PHI 805-22: Faith-Learning Integration and Interdisciplinary Studies

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Professor

Dr. David Ward

**I enjoyed reading your responses to Assignment #1 for PHI 805-22, Michael! You did a wonderful job articulating the essential elements of faith-learning integration and interdisciplinary research. Pazmino’s book is a classic. His philosophical ladder provides a good framework for thinking about the levels involved in education. Nice job citing both my article and Dennison's response. Dennison has a valid point about fallenness. But your response is both right and the biblical one. We are called to engage in changing the world to advance the kingdom knowing that complete change awaits Christ’s return. You close your discussion with a wise reflection. Faith-learning integration and interdisciplinary research can change the world and it requires good theory (the academic) and good practice (the practical). It reminds me of my later course, PHI 943 Orthodoxy and Orthopraxis. Works Cited tips: Book titles are to be in sentence case.**

***Foundational issues in Christian education: An introduction in evangelical* *perspective* 3rd Edition.**

**Keep up the great work! -- Prof. David Ward Grade: A**

Recently, I was teaching a youth education class for a local Bible college here in Huntsville. This is an undergraduate course, so I was not able to go in depth. However, my first few classes, I introduced certain philosophies of education. For example, I mentioned that I am a student of local or public schools. Therefore, I was taught with a pragmatic approach to education. Sadly, this pragmatic approach has permeated throughout education. Critiques are made of art and humanities degree programs because no one can get a “good job” with those types of degrees. The thinking is that everything must fit into place. Robert Pazmino, in his book *Foundational Issues in Christian Education* provides a philosophical ladder. This ladder includes: evaluation, implementation, structural organization, purposes and goals, nature of persons, and authority. (Pazmino, 2008) So, it makes sense that much of education is pragmatic. Everything needs to fall within the structural organization to accomplish goals, be evaluated, and so on. However, as David Ward writes, “Reality is complex and stratified into multiple dimensions, the understanding of which is reflected in the historical development of the major disciplines like mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, sociology, history, literature, et al” (Ward, 2014). Therefore, there needs to be a return to a neo-scholastic or neo-thomism view of education. There needs to be a development of thinkers. There are many problems in the world. Unfortunately, as William Dennison explains, A better world will be messed up by humanity’s fallen nature. He writes, “In the history of Christian thought there are numerous understandings of the state of sin in humanity and the noetic effects of the Fall” (Dennison, 2014). Sadly, sin and humanity’s fall will always get in the way of complete world change. But, does that mean humanity shouldn’t try? Or, should we just accept the world as it is? The purpose of interdisciplinary studies involves engaging faith integration and interdisciplinary research to see opportunities to make the world better. Faith is not indoctrination, but education shouldn’t be either. Instead, education should merge the scholastic with the practical. It involves engaging the pragmatic with the scholastic. When this happens, the world changes for the better, even if it is temporary.

# **Bibliography**

Dennison, W. D. (2014). For a better world?: response to David C. Ward. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 57–72.

Pazmino, R. (2008). *Foundational Issues in Christian Education: An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective 3rd Edition.* ADA: Baker Academic.

Ward, D. (2014). Interdisciplinary faith-learning integration for social change. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 29-56.