

Escaping Margaret's World: The Importance of Worldview for the University

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Michael W. Goheen

Accepting the Way the World Is Or A Missionary Encounter?

In their best-selling book *Habits of the Heart* Robert Bellah and his fellow authors tell the story of Margaret Oldham a therapist in her early thirties. She is a woman with an outstanding academic record and professional success. She sums up her sense of the meaning of life in the following way:

I just sort of accept the way the world is and then don't think about it a whole lot. I tend to operate on the assumption that what I want to do and what I feel like is what I should do. What I think the universe wants from me is to take my values, whatever they might happen to be, and live up to them as much as I can.¹

"I just sort of accept the way the world is and then don't think about it a whole lot." This is Margaret's world. Remember, Margaret is a well educated therapist with graduate degrees in psychology. Unfortunately this is common in pragmatic North America among the educated and uneducated alike. But more sadly it is often common among Christians.

If the biblical story tells us the truth about the way the world is, however—and I believe it does—then this position is dangerous and downright irresponsible. In fact, Margaret holds unexamined assumptions, deep faith commitments about the way the world is including the nature and purpose of human life. Almost certainly she has adopted the default beliefs of her

¹ Robert Bellah, et al. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 14.

culture—humanist beliefs that she began to imbibe from her birth and theoretically deepened in her graduate education. If the biblical story is true, then those beliefs have distorted and twisted the way the world is to some degree. They do not tell the truth, for example, about what it means to be human. And these beliefs will shape her therapy from start to finish. If she fundamentally misunderstands what it means to be human her therapy may be less than helpful. I worked for three years in a psych hospital while going to seminary and saw first hand the damage of what a humanist view of the person can do in therapy.

Margaret's situation illustrates the position we find ourselves in. We live as part of a cultural community that has been shaped by an idolatrous story; it has given direction and form to every part of our life together. According to the biblical story wisdom is a matter of serving the Lord God and conforming ourselves to the design and order, the intent and purposes of his good creation. Foolishness is serving an idol or idols that corrupt our life in God's world. Walking in the way of the Lord brings abundant life whereas serving idols brings death and destruction. And so service of our cultural idols is a dangerous path. To follow Margaret, and "just sort of accept the way the world is" is simply perilous.

Margaret's acceptance of the world means also that she doesn't want to think about it a whole lot either. By contrast Lesslie Newbigin believes that thinking about the way the world is is urgent. It is one important way of equipping us for faithful living in God's world. He says:

Incomparably the most urgent missionary task for the next few decades is the mission to 'modernity'. . . It calls for the use of sharp intellectual tools, to probe behind the unquestioned assumptions of modernity and uncover the hidden credo which supports them.

Credo is the Latin word for 'I believe' and is the root of our word 'creed.' A credo is our deepest religious beliefs about the world. Newbigin calls us to probe the credo, the religious beliefs, of Western culture. And he believes that they are hidden and must be uncovered. That is, even though they are powerfully formative, they are simply assumed, and need to be uncovered.

Newbigin's passionate and clarion call to probe our cultural credo is put in the bigger context of his call for a missionary encounter with Western culture. A missionary encounter is about a clash of ultimate and comprehensive stories—the Biblical story and the cultural story. It requires a church that believes the gospel and is committed to shaping its entire life by the Biblical story. When this happens the foundational religious beliefs shared by the cultural community will be challenged. As the church lives fully in the biblical story in the entirety of its life, it encounters the reigning idolatrous assumptions that shape its culture. The church offers the gospel as a credible alternative way of life to its contemporaries. There is a call for a radical conversion, an invitation to turn from the idolatrous beliefs of its cultural story and to understand and live in the world in the light of the gospel.

The Role of the University

Newbigin recognises that if the church is going to be faithful in its calling, it needs “sharp intellectual tools” to examine the religious credo of its culture. Surely here is a job for the Christian university: to provide those sharp intellectual tools. And here is the proper context for Christian university education: the bigger mission of the church to embody the gospel in all areas of life in a missionary encounter with culture.

Nicholas Wolterstorff is one author who has placed Christian university education in the context of the mission of the church. His charge is that the American church has accommodated itself to American civil religion. Instead of an encounter with culture the church has accommodated itself to the religious beliefs of its cultural context. In contrast he calls for “a new vision” of Christian higher education which is “religiously alternative education.”²

This new vision begins with a proper understanding of the biblical story and the role of the church within that story. He summarizes the calling of the church in the biblical story in three words—witness, servant, evidence:

² Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education* (eds. Clarence W. Joldersma and Gloria Goris Stronks; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 6.

The church is called to *witness*—to be a witness to the coming of God’s Kingdom, God’s work of renewal, urging all people everywhere to repent and join the band of Christ’s followers. The church is called to *serve*—to serve all people everywhere by relieving their misery and their lack of joy, both attacking the structures that victimize and alleviating the misery of the victims. And the church is called, in its own life and community to *give evidence* of the new life—not just to wait around in the promise that someday there will be a new heaven and a new earth, but to exhibit the fact that in Christ there is a new Power and that the Kingdom has broken in.³

The church that is faithful to this mission will encounter suffering. Wolterstorff continues saying that Christ warned his disciples that “there will be alienation and even hostility between the church thus understood and surrounding society. For that surrounding society lives by other values; it has other goals, and it worships other gods.”⁴ He rightly believes it is a deep illusion to see various religions as part of a broader public piety that unites them all.

The calling of the Christian university is to serve the Christian community in its mission. He rightly summarizes that “the Christian community exists not for its own sake but for the sake of all people.”⁵ Thus, “the mission of the Christian college is determined, at bottom, by the fact that it is a project of and for the Christian community. It is obvious that in the modern world, if the Christian community is to share in God’s work of renewal by being witness, servant, and evidence, its young members will need an education pointed toward equipping them to contribute to that calling.”⁶ This is the religiously alternative education Wolterstorff calls for.

³ Wolterstorff, *Educating for Shalom*, 7.

⁴ Wolterstorff, *ibid.*

⁵ Wolterstorff, *ibid.*

⁶ Wolterstorff, *ibid.*

The Role of Worldview Studies

If Wolterstorff is correct, and I believe he is, then the role of worldview studies will be one of those intellectual tools that the Christian university can use to probe the beliefs of modernity. And it is precisely here that noting how the word ‘worldview’ came into Christian higher education is so instructive.

Worldview translates the German term ‘weltanschauung’, a word that arose in pagan German philosophy. It was used to denote a set of beliefs that underlie and shape all human thought and action. It was introduced into the English speaking Christian community by James Orr and Abraham Kuyper at the end of the 19th century. Less than one hundred years later the term was so popular in Christian higher education in North America that George Marsden could speak of “the triumph of Kuyperian presuppositionalism” in evangelical higher education in North America, an approach to scholarship that emphasises worldview.⁷ What was it that made the term and approach so popular?

I believe the answer to this question is that the Christian academic community recognised the same danger that Abraham Kuyper saw over a hundred years ago, and seized the word for similar reasons. Kuyper believed Christianity offers a comprehensive and unified view of the world. However, he believed from the time of the Enlightenment the modern worldview had become powerful and dominant within Western culture, a vision of the world that threatened the gospel. Kuyper believed that the modern worldview 1) was *another* comprehensive and unified view of the world, 2) was fundamentally religious, 3) was embodied in the various forms of social and cultural life, and 4) was deeply antithetical to Christianity. He believed that Christianity’s only defence against the power of modernism was to develop an equally comprehensive worldview. In his first lecture he employs the language of spiritual warfare to speak of the missionary encounter between stories or worldviews or systems.

⁷ George Marsden, “The State of Evangelical Christian Scholarship,” *Christian Scholar’s Review*, XVII, 4 (June 1988), 355.

If the battle is to be fought with honour and with a hope of victory, then principle must be arrayed against principle; then it must be felt that in Modernism the vast energy of an all-embracing life system assails us, then also it must be understood that we have to take our stand in a life system of equally comprehensive and far-reaching power.⁸

While James Orr used the term to defend theology, Abraham Kuyper was more concerned for the whole of cultural and social life—politics, art, scholarship, and so on. In other words, Kuyper believed that the term ‘worldview’ could help the Christian community grasp that the gospel and the church’s witness is as wide as creation. He believed what the Christian Reformed Church would confess a hundred years later, that the church is sent “into science and art, media and marketplace—every area of life—pointing to the reign of God with what they do and say”⁹; and that since “Jesus Christ rules over all” then “to follow this Lord is to serve him wherever we are without fitting in, light in darkness, salt in a spoiling world.”¹⁰

Is worldview still a useful concept to foster a missionary encounter and to equip the younger members of Christ’s church with an all-embracing vision of the kingdom of God and the mission of the church? Sometimes I wonder. Last year I asked a fourth-year class of about 175 students how many had heard the term ‘worldview.’ All hands went up. I then asked how many had heard it so many times they were sick of it. About $\frac{3}{4}$ of the hands went up. I asked how many could give a good definition or description of it and why it was important. Considerably less than half of the hands went up. So I wonder. Yet at this point I know of no other word that can deepen our sense of the breadth of the gospel, the breadth of the church’s cultural calling, or help us understand the difference between a vision of public life through the gospel or through the idolatrous lenses of our culture.

⁸ Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931), 11.

⁹ *Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony of the Christian Reformed Church* (2008), par. 30.

¹⁰ *Our World Belongs to God*, par. 43.

An Illustration: Economic Globalization

I want to make this concrete. I thought about three different examples I could use. The first was to speak of the naturalism and secularism of the natural sciences. I believe this has had a debilitating impact on the Christian community teaching us to live in the world about which Paul could say “In him we live and move and have our being” as if God does not exist. I would love to have taken that up. I thought of sports—something that brings me a great deal of delight—and the greed, the commercialization of sports which has trickled down with devastating consequences across the whole range of our culture. In both of these cases I believe we need to drive down to the foundational beliefs of our culture that are shaping science and sports, and ask how the gospel can bring healing to these areas of life.

I decided, however, to treat neither science nor sports but economic globalization. This is partly because of where my head is at right now. I have just finished a chapter for a book I am editing at the moment on globalization to which a number of people incidentally associated with Redeemer are contributing—professors David Koyzis and Craig Bartholomew, but also former students, now Ph.D. students and part-time instructors here—Rob Joustra and Erin Goheen, and also some of our speakers for this conference—Cal Seerveld and Susan Van Zanten. But it is more than simply what is occupying my mind at the moment. It is also the urgency of the issue.

The urgency arises first because economic globalization may well be the dominant story we face in our world. Argentinian church leader Rene Padilla believes so. He warns us that economic globalization is “the greatest challenge that the Christian mission faces.”¹¹ Similarly British biblical scholar Richard Bauckham says that, contrary to what many perceive, the major threat faced by the Christian church in the twenty-first century is not postmodernity that believes there are no true metanarratives but the grand story of economic globalization. He says that “the reality of our world is not the end of grand narratives, but the increasing dominance of the narrative of economic globalization. . . . This is the new imperialism . . .”¹²

¹¹ Rene Padilla, “Mission at the Turn of the Century/Millennium”, *Evangel*, 19, 1 (2001), 6.

¹² Richard Bauckham, *Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 94.

Since this is the dominant story shaping our world it has the potential to do much good but also to do much harm. Bauckham believes that economic globalization is an urgent threat because this new imperialism threatens the whole world through the poverty and environmental destruction that comes in its wake. The words of N.T. Wright and Lesslie Newbigin are even stronger in this regard. Wright speaks of the “massive economic imbalance of the world” as “the major task that faces us in our generation” and “the number one moral issue of our day.” With prophetic passion he goes on to denounce it with very strong words:

The present system of global debt is the real immoral scandal, the dirty little secret—or rather the dirty enormous secret—of glitzy, glossy Western capitalism. Whatever it takes, we must change this situation or stand condemned by subsequent history alongside those who supported slavery two centuries ago and those who supported the Nazis seventy years ago. It is that serious.¹³

These are strong words! Comparing the poverty of the third world as a result of our global economic structures to slavery and Nazism! These comparisons are uncomfortable but not unique to Wright. Interestingly Lesslie Newbigin made a similar comparison twelve years ago. We had just walked through the museum of civil rights. We were standing by our van waiting for my wife to return from the museum where she had gone to get something. He said to me something like this: “How could Christians have ever condoned such dehumanizing slavery?” He answered: “No doubt because they were blind to their own cultural assumptions.” He then asked a question I have thought about many times since and have shared with students: “I wonder what huge and obvious injustices we are participating in today? I wonder what cultural assumptions we are blind to?” He then offered his own answer: “I wonder if it is our global economic system and its counterpart in Western consumerism that is impoverishing the large majority of the world’s population.” Tony Blair, former British prime minister, speaks of global poverty that

¹³ N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperCollins Books, 2008), 216-217.

flows from our global economic systems in the introduction to his government's white paper on poverty and globalisation: "One in five of the world's population – two thirds of them women – live in abject poverty, in a world of growing material plenty. The new millennium offers a real opportunity to eliminate world poverty. This is the greatest moral challenge facing our generation."

If these comments of Padilla, Bauckham, Wright, Newbigin, and Blair are anywhere near correct, it is incumbent on the Christian community to understand these powerful forces or processes that these authors label 'economic globalization.' If Christians are concerned for justice and mercy, and these processes are in part deepening the divide between the rich and poor, and ravaging the resources of God's creation, then it is urgent that this whole process is discussed and debated especially with respect to the underlying religious beliefs, the credo that is driving it all. Surely the Christian university needs to lead the way to equip students to live in a world increasingly shaped by globalization.

In this regard there is another important observation on Christian higher education made by Wolterstorff. He believes that Christian universities have been preoccupied with the question of the 'integration of faith and learning.' However, most reflection on Christian higher education does not go beyond this to ask about what such learning should produce. In other words, integration of faith and learning is about the *content* of Christian higher education, not the *goal*. What is the goal of Christian higher education? He surveys various models that offer an answer to that question and then submits his own which he calls the 'shalom model.' He believes that none of the other models he has surveyed adequately respond to the wounds of humanity. He says that "our traditional models speak scarcely at all of injustice in the world, scarcely at all of our calling to mercy and justice. I submit that the curriculum of the Christian college must open itself up to humanity's wounds."¹⁴ The topic of economic globalization certainly raises issues of structural injustice, of poverty, and of ecological devastation.

The problem in dealing with this topic is that Christians usually polarize by simply accepting the humanist terms of the debate. It seems that it is easier to naively defend the global economic

¹⁴ Wolterstorff, *Educating for Shalom*, 22.

system or to trash it with prophetic criticism. And temperatures rise as some defend global capitalism and others denounce the environmental and economic injustices it brings. Rebecca Todd Peters offers a typology of four competing theories of economic globalization.¹⁵ The first two are fundamentally positive about the global economic structures. Even though they appear to be on opposite ends of the spectrum to many, they really are very close to each other. The first she terms ‘neoliberal’ (which believes that the global market must be free to operate globally—think of Republicans like Reagan). The second she terms ‘development’—I’d call it neo-Keynesian (which believes that the global market must be free to a degree but that the government must play some economic role after the fact to keep it working—think of Democrats like Obama). The last two theories are in fundamental opposition to the whole global system. One she calls ‘earthist’ which excoriates the global economic system because it is destroying the environment, and the other is ‘postcolonial’ which exposes the political injustices of globalization. She rightly points out that these four theories currently dominate discourse on economic globalization.

The problem is that all four theories share the humanist story and its fundamental beliefs. And the dilemma is that one must then be *for* economic globalization as it stands (one may tweak it here and there, of course) or *against* it wholesale. When one accepts the assumptions of the debate, one feels compelled to defend it or demonize it. My own view is that each of these theories is built on an important insight into what is happening in the globalization process but that each of those insights has been significantly distorted by the humanist discourse that shapes the whole conversation. It seems to me that the first two theories—neo-liberal and development—have grasped the insight that a global market is a good part of creation. The latter two—earthist and postcolonial—realise that every good part of creation has been corrupted by human evil.

Deism and the Market Mechanism

¹⁵ Rebecca Todd Peters, “The Future of Globalization: Seeking Pathways of Transformation”, in *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, 24, 1 (2004): 105-133.

I cannot enter this topic in a comprehensive way so I would like to illustrate what I am saying with reference to one area: that is, the impact of deism on our understanding of the market today. In the 18th century Adam Smith forged the economic vision that continues to shape economic globalization today. The 18th century was the time when the worldview that would dominate Western culture came to mature expression. The vision of the Enlightenment thinkers was that human beings could create a better world through reason. The way this worked was as scientific reason discerned the laws of the world, it could control them for the building of this better world. Scientific reason could control the non-human creation by discerning the laws of nature harnessing them through technology. Scientific reason could control the human creation by discerning the laws of economics, politics, education, and society and form a more rational society in keeping with these laws. Humankind could progress toward this utopia through the construction of a rational society.

Christopher Lasch suggests that it is Adam Smith's version of this Enlightenment vision that has endured through the trials of the 20th century, and now shapes globalization. For Adam Smith the better world was one of material prosperity. He lived during a time of grinding poverty, hunger and deprivation. He asked how economic processes and laws could be harnessed to produce a growing economy to alleviate the needs of the poor. Certainly a noble vision!

Trouble was Smith's view of law was thoroughly deistic. Deism has a distorted view of God and thus of God's law for human society. According to a deistic view of the world God created the world and then withdrew. The world he created is like a machine in which the laws are built in independent of the creator. The Law-giver is no longer necessary, and conformity to that law is no longer a human response to the Law-giver. It is blind submission to mechanical and impersonal laws.

In a deistic worldview laws for human society are based on a false parallel with physics. To illustrate: If I step off a 50th floor balcony, the laws of physics "kick in" and will make sure it is the last decision I make. The laws work 'automatically' so to speak. You simply "obey" those laws or pay the price. Francis Bacon spoke of these natural laws when he said that "nature is

only to be commanded by obeying her.”¹⁶ When economic laws are understood in this false way, the market is no longer something that human society creates and moulds in a responsible way in response to God’s law. It becomes an autonomous and neutral mechanism whose impersonal forces must simply be obeyed—like obeying gravity. Economics becomes “the science of the working of the market as a self-operating mechanism modelled on the Newtonian universe.”¹⁷ Newbigin has strong words of warning for this deistic view of the market.

The idea that if economic life is detached from all moral considerations and left to operate by its own laws all will be well is simply an abdication of human responsibility. It is the handing over of human life to the pagan goddess of fortune. If Christ’s sovereignty is not recognized in the world of economics, then demonic powers take control.¹⁸

A biblical view stands in contrast to deism. God has ordered creation in such a way that human beings are given responsibility, and are called to shape economic life and the market in a just and equitable way. The market is *not* an independent and mechanistic phenomenon but a human construction, the way human beings steward the earth’s resources and responsibly shape their economic life together. To abandon our economic life to “market forces” is tantamount to giving up our economic future to fate. Abdicating responsibility by relinquishing the market to autonomous forces will simply allow the market to be shaped by the most powerful economic actors. Markets *will* be shaped by human economic activity—of that we can be sure because this is the way God has made the world. The only question is whether they will be formed in a just or unjust, a sustainable or unsustainable way.

This is the context in which Adam Smith constructs his economic theory. He is a deist and his views of economics are shaped by this mechanistic view of natural law. He was first a moral

¹⁶ Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, book 1, aphorism 129.

¹⁷ Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 31.

¹⁸ Lesslie Newbigin, *Truth to Tell: The Gospel as Public Truth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 79.

philosopher whose primary concern in a situation of economic deprivation was to increase goods so that they could be distributed to the poor. The market would be the mechanism that would automatically coordinate economic forces for the material betterment of humanity. For Smith, the market becomes a key to the prosperous future of humankind.

It is Adam Smith's "invisible hand" that reflects his deistic view. The invisible hand was the mechanism of the market at work co-ordinating the actions of self-interested people to produce wealth and distribute it more fairly. A reference to an "invisible hand" reflects the fading memory of the God's providential rule. Augustine had spoken of God's providential hand co-ordinating even conflicting individual activities in the same way a skilful composer resolves discordant sounds and harmonizes them into a grand melody.¹⁹ Augustine's active and present God is now banished in the thought of the deistic Smith.²⁰ The way the invisible hand worked was as individuals acted according to self-interest, there would be a harmony of conflicting interests that would produce wealth and prosperity. Gradually the growing bounty would trickle down to prosper the poor.

Human beings can progress toward a materially prosperous world by simply obeying the laws of the market. This confessional vision has been transfused into the bloodstream of Western culture. It is this Enlightenment *credo* which is playing such a powerful role in globalization today. Adam Smith spoke only of national economies and markets. Globalization is the integration of all those national markets into a global market. Smith's faith in the market is still evident: the market is the key to economic growth and the prosperity of humankind. The market must be free from government interference; it is the mechanism that will produce wealth. Third World countries must participate in this market which has now expanded to global proportions if

¹⁹ For this image of melody in Augustine's thought see John Neville Figgis, *The Political Aspects of St. Augustine's 'City of God'* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1921), 40. This has been republished by Forgotten Books (2007), and the reference to the 'melody' image is on page 33.

²⁰ Werner Stark, *Social Theory and Christian Thought: A Study of Some Points of Contact. Collected Essays Around a Common Theme* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. 1958), 25-38. After quoting Augustine's *City of God* V, 11, he says: "It is a far cry from these sentiments, characterized as they are by the deepest faith in a personal God . . . to such deistical or atheistical writers as Adam Smith and Kant, or Hegel and Marx. Nevertheless, the structure of their thought is very close to, not to say identical with, that of Augustine. All four . . . were convinced that there operates in history and society a hidden law which coordinates and combines the disjointed and selfish actions of individuals into a great social order or process which achieves other, and indeed, better, in the sense of moral, effects than they have ever contemplated or desired" (28-30).

they want to prosper. The breakdown of the communist centrally-planned economies has put this vision beyond critique. The deism of the global market has been best expressed in the 1980s by Margaret Thatcher when she said ‘you can’t buck the market’ and ‘there is no alternative’ (TINA) to the global market.

The remainder of this paper will observe the way that this deistic view of the market is partially responsible for an unjust global market contributing to massive poverty.

Global Market Ideology and Exclusion

In principle, the Christian community should not oppose a global market or expanding global trade. If the market is responsibly shaped to provide goods and services for human well-being, then widening the market could be source of good for more people. Lesslie Newbigin correctly says that “free markets are the best way of continuously balancing supply and demand.” Free markets are part of God’s good creation. Amartya Sen, the Nobel prize winning development economist, put it simply in a recent interview: “Being against the market is like being against conversation. It’s a form of exchange.” And the expanding global market has produced much good for many people. The problem is that in the “contemporary ideology of the free market . . . we have an example of something good being corrupted”²¹—with its attendant injustices.

A global market could be a benefit to the poor, but the global market that is emerging is an unjust market that is not leading to the material abundance for all. In fact, it is impoverishing many and leading to horrific poverty and debilitating debt. *When we adopt a deistic and mechanistic view of the market it calls for our blind submission to market forces. This hides the fact that the powerful economic players are constantly shaping the market with economic policies that are often unjust.* Let me mention five ways the market has been shaped to exclude poor countries unfairly from the bounty of the global market.

First, they are *excluded from capital*. A disproportionate percentage of investment capital flows to the USA and Europe, and very little to the poorest countries of the world. For poor

²¹ Newbigin, *Truth to Tell*, 76.

countries to attract capital they must pay higher interest rates. Even then third world countries are largely excluded from the capital necessary to participate equally in the global economy and share in its growing production.

Second, they are *excluded from currency*. The richer countries exercise control of the currencies that are used in international trade (the dollar, the euro, and the yen). Poorer countries who want to participate in the global market must borrow money from countries whose monetary unit is accepted internationally. They must pay interest just to secure the currencies they need to participate in the market.

Third, they are *excluded from decision-making power*. The levers of economic power in the global economy are controlled by the wealthier countries whose policies, not surprisingly, are often self-serving. Poorer countries must acquiesce to the direction of international financial institutions if they are to receive the money needed to participate in the global economy.

Fourth, they are *excluded from markets*. Even though the price for receiving money from Western controlled banks was the opening of their markets to the West, the response has not been reciprocal. Even though the West has demanded that poorer countries take on a policy of exports to service their debt, those same Western countries have continued to prevent entry of products from other parts of the world into their market through tariffs and other trade barriers.

Fifth, they have been *excluded from scarcities*. Adam Smith was concerned to distribute scarce resources to meet existing real needs. When the rich had their needs met, increasing production would mean that goods would trickle down to the poor classes. However, sophisticated marketing tactics allied with incredibly powerful information technology attempt to influence consumer demand. Their goal is to artificially expand the needs of those who can afford more. At a time when production could meet the basic needs of everyone, it is directed toward the artificially generated “needs” of the wealthy. Thus the scarce resources of the world are channelled toward the growing markets of the West that are artificially stimulated by powerful marketing techniques, and at the same time directed away from the real needs of the poor. Thus our consumer society is part of the problem of global injustice.

These exclusions have led to rising debt among the poorer nations of the world. A growing percentage of resources from third world countries are used to service their debt rather than to provide basic services like health and education which are so desperately needed. Africa has been hardest hit where in some countries the external debt is often much higher than the value of all their exports. Even when these poorer countries are attempting to be fiscally responsible—and certainly there has been corruption and mismanagement in many of these third world countries—the structures and policies of the global economy make it difficult to put a dent in the debt. These exclusions make it clear that all the participants in the global market are not equal partners; there simply is not a level playing field or a free market. And it has led to crippling debt and massive imbalances of wealth, in which the overfed live alongside the starving in the same world.

Conclusion

Joseph Stiglitz identifies six areas in which globalization needs to be reformed: the need to address poverty, the need for foreign aid and debt relief, the need to make trade fair and equitable, the need to recognize genuine limits in the ability of poorer countries to open their markets, the need to address the environmental crisis, and the need for a healthy and just system of global governance.²² Each of these issues is certainly urgent but they will not be resolved apart from addressing the deepest beliefs that give shape to the social and economic systems producing these problems. Thus, the neglect of the religious and spiritual roots of globalization in the current literature is not just regrettable, it is downright irresponsible. This is true not only of economics but could be illustrated from any subject in the curriculum.

One may disagree with my interpretation of the economic situation. But it is meant to be an illustration of what I hope we agree on—the main point of this paper. A Christian university is called to transmit to its students the insight needed to equip them for their mission in God's world. Christian scholarship can play an important role in furnishing the sharp intellectual tools Newbigin suggests are needed to enable the church to be faithful in its mission. Christian

²² Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work* (New York: Norton, 1996), 11.

scholarship may not neglect the foundational idolatrous beliefs of our culture and of our global world that are diminishing human life. Worldview studies can play an important role in helping to dig down to the credo that is foundational for human life. It offers a way for believers to participate in cultural transformation including the global market by saying 'no' to idolatry and 'yes' to good cultural development.