

*Scientia Pro Amore Dei – Knowledge for the Love of God*

A Statement on Christian Higher Education and the Christian Mission at Samford University

Thy will be done. This is the heart of Christian Higher Education. Our goal as educators is to align our will with our Father's; that empowered by the Holy Spirit and modeled after Christ, we may lay our life and our intellect upon the sacrificial cross of salvation, and that through our sacrifice and faith we may be blessed with the grace to inspire, teach and serve our students, our community and our Church.

Though I don't know much about the Baptist religion, the Catholic tradition I come from is rooted in discernment, discovery, and revelation. Therefore, I believe our Lord entrusted us with the talents to decipher many of the worldly mysteries. So we approach the altar of faith with the humble recognition that scientific discovery happens through the grace of God and our ability to discern, embrace, and employ our divinely endowed talents... However, I also believe that faith and science are mutually orthogonal concepts - that a person cannot, and probably should not, attempt to use one to describe the other except to stand before the wonder of the unknown. Humility is embracing the knowledge that it is only through the Grace of God, that we are allowed to discover more of His world.

I believe where faith and science intersect is the core tenant or precept of each such undertaking. One cannot know the Father without going through the Son, but the belief in the divinity of Jesus as the Christ is a willful action of faith. Through that faith in Christ, our faith in that Truth is grown and tested and grows stronger. Science (despite many secular or antitheist decrees to the contrary) also relies on the assent to that which cannot be fully proven. We start with the axiom that something first *is*, and then let that assent grow within us like a fire to testing that which is true.

My Catholic faith has brought me into the world. The world led me away, and then I was called home. I was called home to a church of the poor. I was called home to bring the faith of Christ into the world through my family, and my vocation as a college professor. I yearn for a more faithful life. In my longing, I submit my will and my intellect to Lord everyday. I require personal responsibility, accountability and integrity in myself, my wife and sons, and those around me.

It is in this sense that I believe I can contribute to the mission at Samford University: I hope to transform and be transformed through seeking the presence of Christ in all those I meet, such that, at the end of the day, the Christian mission is not only about Christ teaching His world through me, but is just as much as Christ teaching me through His world.

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