth Century’ in George M. Marsden and Bradley J. Longfield, *The Secularization of the Academy*, OUP, 1992.

6 Keble and Newman’s objections to the honorary doctorate awarded by the

University of Oxford to Michael Faraday in 1832 were symptomatic of the struggle, and the change.

7 See Higher Education Statistics Agency, *2012/13 Students by Subject*.

education it offers is purely vocational. Developments such as the annual National Student Survey, the Unistats database and media league tables reinforce the sense of the student as consumer buying a product for personal ends.

On the research side the sums of money expended by government on the seven research councils are also a telling indicator of priorities: the 2010 comprehensive spending review envisaged spending only 3.3 per cent of the total research budget on the Arts and Humanities Research Council and 5.6 per cent on the Economic and Social Research Council. The remaining 91.1 per cent is spent on science and technology.⁸ More significant still is the new 'impact agenda' in which research – even in social sciences and the arts and humanities – is required to demonstrate a beneficial social and economic effect if it is to acquire public funding.



King's College Chapel, Cambridge

Finally, globalisation – the increasing mobility of academic staff and students as well as the ability to communicate rapidly and effectively anywhere in the world in English and by modern technology – is also a secularising factor. Universities compete globally for resources, for staff, for students, and for reputation. Almost a quarter of full-time students in the UK are not British – one in six comes from outside the European Union.⁹ On a purely day-to-day level, I have a much closer relationship with the colleagues in Santiago, or Sydney, or Singapore, who are interested in my little corner of knowledge, than with the earth scientist whose office is a few floors below mine.

Specialisation, instrumentalisation and globalisation are part of the story of the modern secular university because they conspire to turn the university into an intellectual version of the liberal state – a rational institutional framework for the pursuit of individual goals, or merely 'thin' common goals, while remaining agnostic on more fundamental questions of human purpose or personal character. Specialisation emphasises detachment from questions of overarching truth; instrumentalisation suppresses questions of ultimate ends; while globalisation brackets the cultural and ideological – and that means the religious – in the name of a common human endeavour. Nothing expresses this

more powerfully than the development of the MOOC (massive open on-line course) in which individuals from anywhere in the world sign up to develop skills of their choice at the hands of disembodied tutors. John Henry Newman saw it in embryo and warned about the 'bazaar or pantechnicon, in which wares of all kinds are heaped together for sale in stalls independent of each other'.¹⁰ In more modern terms, Stefan Collini calls this phenomenon, 'the global multiversity'.¹¹

A Christian orientation

What is our basic response as Christians to the global multiversity? At one level, there is nothing wrong with specialised and vocational training, or research for technological and economic ends. Indeed, it is a familiar refrain of industrial leaders that for many students, post-secondary education and training in the United Kingdom is not nearly practical enough.¹² The worry is that the secular world of higher education we now find ourselves in is not merely inadequate in the sense of limited. Our institutions of higher education may be failing to achieve their potential as universities. The biggest (perhaps, the only) problem with the University of Law is the unjustified claim implicit in its name.

When we have time to stop and think about such wider questions, there is still a widely shared sense among many academics that universities can and should be much more. Primarily, this is seen as a matter of *intellectual* inadequacy. The curriculum has become too narrow, too mechanical, too instrumental. That is what motivates Stefan Collini's critique of British higher education policy, as well as initiatives such as A. C. Grayling's New College of the Humanities in Bloomsbury, with its intensive teaching and 'liberal arts' inspired programmes. Others might worry about the university's *moral* inadequacy. Is it really right to detach 18-year-olds from their families and communities to immerse them in an intense and artificial culture of materialistic hedonism? Is it right to focus on individual employability as opposed to public service? A few might even notice the *theological* inadequacy of the secular global multiversity, as it deliberately brackets out the biggest questions of truth and value.

It is worries such as these which keep the ghost of John Henry Newman still hovering over debates about higher education. For Newman, the idea of a university was of an institution which offered a deliberately broad and multi-perspectival education, which engaged the whole person, developing 'liberal' virtues among its members, not least virtues of the intellect.¹³ This could only take place among a community of interacting scholars, and within an institution committed to a unified and fully comprehensive view of Truth – for Newman, Catholic Christianity. There are plenty of non-Christian academics who are attracted to Newman's idea, if not its specific instantiation.

But as Mike Higon has pointed out, even Newman was not

8 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *The Allocation of Science and Research Funding 2011/2012 to 2014/2015*, December, 2010. The breakdown of total expenditure for the period is: AHRC £396m; BBSRC £1,632m; EPSRC £3,172m; ESRC £674m; MRC £2,560m; NERC £1,465m; STFC £2,181m.

9 See Higher Education Statistics Agency, *Table 1 – HE student enrolments by mode of study, sex, level of study and domicile 2009/10 to 2013/14*. 50.3% of postgraduate research students are non-British (36.3% non-EU); 60.6% of taught postgraduates are non-British (50.1% non-EU); 15.0% of full-time first degree students are non-British (10.0% non-EU).

10 John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University*, ed. I. T. Ker, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976, p.421.

11 Stefan Collini, *What are Universities for?*, London: Penguin Books, 2012.

12 E.g., 'Skills shortages holding back the UK's economic recovery', *BBC News*, 1 December 2014.

13 John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University (1852/1873)*, ed. Frank M. Turner, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.

radical enough.¹⁴ For the Christian theologian, knowledge is knowledge of the divine and triune God and of his works and world. The ultimate end of all knowledge is worship. Only this can satisfy our human thirst for understanding. Psalm 19 is a wonderful hymn of praise to the God who discloses himself and his works in the glory of the heavens above and the wonders of the law within.¹⁵ Pursuit of the sciences and the humanities should lead to renewed relationship with God.¹⁶ This is beautifully expressed in Colossians 2:2–3, which speaks of the Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This mystery is now disclosed by God, and the full riches of complete understanding are experienced in the apostolic preaching and the loving unity of the people of God. So it is not surprising that many Christians have been led to the need for a radical alternative: the creation of genuinely and explicitly Christian higher education institutions.¹⁷

The problems with such proposals are not merely practical. There is no British tradition of Christian liberal arts colleges, as there is in the United States. Indeed the very structure of the education system leaves little space for generalist post-school education. Our closest equivalents are still recognisable for their roots in Church-based teacher training colleges.¹⁸ It has become extremely hard under current conditions to see how the modern mass secular plural multiversity could be replaced. For all our worries about funding (and they are serious) the benefits of large-scale participation in modern higher education are enormous. In any case, the withdrawal of Christians from the secular academy may only stimulate a greater separation of staff and students on grounds of faith or worldview and exacerbate tendencies to isolation we would otherwise deplore. Setting one's face against specialisation, instrumentalisation and globalisation risks accidentally promoting their opposites: amateurism, practical irrelevance and insularity.¹⁹ So, rather than speculating about major institutional change, this paper focuses on immediate responses in the context we find ourselves in.

At this point the ancient example of Daniel can provide fresh inspiration. Daniel took his first degree in liberal arts at the University of Babylon,²⁰ and then specialised in international relations. Through his adroit intervention he managed to save the sector from serious Government cuts on account of the perceived inefficiencies of his fellow scholars.²¹ He saw his ideas plagiarised, misrepresented and ultimately vindicated.²² From his early days as a student to the day of his death he never stopped living the tension between his faith in God and the world he lived in. It was physically risky; it was mentally exhausting.²³ But that tension was also ultimately productive, giving him insight into a new meta-narrative of global proportions, its significance extending far beyond the

narrow confines of his time and place.²⁴ Above all, the message of Daniel is that there is a God who discloses all wisdom and knowledge in order that he should be praised and worshipped by all.²⁵ Daniel reminds us that the most important question for any student or scholar is not 'what do you know?', but 'who do you worship?'

Jesus calls his followers to be salt and light in the world, whatever the context.²⁶ Negatively, salt prevents decay, and light shows up flaws; positively, salt enhances flavour and light gives direction, warmth and comfort. So, Daniel's example should inspire us to engage in 'prevention' and 'enhancement' as we 'seek the welfare'²⁷ of the secular university.



Lion from Ishtar Gate, Babylon

Preventing decay

Our first task, then, is to prevent decay, and that means preventing the slippage into a hostile, or atheist, secular university. This is the university which in practice, if not officially, presupposes the falsehood of Christianity – and other religions as well. The start of this paper contrasted two forms of secularism: inclusive and exclusive. Exclusive secularism is not necessarily hostile to Christianity. Sometimes bracketing off questions of religious faith and conduct can secure genuine common ground. But exclusive secularism risks slipping into hostile secularism, in which Christianity is actively resisted.

This slippage is easy because there is a natural affinity between the global multiversity and secular humanism as an ideology. Stephen Fry recently recorded a short video for the British Humanist Association in which he argued that the secret of happiness lies in finding out whatever it is that gives life meaning for you as an individual, and going and living it.²⁸ There is no bigger framework 'out there' to be discovered. It is not a large jump to propose that the secular university is the place in which individuals pursue what counts as 'truth' in the subject to which they feel attracted, for whatever purposes they choose – and nothing can, or should, be said to challenge this.

However, challenge is exactly what is required, and this means, first of all, keeping Christianity on the agenda as an object of study. One of the more pernicious effects of

14 Mike Higon, *A Theology of Higher Education*, OUP, 2012.

15 Was Immanuel Kant reflecting his Lutheran upbringing when he wrote: 'Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and steadily reflection is occupied with them: *the starry heaven above me and the moral law within me.*' (*Critique of Practical Reason*, 1788)?

16 Psalm 19:14.

17 See, for example, Jeff Astley, Leslie Francis, John Sullivan and Andrew Walker (eds.), *The Idea of a Christian University*, Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004. Nigel Paterson, 'Do we need a Christian University?', 2008, *Cambridge Papers* vol.17 no.3.

18 The Cathedrals Group of 16 universities and colleges shares 'a common faith heritage and a strong commitment to values such as social justice, respect for the individual and promoting the public good through our work with communities and charities.' See <http://cathedralsgroup.org.uk/> accessed 24 February 2015.

19 Of course, this is not to deny that there are several fine Christian universities in the United States.

20 Dan. 1:17.

21 Dan. 2.

22 Compare Dan. 2:31–35 with 3:1–7.

23 See Dan. 7:15, 28; 8:27; 10:2; 10:16.

24 Dan. 10:12.

25 See, especially, Dan. 2:20–23, 47; 3:28; 4:34–35; 6:25–27; 7:14.

26 Matt. 5:13–16.

27 Jer. 29:7.

28 See 'How can I be happy?' at <https://humanism.org.uk/thathumanism/> accessed 24 February 2015.

secularisation theory was its assumption that religion was no longer an interesting object of study – just as alchemy, astrology and phrenology turned out to be false steps in the forward march of the human intellect, so too religion (and religious studies) would wither away. Even before 9/11 many had abandoned that thesis as palpably false, and religion is back on the intellectual agenda.²⁹ Of course, not every discipline can do this, but as Christians working in these fields we can use our discipline-specific expertise both to inform a better understanding of our own faith, and to secure better levels of religious literacy among our contemporaries.³⁰ The work of God in building the kingdom of Jesus Christ is always worth researching.



Free University, Amsterdam

Secondly, resisting the slippage to atheist secularism means keeping the academy open to Christianity as a framework of study. As George Marsden argues, if we Christians are not going to form Christian academies, this must be our main intellectual contribution.³¹ We should take the professed pluralism and openness of the secular university at its word. Abraham Kuyper's thoughts on Calvinism and Science are still helpful here.³² Kuyper insisted on both the institutional independence of disciplines – the freedom of science (*Wissenschaft*) from ecclesiastical and state control – but also the need to locate each discipline within its ideological framework, hence the Christian Reformed Constitution of the Free University of Amsterdam. We have a duty to spot the grand narratives at work and line up the Christian narrative alongside them. The basic orientation is apologetic: the academic discipline is good and makes sense, but there is an account of the world within which it takes its rightful place and within which it makes more sense.³³

This may be considerably more controversial than keeping Christianity on the agenda as an object of study. Disciplines vary somewhat in their openness to valuing work framed within divergent ideological contexts. It may require flexibility in pursuing Christian perspectives in 'para-university' contexts, more or less detached from mainstream institutions. Examples which spring to mind are the 'Developing a Christian Mind' programme (Oxford) or the US InterVarsity Fellowship's Emerging Scholars Network.

Finally, we need to stand against the trivial but frustrating stupidities which sometimes accompany atheist secularism. Anecdotes abound of the university which prevents Christian students from meeting on university premises because it is committed to 'equality' or concerned about 'extremism'; the university which does not allow its ordained academic staff officially to appear as 'Rev'; the political correctness which assumes there is no space for minority opinions on matters of sexual ethics and human flourishing, however cautiously expressed or well-grounded.

As Christians, this means that we stand for academic freedom: freedom to choose the objects of our study, freedom to adopt the most illuminating 'grand narratives' for our study, and freedom to be the people of faith we are in our universities. Academic staff and students can support each other in this as we use our respective forms of power: institutional status and 'consumer' choice.

Enhancing the flavour

As well as preventing the secular pluralist university from becoming an atheist university, there are also positive ways in which we can 'enhance the flavour'. Here, Mike Higton's suggestions are very helpful: he wants to emphasise the virtuous university, the sociable university and the good university.³⁴

First, virtue. To be a successful scholar requires the development of certain sorts of virtue. Disciplines are 'moral economies', that is, communities of training in virtuous perception. Science depends on being a certain sort of person: disciplined, persistent, impartial, honest, courteous. Education should be an apprenticeship into these virtues. In particular, Higton emphasises 'openness to judgement' by which he means both the willingness to judge and the willingness to be judged. These virtues are fundamentally Christ-like, because they reflect the humility (submission to judgement) and exaltation (willingness to judge) of Christ seen most supremely in his death and resurrection. There is an important difference here from the more common 'skills agenda'. Skills focus on my capacity to get what I want. Virtue focuses on the sort of person I am becoming. In our teaching, learning and research we need to emphasise and develop the virtues that characterise good scholarship.

Second, sociability. The extent to which research and teaching are collaborative enterprises varies from subject to subject, but in all there are elements of sociability. But the pressures of modern university life conspire to squeeze out elements of sociability as inefficient. Departmental coffee breaks – in which freer forms of conversation can develop – die; resource constraints make meeting for conferences harder. Christian scholars have a commitment and calling to preserve and develop university communities where possible, because community (relationality) is an indispensable element of human flourishing. The theological reference point here is

29 As witnessed by the £12m joint AHRC/ESRC *Religion and Society* research programme which ran from 2007 to 2013.

30 See, e.g., Oliver D. Crisp, Gavin D'Costa, Mervyn Davies and Peter Hampson, eds., *Christianity and the Disciplines: The Transformation of the University*, T&T Clark, 2012.

31 George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University*, New York: OUP, 1996.

32 Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 1898, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931;

Peter S. Heslam, *Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper's Lectures on Calvinism*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

33 See, e.g., Robert Song, *Christianity and Liberal Society*, OUP, 1997; Denis Alexander, *Rebuilding the Matrix*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001; and, recently, Timothy Larsen, *The Slain God: Anthropologists and the Christian Faith*, OUP, 2014; and Christian Smith, *The Sacred Project of American Sociology*, OUP, 2014.

34 Mike Higton, *A Theology of Higher Education*, OUP, 2012.

a recognition of individual inadequacy in the body of Christ. Modern academics, and students for that matter, work under enormous pressures which disincentivise those acts of mutual service which keep the academic community functional.³⁵ So there are plenty of opportunities to serve colleagues or fellow-students by being catalysts for the (re)generation of academic community life.

Third, the common good. Higton – rightly – rejects the notion that education is an end in itself. The problem with the current Governmental agenda around impact and its preference for economic or technological growth is not that it seeks an extrinsic goal for higher education but that its vision of that end is too narrow. Education is indeed for the common good, but what is that good? Theologically, the reference point is the ultimate fulfilment of all things under Christ in the new creation. The first challenge for us is simply to find ways of keeping a public conversation going about what the goods of higher education are – what the many ways are in which it serves human wellbeing. In other words, we want to say to the current instrumentalisation of education not ‘no’, but ‘yes, and...’. And we should not despair at finding common ground. One ethical agenda which is gaining widespread support across the academy concerns environmental sustainability.³⁶ There are opportunities here for interdisciplinary cooperation, which can in turn provoke wider conversations around truth and value.

Conclusion

Expressions of concern with the changing culture of the modern university are not uncommon.³⁷ The problem with the secular university is that it suppresses our shared yearning for a more ecclesial vision of scholarly community. In his book, *Religion and Community*, Keith Ward suggests that the Church should be thought of as a community in four dimensions: a teaching community, a charismatic community, a sacramental

community and a moral community.³⁸ This fourfold frame is a helpful provocation as we reflect on our roles, even in secular institutions. Teaching: how can I find ways of ensuring that students and staff alike feel that they are collaborators in a common search for truth, rather than purchasers of a marketable commodity one from the other? Charisma: how does my university enable and celebrate the diversity of talents and gifts, perhaps in extra-curricular and voluntary activities, rather than merely focusing on narrow academic success? Sacrament: what forms of embodiment should I make an effort to preserve: meeting a colleague for a coffee rather than sending an e-mail? Eating with my students? Graduation ceremonies? Moral: what virtues should I be displaying and promoting in my academic life? Self-discipline, humility, honesty, attentiveness to the other, public service?

Christian scholars, both staff and students, work under ever-increasing pressures to succeed, in a context in which the criteria of ‘success’ are often highly individualistic and even materialistic. Daniel’s example is an inspiration, because like him we experience a certain sort of exile: an exile of the mind. Our challenge is each day to ‘turn our face towards Jerusalem’³⁹ as we seek to bless our busy institutions with the richer communal expressions of truth and goodness we have experienced in the body of Christ. If we do this, we can hope to make even our secular universities serviceable to him.



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35 Academics regularly report working up to 60 hours a week, although there is considerable debate about how efficient those hours are. See also, John Morgan and Chris Havergal, ‘Is academic citizenship under strain?’, *Times Higher Education Supplement*, 29 January 2015.

36 See, e.g., the UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development Programme.

37 For one such example, see *Putting Vision Back Into Higher Education: A response*

to the Government White Paper, July 2011, http://publicuniversity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Response_to_White_Paper_Final.pdf accessed 27 February 2015.

38 Keith Ward, *Religion and Community*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000.

39 Dan. 6:10.

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