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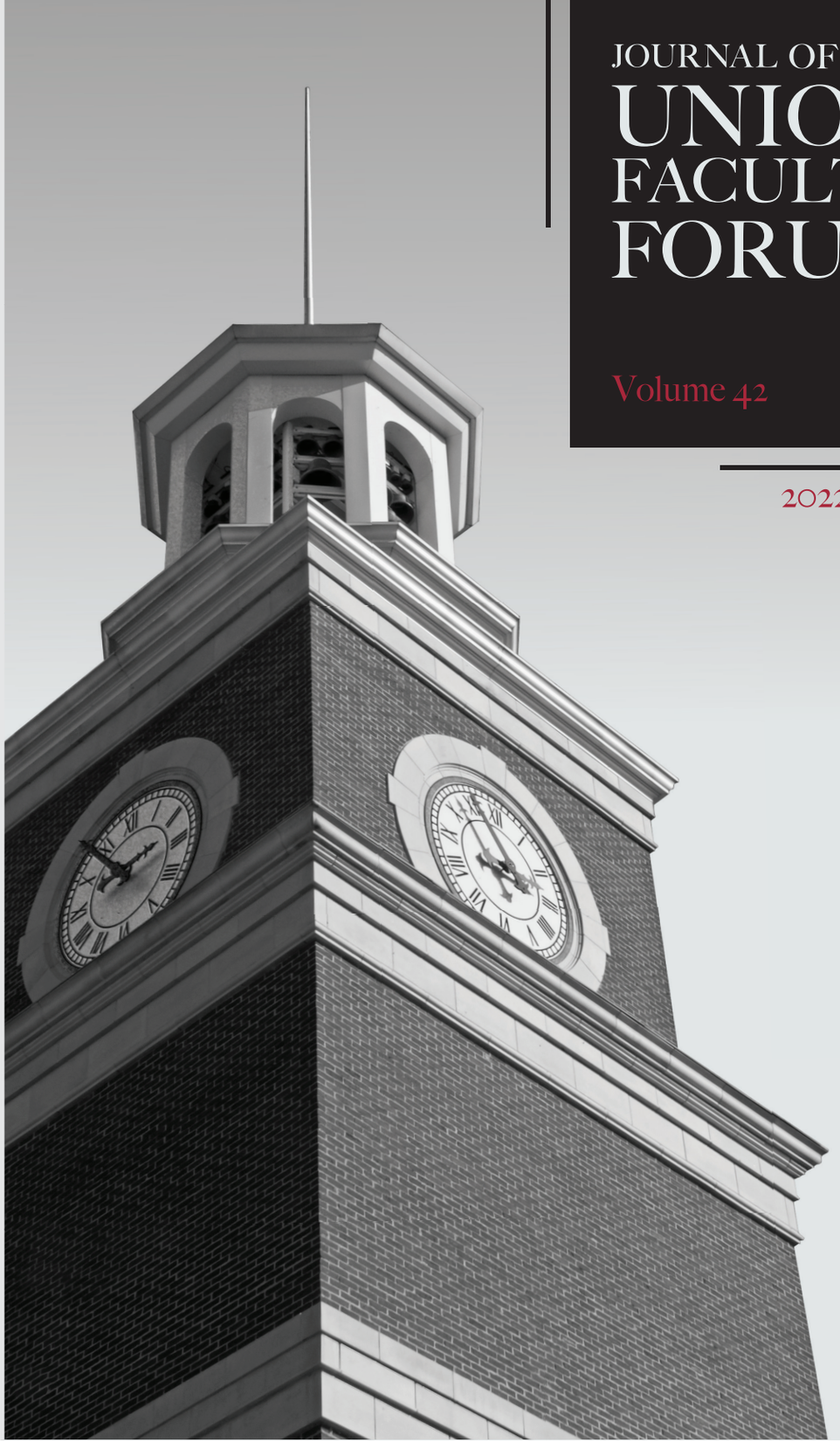

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A Letter from the Faculty Forum President

It is an honor and a privilege to serve as the president of the Faculty Forum. The Forum is a critical component of the communication between faculty and administration at Union. It is a blessing to be surrounded by such loving faculty and staff that care for and nurture each other and their students. The verse for this year is Psalm 126:3: "The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad." We are glad, grateful, and thankful for all He has done for us at Union University. All praise and glory to Him!

The *Journal of the Union Faculty Forum* is a creative outlet for the members of the Faculty Forum. In this day and age where creativity needs to be encouraged and cultivated, the *Journal of the Union Faculty Forum* is leading by example. Thank you to all the faithful contributors and editorial staff for their hard work to bring the journal to life. On behalf of myself, Geoffrey Poore (Vice President), Savannah Patterson (Secretary), and Chris Bailey (*JUFF* Editor-in-Chief), I want to thank everyone for their involvement and contributions this year. I encourage you all to be involved with your students and in the university, as it is a dearly needed light in this world.

Brian J. Glas
Faculty Forum President 2022-2023

A Word from the Editors

We, the students of the Professional Editing, Proofreading, and Publishing class, lay down our pencils and proudly present to you the 2022-2023 *JUFF*. We have learned every way to add a suggestion on Microsoft Word, memorized the Chicago Manual of Style's guidelines, and had verbal fist fights to deliver this final polished product to you. We celebrate Dr. Bailey, our wonderful professor, for her expert advice and kindness in guiding us through our individual editing journeys. We celebrate the Union faculty for sharing their insightful articles on an intriguing variety of topics including: the sixth-century *Christ Pantocrator*, the nature of *perichoresis* in music, cussing, and Channing Tatum. We also celebrate the Union faculty of the past for their legacy of leadership and dedication in the last 200 years of our history. And now we celebrate you, our beloved reader. As you turn the following page and read these scholarly and creative works, we hope you enjoy them as much as we certainly did.

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General Submission Guidelines

A new volume of the *Journal of the Union Faculty Forum* is published during each fall semester. The editors invite submissions of poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, artwork, and scholarly articles in various academic disciplines. Submissions should be in a MS Word format with a 12-point font. The journal accepts MLA, APA and Turabian documentation formats. Acceptance is determined by the quality of the work. While the submission period for the Fall 2022 issue is now closed, you may submit your work for Vol. 43 (Fall 2023-24 issue). Please email submissions to cbailey@uu.edu.

The Sixth-Century *Christ Pantocrator* from St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai:

A Cross-Examination of Prevalent Interpretations of the Portrait

Haelim Allen

The Church Father, Saint Augustine of Hippo, in the early decades of the fifth century, stated the following concerning the representation of the image of Christ in his text *On the Trinity*: "Nam et ipsius facies dominicae carnis innumerabilium cogitationum diuersitate uariatur et fingitur, quae tamen una erat quaecumque erat." This assertion is translated into English by Arthur West Haddan, "For even the countenance of our Lord, himself, in the flesh is variously fancied by the diversity of countless imaginations which yet was one, whatever it was."[1] The earliest acknowledged surviving Christian images are from the third century,[2] which allows for two hundred years or so of development of Christian images, including those of Christ in light of Augustine's statement. It provides a hundred years or so since Augustine's context in which to consider the *Christ Pantocrator*[3] of the sixth c. AD from the Mount Sinai monastery of St. Catherine.

1 Schaff, Philip. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.* Volume 3, *Augustin: On the Holy Trinity, Doctrinal Treatises, Moral Treatises*. Reprint ed. of the American ed. First Series. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 1995, 118.
I initially came across this Augustine quote (though not cited in his article) in Charles Rufus Morey's article, "The Mosaics of Hagia Sophia of 1944" in the *Metropolitan Art Bulletin.*

2 André Grabar, *Christian Iconography: A Study of Its Origins*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 7.

3 "Pantocrator" is an anachronistic designation since the term is not used until the ninth century as associated with dome images. But since this designation is used by both Weitzmann and Constas rather than the more accurate, "Blessing Christ," I will continue to use the designation (See *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, page 51).

This remarkable icon of Christ's image is one of the earliest surviving examples prior to the Byzantine Iconoclasm (AD 726–843) (Figure 1). The icon could be considered in light of Augustine's statement to be one of numerous examples generated by human imagination. And yet, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries,[4] scholars such as Kurt Weitzmann and Father Maximos Constas promote an interpretation of the icon that is theologically and visually specific: the icon as portraying the dual nature of Christ (divine and human) and the dual, paradoxical co-existence of mercy and judgment embodied in God, respectively. This paper will not only cross-examine both strains of interpretation that are based on the visual read of the dichotomy of Christ's visage by both scholars but also negate these interpretations by doing the following: (1) comparing and contrasting the two other Mount Sinai icons associated with the *Christ Pantocrator*, (2) examining the *Christ Pantocrator* with other Christ icons showing or not showing this visual duality, and (3) by proposing that the icon is derivative of not only Greco-Roman portraits as accepted by numerous scholars[5] in general, but more specifically, found in the tradition of the Fayum portraits which are materially and compositionally connected to the *Christ Pantocrator* icon.[6]

The following excerpt from Kurt Weitzmann, in his 1976 book on the Mount Sinai icons, may very likely be the source that perpetuates the notion that the *Christ Pantocrator* of the sixth century from Mount Sinai depicts Christ's dual nature: both divine and human.

> The high artistic quality of this icon [Christ Pantocrator] derives not only from its refined and most skillful application of the encaustic technique, but equally from its hieratic composition and the linear design of its detail. By positioning the figure of Christ on the axis frontally and by opening his eyes wide so as not to fix them on a particular point, the artist achieves an effect of aloofness and timelessness, a pictorial expression of the divine nature. At the same time he avoids strict symmetry and enlivens the pose by turning the body of Christ slightly to the right. There are other noteworthy features: the pupils of the eyes are not at the same level; the eyebrow over Christ's left eye is arched higher than that over his right – a feature which in particular is responsible for the vivid expression of the face; one side of the mustache droops at a different angle from the other; the hair is not parted in the center but on the side, while the beard is combed in the opposite direction and, corresponding with its curve, the hair falls down on the left shoulder but on the other side it is swept back. By using in such a subtle manner abstracting features along with more naturalistic ones, the artist has been able to convey pictorially the dogma of the two natures of Christ, the divine and the human.[7]

Scholars within and outside the field of Art History since then have more or less advocated such an interpretation of this significant icon.[8] Such figures as Father Maximos Constas, who is a research faculty at the Hellenic College Holy Cross and Greek Orthodox School of Theology, and who recently wrote a book in 2014, *The Art of Seeing: Paradox and Perception in Orthodox Iconography*, states that there is no doubt that the Sinai Christ expresses a duality, and that this was quite deliberate on the part of the artist. He then refines this visual duality as not pertaining to Christ's two natures as Weitzmann proposes, but rather as a duality of God's attributes: a paradoxical co-existence of mercy and judgment. Another way to explain this dichotomy within the *Christ*

4 Scholars Georges (Georgios) and Maria Sotiriou only began their research and analysis of the Sinai icons in the late 1930s; publishing their book, *Eikones tīs Monīs Sina Icônes du Mont Sinaï* in 1956.

5 Manolis Chatzidakis and Gerry Walters, "An Encaustic Icon of Christ at Sinai," *The Art Bulletin* (Sept., 1967): 206. Kurt Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinaï, The Icons. Vol. I. From the Sixth to the Tenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 6, 23-26.
Thomas F. Mathews "Early Icons of the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai." In *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Kristen M. Collins (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), 52.

6 In reference to St. Peter's icon from St. Catherine's, Jas Elsner determines its derivation on Roman examples which I agree with, but I will relate the examples from the Fayum portraits to the triad and more particularly to the *Christ Pantocrator* later in the paper (see Elsner's *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph*, 257-59).

7 Weitzmann, *The Icons. Vol. I*, 15.
Kurt Weitzmann, *The Icon: Holy Images – Sixth to Fourteenth* Century (New York: George Braziller, 1978), 40.
Weitzmann summates and abbreviates the quote from his book of 1976 in the 1978 print.

8 Maguire, Henry. "Style and Ideology in Byzantine Imperial Act." *Gesta* (1989): 225. Maguire writes the following without giving a citation: "The Byzantine writers on art tell us, then that the expression of emotion on faces was an index of Christ's humanity, while, conversely, an impassive or detached expression denoted his divinity." From my research, this understanding stems from later Byzantine years rather than those closest to the triad. Ralph Woods–a theologian from Baylor University–among many other theologians, uses this particular icon to be a visible example of Christ's dual nature.
Janson's 9th ed. of *Basic History of Western Art*, which notes on page 180, the icon depicting the "dichotomy between the spiritual and the physical."

Pantocrator's image comes from Robin Cormack's book *Icons* published in 2007 in which he merges both Weitzmann's and Constas' interpretations in the following manner:

> The icon [Sinai *Christ Pantocrator*] represents his two natures, to the right, the arched eyebrow, sunken cheek, moustache and mouth drawn down in a sort of sneer suggests the stern, condemnatory divine nature of God in judgement; to the left, the more open friendly and sympathetic gaze suggests the more benign human nature.[9]

Cormack notes this reading of the *Christ Pantocrator* as pure speculation due to the absence of written documentation in Byzantine texts that would support such direct theological connections of Christ's duality to this particular or any other Christ Pantocrator types. Nevertheless, Weitzmann, Constas, and other scholars from various fields continue to perpetuate the icon's depiction of a dichotomy of some kind, and they agree with one another in the icon's compositional particularities: for example, the wide, opened eyes, uneven, along with the pupils, eyebrows, moustache, etc. (Figure 2). Even so, scholars disagree on its provenance (in addition to interpretations of these peculiar physical traits).[10] An initial assessment of the *Christ Pantocrator*, its provenance, or the lack thereof, may give us at least some context to consider before my discourse on the three comparative analyses.[11]

Background

The *Christ Pantocrator* icon from St. Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai, Egypt, is acknowledged as one of the first of its kind among succeeding and surviving examples of Pantocrator types of Christ images.[12] It is one of 2,000

9 Robin Cormack, *Icons* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 29.

10 Jaś Elsner, "Ancient Viewing and Modern Art History." *Métis–Anthropologie des mondes grecs anciens* (1998), 417-437. Elsner notes Georges (Georgios) and Maria Sotiriou for Alexandria, Ernst Kitzinger [Franz Wickhoff as noted in Sotiriou's article] for Rome, Kurt Weitzmann [Chatzidakis, p202] for Constantinople. My additions in brackets. Elsner goes on to state that Charles R. Morey attributes at least the St. Peter's icon to Sinai.

11 Mathews, "Early Icons of the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai," 41.

Weitzmann, *The Icons, Vol. I*, 4.

12 John Galey, Kurt Weitzmann, and George Forsyth, *Sinai and the Monastery of Saint Catherine* (Israel: Massada, 1980), 53 (see author's caption).
Cormack, Icons, 26. Cormack suggests that the *Christ Pantocrator* is an example of an acheiropoietos (derived from an earlier example) and regarded as the genuine face of Christ and as a miracle-working image.

or more icons housed in the oldest and still functioning monastery of St. Catherine (Figure 3). The monastery is located at the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula. St. Catherine's monastery was built under Emperor Justinian's decree between AD 548 and 565.[13]

George H. Forsyth, in his article regarding the monastery, provides a written account from Procopius, a sixth-century historian. In his book, *On the Buildings* or *Of the Buildings of Justinian*, Procopius states that the Emperor Justinian built a church for the monks "which he dedicated to the Mother of God, so that they might be enabled to pass their lives therein praying and holding services."[14] Procopius also mentions an additional function for the building: "Justinian built a strong fortress and established a considerable garrison of troops in order that the barbarian Saracens might not be able. . . to make inroads with complete secrecy into the lands of Palestine proper"[15] (Figure 4). Regardless of the structure's exact function and intent by Justinian, the monastery was blessed with not only these early icons, including the *Christ Pantocrator,* but also in years to come with their extensive, surviving collections of sacred images preserved for posterity.[16]

Within this extensive collection, the first cross-examination of Weitzmann's and Constas' analyses pertains to the visual comparison of the *Christ Pantocrator* with the other St. Catherine icons that are thought to be painted by the same hand, if not deriving from the same workshop: *St. Peter* and *Virgin and Child with Two Saints*. Another examination of the *Christ Pantocrator* contrasts it with other Pantocrator images in close time proximity of the icon to counter Weitzmann's claim that the St. Catherine's version served as a prototype for other examples.[17] And lastly, a third examination requires an under-

13 George H. Forsyth, "The Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai: The Church and Fortress of Justinian." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* (1968), 4.

14 Procopius Caesariensis, *Procopius on Buildings vol. VII*, trans. Henry Bronson Dewing and Glanville Downey (London: W. Heinemann, 1954), 355, 357.

15 Forsyth, "Monastery of St. Catherine," 5. Both Arabs and Muslims are associated with this term, though in chronology, Arabs invaded first and Muslims thereafter.

16 Mathews, "Early Icons," 51. Mathews suggests that *Christ Pantocrator*, *The Virgin and Child with Saints*, and *St. Peter* were offered by Justinian as votive offerings. I find Mathews' thesis which relates the votive practice not only being a continued practice from Greco-Roman traditions (pages 44-45) but because in a votive situation, "the work of art stood at the center of the dialogue between the gods and human beings." This additional connotation to icons only enhances their role as an intermediary mode between finite and infinite beings. Mathews also concedes on the same page that his thesis is hampered due to the lack of inscriptional evidence.

17 Weitzmann, *The Icons, Vol. I*, 15.

standing of material and technique associated with encaustic painting, along with these implications pertaining to the image produced. Encaustic is an ancient painting process of suspending pigments in hot liquid wax applied to substrates like wood. Related to this is the necessity of comparing the *Christ Pantocrator* to similar surviving examples prior to and around the time of the icon's inception: namely, the Fayum encaustic portraits, which may provide a better understanding of the materials' conveyance of the life-like qualities of the individuals.

First Examination of the *Christ Pantocrator* with *St. Peter* and the *Virgin and Child with Two Saints*

Most scholars, including Weitzmann, Mathews, and Chatzidakis,[18] believe that the three icons, *Christ Pantocrator*, *Virgin and Child with Two Saints*, and *St. Peter,* are all painted from the same workshop, if not by the same hand[19] (Figures 5, 6). The architectural features in the backgrounds, their paint quality, and other details all contribute to this deduction. Weitzmann in particular links the *Virgin and Child with Two Saints* and the *Christ Pantocrator*. Not only do Christ's nimbi share the gold-lined cross in both paintings, but the punched rosette pattern along their border, as well as other details, seem to indicate that they are indeed products of the same workshop[20] (Figures 1, 7). Even so, scholars disagree concerning the region where the triad's workshop is located. As Georges (Georgios) Sotiriou states in his text on the Mount Sinai Icons (1956-58), none of the icons examined, including the triad, have a date or place of origin[21] or other information concerning provenance. But

18 Chatzidakis and Walters, "An Encaustic Icon of Christ at Sinai," *The Art Bulletin*, 197. Weitzmann, *The Icons vol. I*, 15. Weitzmann connects the *Christ Pantocrator* to the *Virgin and Child with Saints.* Mathews, "Early Icons," 51. Mathews treats the triad as a set. (He designates the *Christ Pantocrator* as the *Blessing Christ*.)

19 Weitzmann, *The Icons vol. I*, 15.

20 Weitzmann, *The Icons, vol. I*, 15
I disagree with Weitzmann in that the encaustic properties (strokes, neatness, etc.) in the *Virgin and Child with Two Saints* are much more rudimentary than found in both the *Christ Pantocrator* and *St. Peter*. Thomas Mathews notes Weitzmann's claims in his chapter in *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, 51.

21 Sōtīriou, Geōrgios A., and M. Sōtīriou, *Eikones tīs Monīs Sina Icônes du Mont Sinaï* (Athīnai: [s. n.], 1956), 230. French text rather than the Greek: Aucun des exemplaires étudiés ici ne porte de date ni de lieu d'origine, bien que de longues inscriptions les accompagnent, comprenant habituellement une invocation au saint reproduit, ou un passage scripturaire; il y a aussi des portaits de moines peintres ou de donateurs, quelquefois avec leur nom. Mais il existe bien peu d'icones que l'on puisse dater, ou dont on puisse fixer l'origine avec precision, d'apres les personnages representes ou d'apres d'autres indices.

with scholars grouping the three in particular on stylistic and compositional grounds, a closer look is warranted.

From a compositional perspective, they are different in that Mary's full body is depicted, while St. Peter and Christ are shown from the torso up (Figures 1, 5, 6). The usage of the architectural elements to frame the figures is a common feature, even if they do not reflect one another in structure or coloration. Without too much digression in making comparisons of the minute details of the three icons, examining their visages will provide a better idea as to their relationship to one another, as well as addressing Christ's visage as embodying his dual nature or the dual attributes of God.

The close ups of the faces of *Christ Pantocrator* and *St. Peter* show some similarities (Figures 2, 8). Weitzmann and Constas noted in particular the eyes being different from one another in the Christ image. The close-up of St. Peter also shows not only the frontality of one of his eyes and not the other but also that the pupils do not line up. Does this also imply in St. Peter a dual nature as both divine and human? Obviously, according to the Christian faith, this is not the case since St. Peter is not God. But the persistence of the two sides of Christ goes so far as to create two portraits of Christ, depicting both sides as a whole, not only on *Wikipedia's* website (not exactly scholarly) but also in Fr. Constas' book, *The Art of Seeing* (Figure 9). He states:

> Before us now is a Janus-like figure at once meek and majestic, diminutive and daunting, oscillating between the extremes of vulnerability and power. On the one hand, we are presented with a timid, slightly sad-looking young man, who hesitantly turns to us in a gesture of prayer or petition. He seems poised to bless and perhaps even to touch us. . . . His dark counterpart, on the other hand, is a ponderous Titan, aloof to all relation. Solemn and impassive, he is self-contained in the closed circle formed by the armor of his authoritative volumes, themselves suggestive of ominous secrets and threatening revelations.[22]

The St. Peter icon also shares some of the visual characteristics that many attribute to the *Christ Pantocrator*–the distinct sides or halves, in addition to his uneven, unleveled eyes (Figures 10, 11). If we were to also project the

22 Maximos Constas, *The Art of Seeing: Paradox and Perception in Orthodox Iconography* (Alhambra, California: Sebastian Press, 2014), 51.

characteristics of visages generated by the two sides of St. Peter's, even if not as eloquently written as in Constas' example, here is one interpretation:

We could describe how Peter (Figure 10) seems tight-lipped and his slightly curled, downturned eyes make him appear sad, possibly indicating a visage of one who was met by Jesus when He asked if Peter loved Him after His resurrection. Or there is the leaner visage (Figure 11) with the piercing eyes that seemingly convict us to not deny Christ as he had done.[23] But Jaś Elsner in his statements regarding the *St. Peter* icon notes the lack of scriptural or theological basis, as compared with examples such as the *Quedlinburg Itala* of the second quarter of the fifth century.[24]

And what about the Virgin's visage? Could her image also be split in two different portraits? Due to her expressive features including her gaze that will make one of her two separate portraits cross-eyed (her pupils are also not in alignment), I show a pair of images on a much smaller scale. She also looks to be two different persons based on the one composition (Figure 12).

Through this exercise, what is clear is that these two sides of the faces are not equal in width. The evidence can be seen not only in the visages but also in the width of their necks (Figure 13). This suggests that the artist(s) desires to convey in the original images all three faces to be turned, even if minutely, where one side of the face is seen as greater than the other side. Without progressing to my third and last examination, this portrayal is quite common in the Fayum portraits. Euphrosyne Doxiadis, in her introduction to *The Mysterious Fayum Portraits*, acknowledges the usage of this complex three-quarter (even if some are minute in their turn) poses of the Greek tradition within these Fayum portraits.[25]

23 Weitzmann describes St. Peter's eyes as being large (as he also describes the Christ Pantocrator) and that they "radiate calm and concentration" in his 1978 book on *Icons* versus his assessment of Christ's wide eyes: "His opening his eyes wide so as not to fix them on a particular point, the artist achieves an effect of aloofness and timelessness, a pictorial expression of the divine nature."

24 Jaś Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph*, 257; Elsner attributes this lack to its ancient heritage in Roman consular portraits on page 258. But in Nelson and Collins' book*, Holy Image, Hallowed Ground*, Thomas Mathews writes in his brief, catalogue essay of St. Peter that even with this adoption [of Roman official portraits], the "artist has carefully purged it of all symbols of secular power…St. Peter dresses in the civilian garb of a philosopher…sling of his cloak" on page 123.

25 Euphrosyne Doxiadis, *The Mysterious Fayum Portraits: Faces from Ancient Egypt.* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1995), 13.

Second Examination: *Christ Pantocrator* as a Prototype?

My second cross-examination pertains to Weitzmann's statement regarding the subtleties of the portrait indicating Christ's divinity and humanity, in particular, such traits as the raised and uneven eyebrows (Figure 2). He states that this specific trait associated with this type of Christ image could be seen in later copies.[26] Weitzmann mentions one work in particular, the Christ image in the narthex of Hosios Lukas,[27] as embodying the uneven brows[28] (Figure 14). There seems to be a slight upward pitch of Christ's left brow, but in my humble opinion, the mosaic shows a greater sense of symmetry than not (Figure 15). If Weitzmann is correct, other Christ Pantocrator examples should exist also showing this visual dichotomy, regardless of whether that dichotomy shows the dual nature of Christ's humanity and divinity; or as Constas claims, the dichotomy showing God's mercy and judgment.

The surviving Christ Pantocrator examples in close time proximity to that of the one in St. Catherine's triad all do not show the dichotomy in their compositional analyses. The select number of Christ images, including ones from Rome, Istanbul or Constantinople, Daphne, and even within St. Catherine's monastery, all show Christ looking in a similar direction to that of the triad's *Christ Pantocrator*, with the exception *The Transfiguration*, which is from the same monastery where Christ looks directly out at us (Figures 16-20). But none of these seem to show eyebrows at different levels. By examining not only the eyebrows but also other features in these examples, Christ's visages do not seem to reflect a compositional dichotomy. As significant as the dogma of Christ's dual natures was in the early Church (Councils at Nicaea, Chalcedon, etc.), would there not be more than one such example? If we reflect back to the triad, one may see that the raised eyebrows are not only found in the *Christ Pantocrator*, but also in *St. Peter* and the *Virgin Mary*, all reflecting, in my opinion, a sense of animation and liveliness (Figure 21). This sense of liveliness will also be addressed in the third and last examination.

Third Examination: The Mummy Portraits

This examination investigates the usage of material and technique involved in encaustic painting, in addition to comparing the Sinai *Christ Pantocrator* to

26 Weitzmann, *Icons, vol. 1*, 15.

27 Early 11th Century. Hosios Lukas Monastery Church; detail of mosaic of Christ Pantocrator in the narthex. https://library.artstor.org/asset/LESSING_ART_1039901814. Artstor notes the years 1011-48 for the Christ icon in the narthex.

28 Weitzmann, *Icons, vol. 1*, 15.

surviving encaustic examples, namely the Fayum encaustic portraits, which may give us a better understanding of the materials' conveyance of the life-like qualities of the particular individuals.[29] Therefore, this liveliness of the *Christ Pantocrator* and the others in the triad may reflect the artist's desire for these portraits to embody a likeness of living persons, and not of anyone in particular, but rather to convey their actual existences. The analysis of the material and technique will pertain mainly to the Fayum paintings but also may certainly be applicable to the triad encaustic paintings.

Within Egyptian funerary painting history, the first surviving examples most likely go back to the era of the Old Kingdom, where the mummies from the Giza necropolis had plaster masks in the likeness of the deceased incorporated into the linen bandages. This practice continued and lingered through the Roman period of the last millennium BC.[30] Within the first century AD, Greek settlers in Egypt brought the tradition of a painted portrait into the Egyptian culture and society.[31] Its adaptation into the Egyptian funerary practice lasted well into the Roman period after the adoption of Christianity.[32] The Fayum portraits are the earliest surviving and painted portraits from Egypt[33] (Figures 22-25).

"Fayum paintings" prevalent within the first few centuries are a designation that not only include those majority of paintings found in the region of El-Fayum, but also include paintings from other places such as Aswan and Antinoöpolis to the south and Saqqara to the north, all due to their portraits being

29 Weitzmann notes how scholars have attributed the encaustic technique exclusively associated with Fayum portraits. He negates this since encaustic examples were found in other areas of the Mediterranean. See his *The Icons, Vol. 1*, 5. I agree with his statement, but my comparison of the *Christ Pantocrator* to that of the Fayum paintings is not based solely on an Egyptian exclusive usage of the technique, but rather how they connect the Greco-Roman tradition as found in the Fayum portraits to that of the Sinai triad, in addition to their conveyance of the individual's life-like qualities. Even so, scholars such as Albert Lythgoe note the various levels of technical abilities within the group, including the usage of conventional types in his article, "Graeco-Egyptian Portraits," page 68.

30 John Cooney, "Portraits from Roman Egypt," *The Bulletin of Cleveland Museum of Art* (Feb., 1972), 50.

31 Cooney, "Portraits from Roman Egypt," 50.

32 Albert M. Lythgoe, "Graeco-Egyptian Portraits." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (Mar., 1910), 67.

33 Cooney, "Portraits from Roman Egypt," 50.

similar in style and craftsmanship.[34] Major sites in the Fayum region include Hawara, er-Rubayat, and Arsinoe. A brief overview in the development of mummy portraits conveys a syncretistic adaptation of Greco-Roman portrait paintings (and in particular, as Barbara Borg mentions, the veristic Roman paintings)[35] along with assimilation into the Egyptian tomb cult. Thereby, these Fayum paintings exhibit a "true" likeness to the individual mummy. The mummy portraits within Roman imperial Egypt replaced ancient Egyptian masks in funerary representation. Borg notes that the mummy portraits are surprisingly individualized, with details in hairstyles, jewelry, clothing, etc., to convey a very life-like impression.[36] This trait of being life-like is especially attributed to the material and technique of encaustic painting.[37]

Euphrosyne Doxiadis notes in her book how the Fayum portraits and Christian icons have specific features in common, notably the technique in which they are painted, along with their expressive eyes.[38] The three icons from Mount Sinai certainly embody these traits. They are all encaustic paintings, and as I have already addressed, they convey the liveliness of their expressions, especially in their eyes, as they portray the image of a living person rather than a portrait of the dead[39] (Figure 26). The pigments suspended in wax convey a much more life-like quality of the flesh as compared with other processes.[40] This may seem paradoxical, since the Fayum portraits served in a funerary function. But as Barbara Borg and others have noted, these mummies were not buried but were housed with the living, and they were above ground for

34 Brian Ramer, "The Technology, Examination and Conservation of the Fayum Portraits in the Petrie Museum," *Studies in Conservation* (Feb., 1979), 1.

35 Barbara Borg, *Mumienporträts. Chronologie und kultureller Kontext, (*Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1996), 196. Veristische Porträts anstelle socher Masken bedeuteten somit eine Individualisierung der Mumie.

36 Barbara Borg, *Mumienporträts*, 1. Im Gegensatz zu letzteren vermitteln die Mumienporträts durch ihre z.T. überraschende Individualität und durch die Darstellung von modischen Details wie Frisuren, Schmuck, Kleidung usw. Einen ausgesprochen lebensnahan Eindruck.

37 Lythgoe, "Graeco-Egyptian Portraits," 69. Lythgoe notes that portrait panels show faithful likeness better than masks.

38 Doxiadis, *Mysterious Fayum Portraits,* 90.

39 Cooney, "Portraits from Roman Egypt," 50.

40 Doxiadis, *Mysterious Fayum Portraits*, 95.
See: A.F. Shore, *Portrait Painting from Roman Egypt* (London: The British Museum, 1972), 22. Shore notes that mummy portraits in wax represent almost the total number (versus another material like tempera).

an extended period before actual burial.[41] These portraits served as a likeness and liveliness in that they represented the deceased to the living.[42]

As such, just as the manner in which these Fayum encaustic paintings show a likeness of the person (not so much in terms of a photographic reproduction as we might expect), so also, an icon represents or rather is a substitute for or even a window to the person depicted. Viewers contemporary with these icons, including the *Christ Pantocrator*, would have considered them to be true-to-life, a living image.[43] Chatzidakis mentions that one of the fundamental notions maintained from preceding centuries of portraiture and the icons was to "preserve as much as possible of the external aspects of a portrait to give the icons an air of authenticity, a primary condition in fulfilling their role as icons."[44] Additionally, Sotiriou believes that icons express the sanctity of the persons depicted, along with their ability to elevate the viewer to the sacred archetype.[45]

Doxiadis, in relation to icons and the Fayum portraits, states that "there can be no doubt that portraits like those found in the Fayum are the forebears of icons."[46] She notes that within the Egyptian cult of the dead the Fayum portraits were objects of veneration, an immortal surrogate of the deceased, and as holy objects.[47] This may explain why that, with the onset of Christianity, the practice of funerary portraits waned and ceased, especially after the edict

41 Borg, *Mumienporträts*, 197. Für eine Aufstellung im Haus der Angehörigen spricht tatsächlich einiges. Wie W.M.F. Petrie berichtet, fanden sich an mehreren Mumien Rebentropfenspuren, Vogeldreck, Beschädigungen der Tafeln und Fusskästen sowie Graffiti, die Petrie als Kinderkritzeleien deutete: sämtlich Hinweise darauf, dass die Mumien vor der Bestattung längere Zeit oberirdisch auf bewahrt wurden.

42 Doxiadis, *Mysterious Fayum Portraits*, 82.
Susan Walker, "Mummy Portraits and Roman Portraiture," in *Ancient Faces. Mummy Portraits from Roman Egypt,* eds. Susan Walker and M. Bierbrie (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Routledge, 2000), 24.

43 Henry Maguire, *The Icons of Their Bodies: Saints and Their Images in Byzantium*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 15.

44 Chatzidakis and Walters, "An Encaustic Icon of Christ at Sinai," 200.

45 Sōtīriou, *Eikones tīs Monīs Sina Icônes du Mont Sinaï*, 233.
French rather than the Greek: Un caractère commun a toutes les icones, independant de leur qualite, de leur epoque et des ecoles, est qu'elles expriment la saintete des personnages, refletent la profondeur spirituelle de leur vie interieure, et elevent el spectateur vers l'archetype sacre.

46 Euphrosyne Doxiadis, 90. She cites Andreas Xyngopoulos as a scholar who also shares this conclusion.

47 Doxiadis, *The Mysterious Fayum Portraits*, 39.

of Theodosius prohibiting pagan cults in AD 392.[48] But the encaustic painting itself–the material, technique, and process–continued as a medium to depict sacred icons like that of the triad from St. Catherine's. In turn, the encaustic icons have inherited some of the connotations of the Fayum paintings. In particular, the attributes of being life-like and serving as a living representative or a substitute for those who are no longer here physically, are likewise understood in the sacred icons. And these particularities continue to this day, especially within the Eastern Orthodox tradition, where the icon continues to be a living image.[49]

There is much to be gleaned from examining encaustic painting: its history and associations with various cultures and contexts in which it was utilized along with its material and the visual inferences. Namely, there is much to study in how this type of painting conveys more life-like or flesh-like portraits than do other media during those early centuries, and how it continued to develop within the history of icon making. The *Christ Pantocrator*, along with the other two paintings associated with the work, all show the complexities of their development as I have presented in the three cross examinations. Those analyses: (1) noting the common asymmetrical features not only in the *Christ Pantocrator* but also St. Peter's and Mary's visages, (2) the lack of other examples displaying the visual delineation as supported by Weitzmann, Constas, and others, and (3) considerations to the icon as related to the Fayum portraits, give reasons to reconsider both scholars' claims of the duality of Christ's nature and the paradoxical traits found in God based on a visual examination. This paper never intended to negate Christ's dual nature or even God's embodiment of mercy and judgment as theological truths but rather to challenge Weitzmann and Constas who have projected theological tenets onto the icon without examining other relevant considerations.

48 Borg, *Mumienporträts*, 204. Während die Entstehung der Gattung der Mumienporträts ganz offenbar dem Einfluss der Römer bald nach Etablierung der römischen Herrschaft in Ägypten zu verdanken ist, wurde für das Ende der Produktion bisher allgemein das Theodosius-Edikt mit dem Verbot der heidnischen Kulte von 392 n. Chr. verantwortlich gemacht.

49 Constas, *The Art of Seeing*, 22. Father Constas states: "In using images…the icon seeks to disrupt habituated ways of seeing, to subvert the hegemony of naturalistic representation, and so summon the eye to a new mode of vision, by opening it up to infinite depth. God is not a finite object that we can hold within a vision, but an infinite mystery, an inexhaustible personal plentitude that always has something more to reveal to us in an endless transformation from glory to glory."

Appendix

Figure 1

Christ Pantocrator
Weitzmann: first half of sixth C.
Elsner: second half of the sixth C.
Artstor: c. 659-700
Kitzinger: 700
St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai, Egypt

Artstor Slide Gallery
Data from: University of California, San Diego
Also, in Weitzmann, Kurt. *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinaï, The Icons. Vol. I. From the Sixth to the Tenth Century.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976, Plate 1.

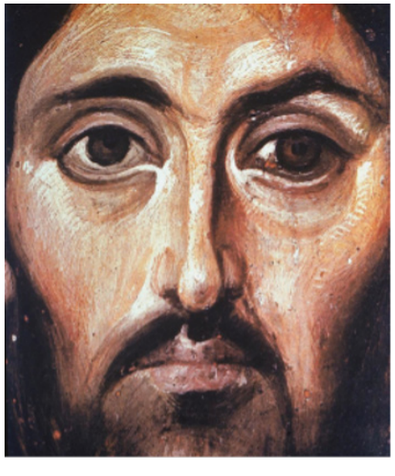


Figure 2

Christ Pantocrator
Weitzmann: first half of sixth C.
Elsner: second half of the sixth C.
Artstor: c. 659-700
Kitzinger: 700
St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai, Egypt
detail

Artstor Slide Gallery
Data from: University of California, San Diego

Figure 3

Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Church, Nave seen through portal from narthex

Artstor
Image and original data provided by Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/Home.aspx
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/TreePfLight.aspx?ID=LES

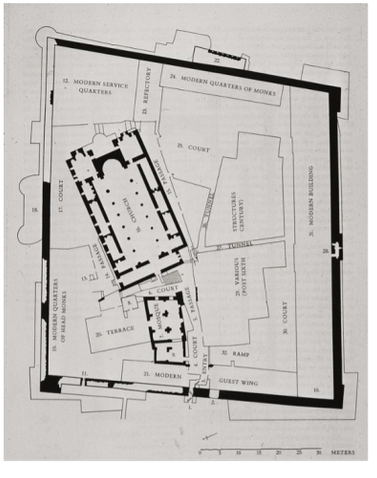


Figure 4

Mount Sinai: Monastery of St. Catherine
Plan showing sixth-century elements in black

Artstor Slide Gallery
Source Data from: University of California, San Diego

Also, in Galey, John, Kurt Weitzmann, and George Forsyth. *Sinai and the Monastery of Saint Catherine.*
Israel: Massada, 1980, 53.

Figure 5

St. Peter Icon
Sixth Century
Encaustic on panel
St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai

Artstor Slide Gallery
Source Data from: University of California, San Diego

Also, in Weitzmann, Kurt. *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinaï, The Icons. Vol. I. From the Sixth to the Tenth Century.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976, Plate B.5.

Figure 6

Virgin and Child with Two Saints
Sixth Century
Encaustic on panel
St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai

Artstor
Image and original data provided by Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/Home.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/TreeP-fLight.aspx?ID=LES

Also, in Weitzmann, Kurt. *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinaï, The Icons. Vol. I. From the Sixth to the Tenth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976, Plate B.3.

Figure 7

Virgin and Child with Two Saints
Sixth Century
Encaustic on panel
St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai
(detail)

Weitzmann, Kurt. *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinaï, The Icons. Vol. I. From the Sixth to the Tenth Century.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976, Plate B.3 (detail).

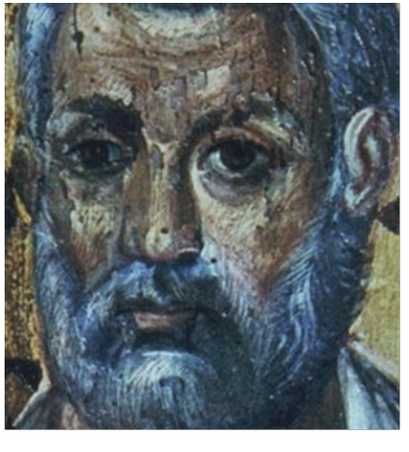


Figure 8

St. Peter Icon
Sixth Century
Encaustic on panel
St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai
(detail)

Weitzmann, Kurt. *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinaï, The Icons. Vol. I. From the Sixth to the Tenth Century.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976, Plate B.5 (detail).

Figure 9

Two images based on the *Christ Pantocrator*

Figs. 6 and 7 in Constas, Maximos. *The Art of Seeing: Paradox and Perception in Orthodox Iconography.* Alhambra, California: Sebastian Press, 2014.

Figure 10

Manipulated image of St. Peter

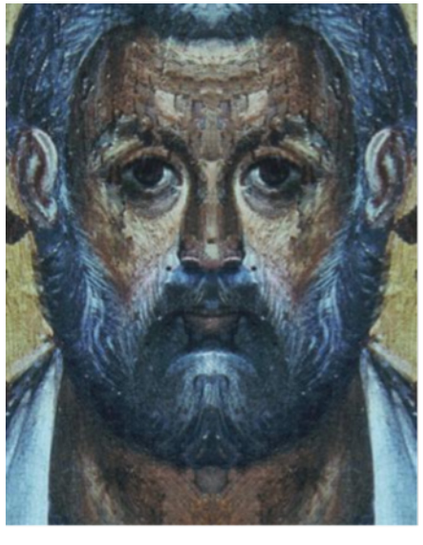
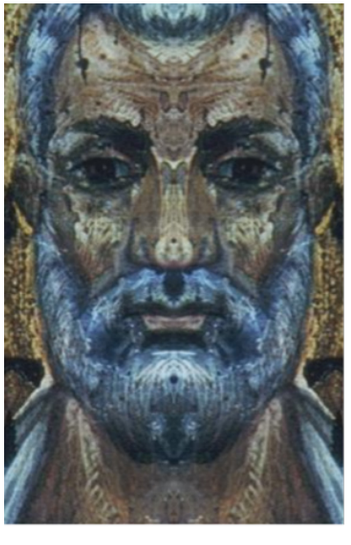


Figure 11

Manipulated image of St. Peter



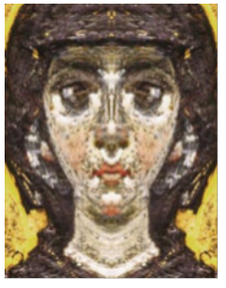


Figure 12

Manipulated images of the Virgin Mary

Figure 13

Lower Left:
Portrait of a thin-faced, bearded man; Roman Period: AD 160-180. Geography: From Egypt Medium: Encaustic, limewood Dimensions: H. 38.1 x W. 21.6 cm (15 x 8 1/2 in.) MET

Artstor
Data From: The Metropolitan Museum of Art Credit Line The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1909 (09.181.1)
Also, in Doxiadis, Euphrosyne. *The Mysterious Fayum Portraits: Faces from Ancient Egypt*. New York: H.N. Abrams, 1995, 162.

Lower Right:
Mummy portrait of a young woman, from Hawara, Egypt, ca. 110-120. Royal Museum of Scotland

Portrait of a young woman in encaustic on wood Fig. 12 in Walker, Susan and M. Bierbrie, eds., *Ancient Faces. Mummy Portraits from Roman Egypt*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Routledge, 2000, 51.

Figure 14

Christ Pantocrator early eleventh century, mosaic, Hosios Loukas

Artstor
http://library.artstor.org/library/#3|collaboratoryfiltering|LESSING_ART_10311440997||Hosios20Loukas-2C20Christ20Pantocrator2C20Virgin-20and20Angels||||103

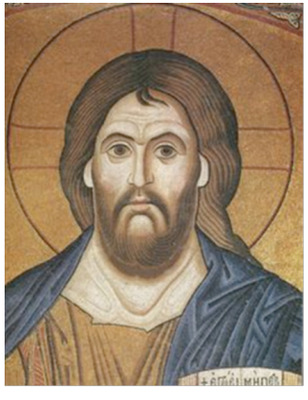


Figure 15

Detail of Fig. 14

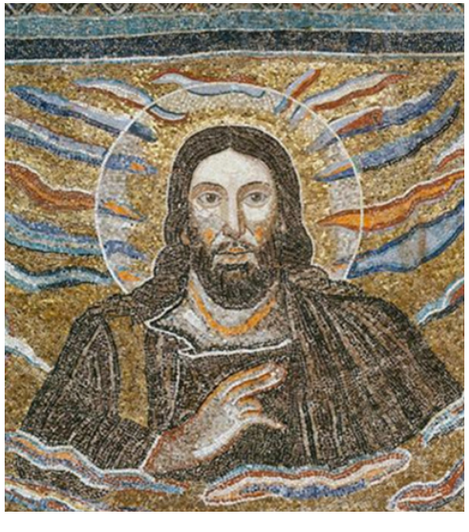


Figure 16

Christ the Pantocrator with Angels; St. John Lateran Oratory of St. Venanzio Mosaic: 2nd quarter of the seventh C. Rome
(detail)

Artstor
Image and original data provided by SCALA, Florence/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/Home.
http://www.scalarchives.com

Figure 17

Jesus Christ Pantocrator (detail from deesis mosaic) from Hagia Sophia
c. late 1261

Artstor
Image and original data provided by Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/Home.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/TreeP-fLight.aspx?ID=LES

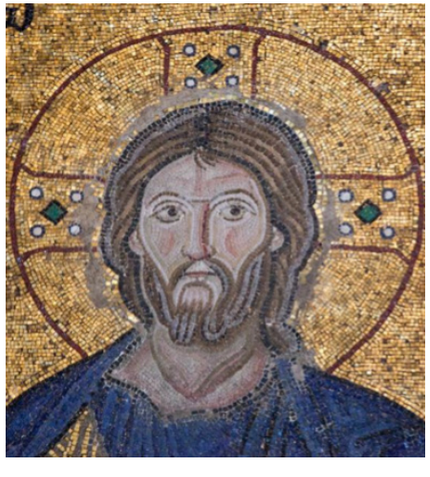


Figure 18

Christ Pantocrator Enthroned between Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos and the Empress Zoe – Hagia Sophia
Mosaic
c. 1028-42
Istanbul
(detail)

Artstor
Image and original data provided by Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/Home.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/TreeP-fLight.aspx?ID=LES

Figure 19

Christ Pantocrator
Central Dome, Church of the Dormition, Daphni, Greece
c. 1080-1100
(detail)

Artstor
Image and original data provided by Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives/ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/Home.aspx
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/TreeP-fLight.aspx?ID=LES

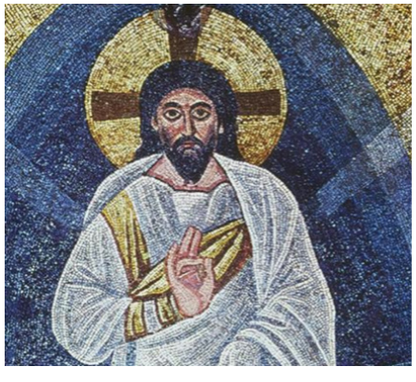


Figure 20

Transfiguration
c. 549-64
Mount Sinai
St. Catherine
(detail)

Plates CIII-CV
Forsyth, George H., and Kurt Weitzmann. *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai: the church and fortress of Justinian.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1973.

Figure 21

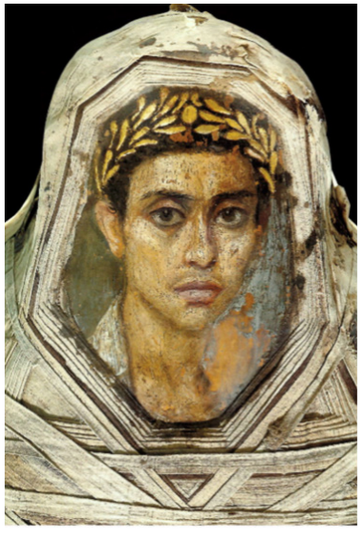


Figure 22

Mummy with an Inserted Panel Portrait of a Youth
Roman Period
AD 80-100
From Egypt, Fayum, Hawara
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Rogers Fund, 1911
Accession Number: 11.139
(detail)

Metropolitan Museum of Art Website
http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/547697
Also, in Fig. 9 in Walker, Susan and M. Bierbrie, eds., *Ancient Faces. Mummy Portraits from Roman Egypt*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Routledge, 2000, 47.

Figure 23

Mummy with an Inserted Panel Portrait of a Youth
Roman Period
AD 80-100
From Egypt, Fayum, Hawara
BSAE excavations 1910-1911
Encaustic on limewood, human remains, linen, mummification material

Dimensions
mummy: l.169 cm (66 9/16 in); w. 45 cm (17 11/16 in)
panel as exposed: l.38.1 cm (15 in); w. 18 cm (7 1/16 in)

Metropolitan Museum of Art
Rogers Fund, 1911
Accession Number: 11.139

Metropolitan Museum of Art Website
http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/547697
Fig. 9 in Walker, Susan and M. Bierbrie, eds., *Ancient Faces. Mummy Portraits from Roman Egypt.* New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Routledge, 2000, 46.

Figure 24

Portrait of the Boy Eutyches
Roman Period
AD 100-150
From Egypt
Encaustic on wood
h. 38 cm (14 15/16 in); w. 19 cm (7 1/2 in)
Gift of Edward S. Harkness, 1918
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Accession Number: 18.9.2

Doxiadis, Euphrosyne. *The Mysterious Fayum Portraits: Faces from Ancient Egypt.* New York: H.N. Abrams, 1995, 32.

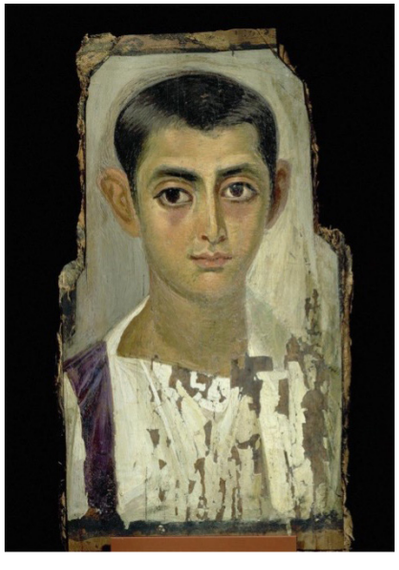


Figure 25

Portrait of a boy from Antinoopolis
AD 130
Musee des Beaux-Arts de Dijon

Artstor
Image and original data provided by Erich Lessing Culture and Fine Arts Archives/ ART RESOURCE, N.Y.
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/Home.aspx
http://www.artres.com/c/htm/TreePfLight.aspx?ID=LES

Figure 26

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Hulu's *The Bear*, Generational Stereotypes, and Prestige Television

Ted Kluck

My wife is a chef so we're suckers for restaurant and food-related media. My family is from Chicago, so I'm a sucker for anything nostalgically Chicago-related as its civic identity is both incredibly cosmopolitan and incredibly tough/blue-collar. In this, Hulu's *The Bear* seemed made just for us (which is one of the marks of good television, I think). The prestige-TV level of photography reminded me of good times I've had in the city, and the characters themselves reminded me of my cousins, whom I love.

"You often like jerks," my wife pointed out as we wrapped up the series last night. She was referring to the Richie Jeremovich character, a 30-something guy who wears sweatpants, carries a gun, and works at a Chicago-style Italian beef sandwich place, which provides the backdrop of the story. Richie is a total jerk whom I would absolutely enjoy hanging out with. He's loud and has this brash-for-no-reason attitude that is dumb and funny, but he's also extremely loyal. He fears that risotto-eating hipsters are taking over his city and his neighborhood and his restaurant. He's not wrong for fearing this.

Richie's younger cousin Carmy is a risotto-eating, tough-looking hipster who was once a world-class chef at the world's greatest restaurant and has returned to Chicago where he inherited his dead brother's Italian beef place; he is trying to make it solvent (a simple-enough and good-enough plot vehicle). Carmy is a wildly talented guy in his late-twenties with a world-class head of hair and a wild animal work ethic. He loves food. He loves kitchens. He loves his staff but is sometimes horrible to them, which makes him exceedingly real and relatable. They have a rich dirtbag uncle named Cicero (Oliver Platt) to whom they owe a large sum of money.

Regarding the staff: they are perfectly diverse but not in a cloying 2022 cover-of-the-textbook sort of way. More in a real Chicago way. Sydney is young and full of herself in a way that most naïve young people are, but she also has real talent and failure in her past. Marcus has a sweet spirit and wants to make the perfect donut. They're easy to like and root for and their scene together in the last episode is sweet and perfect.

Regarding morality: the show is absolutely gritty enough to be real, without delving into the usual utterly depraved prestige-TV tropes. There could easily be a version of this show where somebody in the kitchen is a drug addict and somebody else is sleeping with everybody in the kitchen, but this isn't the case, and the story is leaner and better for it.

Regarding the soundtrack: like its subject-matter, a perfect mix of hipster and blue-collar.

In my job (college professor) I work with Millennials (colleagues) and Gen Z (students), but don't make a habit out of trying to draw referendums about huge groups of people based on a small sample size, though I'm aware that both groups take general "cultural conversation" heat about their respective work ethics (or lack thereof). As writers, like chefs, we're chasing magic and chasing a form of perfection that feels elusive. There will always be people who, regardless of age, chase that, and the chasing will always be interesting.

I've spent a summer trying to perfect something that is deeply imperfect (my home kitchen). It has been an exercise in frustration and despair and is emblematic of life in general in a fallen, sinful, broken world in which wanting to do something good often shows me how very bad I actually am and how deeply I need a savior.

I see *The Bear* in the same way. The characters are a collection of broken people who sometimes reflect God's image and sometimes reflect total depravity. They're fighting a losing battle, but it's hard not to love them for it.

Channing Tatum as Emblematic of a Certain Kind of Self-Aware Thing

Ted Kluck

At some point I leaned over to my wife in the darkened Empire 8 theater and whispered, "This feels like a Netflix Original that somehow got theatrical." That's my assessment of *The Lost City*, which stars Channing Tatum, Sandra Bullock's lip enhancement, the guy from *Harry Potter*, and Brad Pitt for ten minutes.

It even had the somewhat indescribable but know-it-when-you-see-it high-gloss visual look of a Netflix Original, which somehow looks like 8% different than a normal movie. It had a Netflix-Original level of product placement, which is to say it sometimes felt like a 90-minute ad for GMC, Dodge, Johnnie Walker, and Fiji Water.

That being said, it wasn't unpleasant. But it was so self-aware, and such a commentary on itself, that it was more like watching a documentary about fun dumb movies than watching the fun dumb movie itself. Let me (try to) explain:

Tatum's character existed as a sort of commentary on Hot Dumb Guys who you need to get to know because they (maybe) have more going on than you think. Tatum is (zero snark here) really good at playing this type of guy.

Brad Pitt's character existed as a caricature of Brad Pitt himself. It was like Brad Pitt doing Brad Pitt karaoke onscreen for ten minutes. His presence in the project sort of gave the audience permission to like the rest of it. I needed this permission from Brad, and was (again, no snark) grateful for it.

The whole film was supposed to be a commentary on romance novels, but it ended up being more of a commentary on movies that are supposed to be commentaries of romance novels. In its raging self-awareness, it was like being at a party with a guy who is so busy firing off jokes that you can't tell if he's being serious when he says he likes your shirt. It's a little disconcerting. He wants you to go home thinking he's super funny, but you really just go home wondering about your shirt.

This movie was the same. Was I supposed to like it? Was I supposed to acknowledge that it was acknowledging that it was dumb? Was I supposed to like it because it presupposed that I was smart? I'm confused. Maybe I'm not that smart.

I liked it.

But it made me wonder if we'll ever see another super-earnest action-romance ever again: the kind of action-romance that is so center-cut in its salesmanship that you *feel* like you're watching an action-romance and not a wink-wink-nudge-nudge version of one.

A Selection of Poems

Patricia L. Hamilton

Who Gets to Live

(In memory of Ann Livingstone, 1951-2016)

God's thumbnail faintly visible,
a ghostly crescent hovering high,
afternoon's midwinter-blue

devoid of consolation
for those who mourn your passing.

A question?

A tormenting riddle when we think
your life-force too soon dwindled, spent.

Or an answer?

We who remain bending now
as bare boughs laden with snow

but come spring leafing lushly
so we, like you, may bear
perfect winged seedpods of peace.

First published in *Sarasvati* 60, March 2021

Twirling

The church foyer was empty
except for Pam and me.
We twirled in place
to make our skirts swish
and flare out like an ice-skater's
floating on air. Joy, fizzing up
as if shaken in a soda bottle,
spurred us to spin ourselves dizzy.

"Girls!" a woman's voice reprimanded,
"this is the house of God!"
Mrs. G. stood glaring at us, her hair
perfectly coiffed, her patent spike heels gleaming.
The word "God" echoed
as if the heavy steel door of a vault
had slammed shut
at the end of a marble corridor.

Chastened, we desisted.
But for years I've wondered
at the vast chasm between Mrs. G's god—
cold and dour, as if carved in stone—
and ours: ebullient Maker of tiny whorled shells,
of whirling, white-ruffled eddies,
of glittering galaxies spiraling their way
across the vast black night sky.

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Prey

Women Lift their Voices in Mourning

We have heard
wolf whistles, catcalls, the shuffle of work-shoes
answering a bully's signal to his boot-lickers,
have felt our slack arms stiffen, our useless hands ball into fists
as our path is blocked, before and behind, as if we were quarry.

We have known
the stare of a stranger amid the clink and clatter of bar-din,
the swagger of an approaching bulked-up body,
the stench of his sweat as he baits us, toying as with prey—
alert, quivering, helpless as a doe in a rifle's cross-hairs.

We have felt
the dread of a blue strobe in the dark, glimpsed in the rearview
on a narrow, moonless road, the fear of rolling down the window,
of reaching for a cell phone, lest it be snatched,
smashed, ground under the heel of a shiny black boot.

Too, we have seen
a young black teen in a grey hoodie
popping Skittles and swigging a Coke as he ambles along,
earbuds in, eyes on his cell phone, bravely ignoring
the low-slung muscle car trailing him like a prowling cougar.

We have witnessed
black men pursued on foot and kneed in the groin
by thugs in baseball caps brandishing sticks and bats,
or hauled from cars, slammed to the ground, and hog-tied
by men in blue uniforms, batons lifted in a deadly back-swing.

But we can only imagine
the searing pain of bullets drilling through a flimsy t-shirt
to shatter a black man's spine, can only imagine the blinding white flash
that explodes a black man's brain, concussing him into the afterlife
with a crack that reverberates over his last, ragged, fearful breath.

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Flourishing at Life:

Five Habits for Cultivating Well-Being

Julie A. Powell

Flourishing at Life: An Overview

Since the beginning of time, scholars, philosophers, theologians, and so many others have been searching for ways to define and articulate what it means to live a flourishing life. Many of those researchers and scholars have shared thoughtful insights into their perspectives on human flourishing, including Union University's C. Ben Mitchell in his 2022 faculty address and Jacob Shatzer (2019) in his book *Transhumanism and the Image of God: Today's Technology and the Future of Christian Discipleship* (2019). These scholars have been searching for answers in places and disciplines that I dare not tread; however, there is a desire to offer a peek into my personal journey into this fascinating topic of *flourishing,* which began in earnest approximately fifteen years ago.

When exploring the topic of what enables intercollegiate student athletes to be successful at college, I was unaware that an interesting pilgrimage into human performance was just beginning. And just as a person's journey through life often contains curious twists and turns from one season to the next, so has this research endeavor. From generational theory and emerging adulthood to human flourishing and habit formation, from dimensions of wellness including spiritual formation to resilience and grit, each turn is integrating concepts from multiple academic disciplines including neuroscience, psychology, theology, and even mathematics! Regardless of our background or discipline, the hope is that each of us will be challenged to consider that truly flourishing at

life spans multiple disciplines, fields, and industries. And although each person's journey is undertaken individually, few of us thrive without the support of others. So, this essay is an invitation to engage in conversation about what it means to flourish at life through the perspective of health and human performance, specifically in reference to the eight dimensions of wellness outlined by Nemec, Swarbrick, and Menlo (2015).

What will be offered in this essay is likely nothing original to our knowledge and understanding of life; however, the hope is that it might inspire us to participate in rich conversations with each other about applications for individual organizations, encourage us to reconsider our own perspective of what it means to flourish at life, and help us seek out practical activities that will allow both individuals and organizations to thrive. I propose in this essay that living a flourishing life includes inhabiting what the Hebrews describe as *anavah*, or what has been designated by Dave Adamson (2018) in *52 Hebrew Words Every Christian Should Know* as our "God-given space" (p. 43).

Although our initial notion when asked to consider a flourishing life would likely *not* call to mind a word like humility, it is repeatedly appearing in the flourishing research. It is Adamson's (2018) perspective of humility, or inhabiting our God-given space, that provides a foundation for the Five Habits of a Flourishing Life. It is a life where we find our identity centered in Christ, focusing on the dimensions of wellness and a genuine desire to cultivate habits that provide spiritual transformation and character development with a faith-forward future in mind:

> The Hebrew word *anavah* is what we translate as "humility," but the literal definition of *anavah* is to occupy your God-given space in the world–not to overestimate yourself or your abilities, but to not underestimate them either… Growing up, I was taught that humility was thinking less of yourself…But *anavah* is about being aware of and comfortable with your place. When we do this, we don't take up so much space that it squeezes others out, and we don't take up so little space that our responsibilities fall to others. (p. 43)

It's this balanced perspective of *anavah* that most accurately describes what it means to live a flourishing life–we inhabit our God-given space, even when, and if, that space is littered with obstacles and struggles.

The Why

Whether one chooses the perspective of Simon Sinek, who writes on business and leadership in his book *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action* (2001) or the Christian strategist and leader Ken Costa (2016) in his book *Know Your Why: Finding and Fulfilling Your Calling in Life*, there seems to perpetually be someone addressing the need that humans (and ultimately communities and societies) have for finding purpose and meaning in order to achieve life and work satisfaction. This need for understanding the *why* behind what we are learning or doing is the reason many educational curriculums, particularly when engaging emerging generations, recommend investing time in explaining the *why* when initiating a new topic or concept. Spending one class period answering the question, "Why do we measure?" in an assessment course provides the foundation for comprehending *why* we need to conduct actual research that helps us make decisions. And just as students need to grasp the *why* behind a course objective, all of us need to realize the *why* for our lives and how that *why*, especially for Christ followers, places us on a trajectory for a flourishing and abundant life by living out the Great Commandment of loving God and loving others.

To begin the process of answering these existential questions, it's important to engage in a process that I am calling *flourishing thinking*, which is really a combination of two approaches arising out of course design in higher education–backward design and design thinking. The concept known as backward design (Wiggins et al., 2005) was introduced to me first at a 2014 Course Redesign Workshop at Union University. Since that first introduction, opportunities consistently have arisen for its use, not only in course design but also in addressing many areas of life. Utilizing the steps of backward design, which encourages the course designer to focus on the end results first, the answer to *Why is this important to learn?* provides meaning and purpose to the content. Expressing a similar backward-design approach, the educational tool known as design thinking applies here as well as it emphasizes "the big ideas first by asking students to seek out and identify problems. It then works backward to identify information students must master as they design solutions that address problems or opportunities" (Portnoy, 2020, p. 13). It is by taking these parallels to course design and applying them to life design that we arrive at what I call flourishing thinking.

Flourishing Thinking

Moving away from considering only what might be taught in a specific college course, flourishing thinking asks us to contemplate how the elements of design thinking can be applied to the cultivation of the Five Habits of a Flourishing Life. If we consider the specific qualities or virtues associated with living a flourishing life, then a backward design makes sense. If we know what we desire to achieve, then we have a target to aim for and some goals and dreams for which to aspire. Flourishing thinking examines the people who are thriving in their personal, professional, and spiritual lives and reverses their course to observe how they accomplished these goals. In addition to the *how*, we might also return to the *why* question: *Why* do I desire to create habits that lead to a flourishing life? For many of us who choose to follow Christ, the answer will hopefully return us, again and again, to some variation of this answer: I desire a flourishing life so that I can serve a loving Savior by pouring my life into others. Flourishing thinking communicates that a person should have some awareness of who God created them to be and by living in their God-given space (*anavah*), they are fulfilling their divine purpose both personally and professionally. So, just as design thinking has specific elements that serve as guiding questions, flourishing thinking develops the five habits, not along a linear path, but as a fluid process where growing occurs in various ways during different seasons of life and in the varied roles we fulfill in our communities. Flourishing thinking provides us with a lens to evaluate how we invest our time and energy into what we value.

Considering what it means to be a flourishing thinker, we now look through the lens of the dimensions of health and wellness, to develop a holistic model of flourishing habits that will launch college graduates into their professional life. With the guidance and coaching of mentors across multiple generations, college students, or as Murray and Arnett (2019) describe them, emerging adults, are provided a solid foundation on which to build their personal, professional, and spiritual lives. However, it doesn't end there. Throughout the various seasons of life, specifically the professional life, embracers of this holistic model have valuable tools at their disposal in which to return to again and again, when necessary, to define, edit, and redefine what a flourishing life looks like in that particular season. Many elements will stay consistent throughout our lives, others may need to change due to life circumstances, but the foundation is laid, our identity in Christ is established, and these anchors provide a stabilizing groundwork for which a person builds a flourishing life, accepting the obstacles that come, but growing through those experiences to arrive at a contented place in life.

Understanding Human Flourishing

In a health and human performance course, such as drug education, it is necessary for us to have a conversation related to the various perspectives that emerge when attempting to categorize a drug because if we ask someone to explain what an amphetamine is, it will likely depend on their professional perspective. A doctor, a pharmacologist, a chemist, a lawyer, a psychologist, and a user will all provide a different explanation for the same substance. This is why we have tools like a drug identification guide that helps us understand the common substance being discussed. This same idea applies to understanding human flourishing. If we were to pose the question, "What does it mean for a human to flourish?" to a hundred people, we will likely receive a hundred different answers. Although each answer may be accurate for that person's life experiences, at some point, we must arrive at some collective agreement, some parameters, about what flourishing means to guide our conversations.

So, the following descriptions of human flourishing that will be shared here will hopefully allow us to arrive at some common ground, regardless of the discipline or perspective from which we enter this discussion. For a Christ follower who chooses to embrace an evangelical faith, the first step on a pilgrimage to a flourishing life will likely be to look at Scripture, God's inspired Word. How can we inhabit our God-given space, our *anavah*, if we don't use Him as our starting place? So, for the framework to cultivating the Five Habits of a Flourishing Life, I propose that to flourish means that we are inhabiting our God-given space which means that we reflect our Creator's image.

To best reflect our Creator's image, it helps if we view *anavah* through the eight dimensions of wellness commonly referred to in the discipline of health and human performance. In *Made to Flourish* (2015), Shelley Trebesch shares her connections to the dimensions of wellness:

> When we flourish, we experience emotional, psychological, and social well-being. We are full of life–peaceful, cheerful, satisfied, and productive. We accept ourselves as we are, knowing our strengths and weaknesses. We engage in challenges, enjoy learning and embrace an overall sense of purpose. We expect our days to be useful and hopeful. Flourishing people have strong relationships and connectedness to community, contributing as well as receiving. They are curious about differences and suspend judgment for optimized learning. Sound appealing? Sound like what God might intend life to be? (p. 12)

This passage is a beautiful way to articulate living in our God-given space. If we expand Trebesch's three areas of well-being (emotional, psychological, and social) to include the other dimensions of wellness, such as the ones from Nemec, Swarbrick, and Merlo's (2015) wellness model: physical, spiritual, social, intellectual, emotional/mental, occupational, environmental, and financial, we arrive at a solid foundation for what it means to flourish.

However, before we delve into the eight dimensions of wellness, as it relates to cultivating flourishing habits, let's begin with a look at how scholars are defining their version of human flourishing to locate common ground. Beginning this conversation will be what Briggs and Reiss (2021) offer as their three dimensions for humans to flourish:

> We reckon that there are three dimensions of human flourishing which cannot be separated but which can be distinguished for the purpose of considering them. The first is *material*, because humans cannot flourish without adequate food, water, shelter, and bodily health for themselves and their families and the wider community. The second is *relational*, because humans cannot thrive in isolation; we need to be with others and we have evolved to relate to others. The third is *transcendent*, because with only the material and the relational there is still something missing without which humans experience a kind of spiritual poverty. These dimensions are connected, because each of them can find expression through the other two. (pp. vi-viii)

What is compelling from Briggs and Reiss (2021) is that, regardless of whether we chose a secular or religious approach to define what it means to flourish, we have a strong foundation that is rooted in various dimensions of wellness. Briggs and Reiss (2021) continue to explain why this concept of human flourishing speaks to a broad audience:

> The notion of human flourishing is a useful concept within which to consider [the *why*] questions–few would maintain that we want people not to flourish. The concept is sufficiently flexible that it can contain common-sense answers as well as ones that date back to the births of the world's major religions and the origins of philosophy. (p. 3)

Expressing their desire, like mine, not to write another self-help guide, Briggs and Reiss (2021) instead offer that there is a better approach to dealing with

the bombardment from culture about what behaviors should or should not lead a healthy life, help us attain work/life balance, or find meaning and purpose in our careers. Rather than focusing on the cultural messages, Briggs and Reiss carefully consider the contributions from disciplines such as science and spiritual wisdom to guide us to new insights on what it means to flourish as humans. And that is the desire in this essay with the Five Habits of a Flourishing Life–to provide a helpful guide using the wisdom of Scripture, the experiences of mentors, and our own intellectual knowledge from concepts like understanding happiness, life satisfaction theory, and positive psychology to provide us a map to follow as we engage on this journey that is our life.

Two additional perspectives on human flourishing apply to *all* seasons of life; however, some are particularly relevant to the season of life known as emerging adulthood (Murray & Arnett, 2019), which is the best description we have for the season of life that is experienced during the traditional college years. During this time of self-discovery, emerging adults can be engaged, encouraged, and equipped to lean into their growth and development, cultivating habits and skills that will benefit them throughout life. Guiding emerging adults to find their *anavah* in both the personal and professional world lays the foundation for flourishing at life.

Tim Roehl (2018) recommends that to locate these places where we can truly flourish at life, we will need to engage in "focused discernment that resists distractions and eases detours" (p. 23). In his suggestions in *Fit & Flourish: Discover How God Created You to Make a Difference*, we are asked to reconsider things that center our heart. This centering requires us to *look up* to God, to *look back* on our past (or the experiences of others), to *look inside* of ourselves, to *look at* opportunities before us, to *look for* producing fruit, to *look out* to others, and to *look ahead* at how we desire to finish. In investigating these centering aspects, we allow wise discernment to outline where we fit into this world and how to flourish as we live within our God-given space (Roehl, 2018).

Roehl's (2018) specific approach to centering our hearts using wise discernment to determine what it means to flourish at life leads us to another resource on human flourishing, specifically as it relates to the use of technology in our lives, which is a vital topic for the health and well-being of college students. Emerging generations will be continually asked to consider what it means to flourish in life, specifically as it relates to new technologies being introduced. If we could discern for ourselves a personal (or family) digital philosophy, a guiding tool for how we will allow technology to enter our lives, we would

be one step closer to cultivating a healthy lifestyle. Jacob Shatzer (2019) challenges us to take this even one step further, offering that although technology can be a distraction in our lives that needs practical management, there is a deeper issue to address:

> It is a spiritual issue. It has always been a spiritual issue, but digital technology's speed and accessibility, combined with a power to change deep parts of us, makes this issue particularly problematic…True flourishing is not found in a technological worldview but in subordinating our tools to truly human ends. (p. 34)

Shatzer offers that to establish a framework of a healthy life, we lean in with a God-oriented view of human flourishing to fulfill the Great Commandment and that "Human flourishing, then, is not oriented around the self but around God and the neighbor" (2019, p. 37). Through a practice known as discipleship, of following Christ, we can use technology as a blessed add-on to the life of faith, to think wisely, and to discern the role technology will have in our own personal, professional, and spiritual flourishing (Shatzer, 2019).

Other disciplines and perspectives may phrase their definition of flourishing in different ways than have already been addressed, but we can still begin to see patterns emerging that allow us to find common ground. Francis Su, in his book *Mathematics for Human Flourishing*, describes flourishing as follows:

> A wholeness–of being and doing, of realizing one's potential and helping others do the same, of acting with honor and treating others with dignity, of living with integrity even in challenging circumstances…The well-lived life is a life of human flourishing…*eudaimonia…shalom…salaam.* (p. 10)

What Su continues to outline from the perspective of exploring mathematics is that the process which leads to flourishing also develops aspects of character and habits of mind which lead us to grow in virtue. Therefore, he explains that during the process of exploring mathematics, a person develops habits that allow them to live a fuller life and cultivate virtues such as love, truth, beauty, and meaning while helping us "discover what gives our soul its greatest purpose" (Su, 2020, p. 12).

Moving to the discipline of organizational leadership to glean a perspective on what it means to flourish, we might embrace Laurie Schreiner's description in *Thriving in Leadership.* Schreiner (2012) offers:

> "Flourishing" has emerged from the positive psychology literature as a concept that describes the experiences of human beings who are vitally engaged in their work and in significant relationships, who find meaning and fulfillment in the contributions they make–in short–those who thrive. Flourishing goes beyond effectiveness–it means not only doing a job well, but also experiencing deep satisfaction and a sense of purpose in that role. Flourishing people look beyond themselves to the welfare of others and to making the world a better place. (p. 40)

Schreiner's choice of words articulates the feelings of others who bring interesting thoughts to the table on flourishing. In her book *The Flourishing Teacher,* Christina B. Lake (2020) shares, "Since God made us all with different gifts, we should remember that flourishing will look a little different for each of us" (p. 80). Her statements serve as a reminder that although we might research the Five Habits of a Flourishing Life in an attempt to help students navigate their transition into adulthood and the workplace, each path God has for them will look differently than ours or possibly their peers. It is vital during these transformation years that emerging adults are guided through a path to health and wellness on their path to flourishing. Padhy et al. (2021) described flourishing as being "associated with several aspects of mental as well as physical health. Fostering human flourishing is important to improve the quality of life of people" (p. 6). For those of us who are engaged in the work of preparing emerging adults for personal and professional success, delving into indicators of success, such as flourishing, provides valuable information into important psychological variables such as motivation and attitude.

So, although we might all view flourishing at life a little differently, there are consistencies across various disciplines, such as health, wellness, spiritual formation, management, and leadership, that describe some common ground that we can use to provide a framework for understanding the need to develop healthy habits. And as we journey through this life attempting to find purpose and meaning, cultivating healthy habits such as the Five Habits of a Flourishing Life will at least place us in an optimal position to reap the rewards that an abundant life can provide, while also providing fruits that bless others.

Understanding Habits

Before we can delve into the specific Five Habits of a Flourishing Life, it's important to consider what we know about habits in general, and with the

plethora of research related to habits, we probably all have some basic concept of what we consider a healthy or unhealthy habit. Whether we use Steven R. Covey's *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (1989) that has sold millions of copies or look to another resource like James Clear's *Atomic Habits* (2018), there is a need to truly grasp the power that habits hold over us in our everyday lives. This power was thoroughly discussed during a faculty dialogue group in 2017, as we pondered the principles from Charles Duhigg's *The Power of Habit* (2012), and it is this habit loop that repeatedly occurs in flourishing research. It is an understanding of neurology and psychology that provides the foundation for the habit loop, which allows us to chunk information together in the brain, providing the root of how habits form. The formation of a habit is a three-step loop:

> First, there is a *cue*, a trigger that tells your brain to go into automatic mode and which habit to use. Then there is the *routine*, which can be physical or mental or emotional. Finally, there is a *reward*, which helps your brain figure out if this particular loop is worth remembering in the future. (2012, p. 19)

Knowledge of Duhigg's habit loop becomes necessary if we desire to change or replace existing habits that we have established, such as making a choice to engage in healthy activities like exercise or the Five Habits of a Flourishing Life. To make a change, we must understand a basic truth:

> When a habit emerges, the brain stops fully participating in decision making. It stops working so hard, or diverts focus to other tasks. So unless you deliberately *fight* a habit–unless you find new routines–the pattern will unfold automatically. (2012, p. 20)

This comprehension of what is occurring when a habit forms, makes it easier to control. "Once you break a habit into its components, you can fiddle with the gears" (2012, p. 20). It's this "fiddling with the gears" that allows us to uncover the beneficial behaviors that lead to a flourishing life. If we can instill these five healthy habits into the routine of our lives, we have a better chance at living a life that would be described as thriving and abundant.

One resource that not only conveys this idea of the importance of understanding the habit loop but that also attaches Briggs and Reiss' (2021) dimensions of human flourishing is Justin Earley's (2019) *The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction*. It is here that we learn how, after arriving

at a point of feeling distracted, busy, and overcommitted, Earley carefully considered what behaviors he might engage in that would lead him to a place of health and well-being. Earley's perspective challenges us:

> This is why to fully understand habits you must think of habits as liturgies. A liturgy is a pattern of words or actions repeated regularly as a way of worship. The goal of a liturgy is for the participant to be formed in a certain way… notice how similar the definition of liturgy is to the definition of habit. They're both repeated over and over, which forms you; the only difference is that a liturgy *admits* that it's an act of worship. Calling habits liturgies may seem odd, but we need language to emphasize the non-neutrality of our day-to-day routines. Our habits often obscure what we're really worshipping. (2019, p. 8-9)

What Earley is stimulating us to consider is to combine James K.A. Smith's (2016) insight on good moral habits with Duhigg's neurological insight about our brains to consider what shapes our hearts. This shaping connects to our character and our morals:

> Good moral habits are like internal dispositions to the good– they are character traits that become woven into who you are so that you are the kind of person who is inclined to be compassionate, forgiving and so forth…Those habits that become "second" nature operate in the same way: they become so woven into who you are that they are natural for you as breathing and blinking…dispositions are inscribed into your character through rhythms and routines and rituals, enacted over and over again…a sort of learned, second-nature default orientation that you tend toward. (2016, p. 16)

Earley's focus on a program of habits, what he calls a common rule, is based on the idea of a trellis, which provides us some type of visual anchor to understanding time, and "because time is the currency of our purpose, *habits are how we get our hands on our purpose*…a rule of life is how we get our hands on our habits" (2019, p. 15). So, if our habits are how we get our hands on our purpose, then our habits are foundational for human flourishing. Through the daily and weekly habits that Earley outlines for us, we see the progress of how embracing or resisting a habit will guide us along the route to loving God and loving our neighbor. Encouraging a basis found in love and not legalism, Earley's program of habits, his eight rules, provides us a model for the Five Habits of a Flourishing Life, which some might call keystone habits: "A keystone habit is a super-habit. It's the first domino in the line; by changing one habit, we simultaneously change ten other habits" (2019, p. 36). Through building a trellis of habits, we enable ourselves to grow into our God-given space and flourish at life.

The Five Habits of a Flourishing Life

Although the habits are presented here in a particular order, there is an understanding that these are not presented in any sequence or that they are to be addressed individually. Each of the five habits connects to the others in that the cultivation of one will likely lead to growth and development in another. Just as the eight dimensions of wellness are not isolated from each other, the five habits are interconnected; however, it is useful to organize these beneficial behaviors in a way that allows to specifically address one area at a time for intentional consideration. So, presented alphabetically, we will discover the Habit of Awareness, the Habit of Deep Work, the Habit of Growth, the Habit of Margin, and the Habit of Resilience.

Habit #1: The Habit of Awareness

There are two vital aspects to comprehending the Habit of Awareness that include both others-awareness and self-awareness. Understanding of the person God created us to be with specific talents and gifts along with identifying how we communicate, how we love, and what we value, can provide direction for finding a vocation, a purpose, and a life of significance. In *The Art of Work: A Proven Path to Discovering What You Were Meant to Do*, Jeff Goins (2015) shares Frederick Buechner's advice:

> An author who spent part of his life as a schoolteacher and another part as a minister, he observed that finding your vocation is less about grand moments of discovery and more about a habit of awareness...you don't "just know" what your calling is. You must listen for clues along the way, discovering what your life can tell you. Awareness comes with practice. (p. 21)

When making the decision to accept or decline a career position or opportunity, when we are self-aware, we have an "inner observer" guiding us in making our decision. John Ortberg (2015) mirrors this need for an inner observer in *All the Places to Go…How Will You Know?:*

> Maybe you already have a highly accurate intuition of all this. However, likely you would benefit from working with wise, balanced, and unbiased mentors to clarify and confirm your unique wiring. By knowing yourself, you will develop a new set of valuable lenses to evaluate potential opportunities and to prioritize work that you could pursue and work that you probably shouldn't. (p. 154)

Because we have become a student of us, there is an awareness that the leadership style of a potential supervisor and the methods in which we need to be guided differ greatly for optimal human performance; therefore, this may not be the right timing to accept the position at our "dream" organization.

In addition to developing self-awareness to determine one's calling, being others-aware calls us to live alert for the "heart drops" of others where one is listening rather than telling and investing in the process of creating relational equity (Ehman, 2015). As we become students of ourselves, the ripple effect is that we also cultivate a wisdom of others. We learn communication signals, appreciation preferences, leadership styles, and the best environment for creating deep and satisfying work. Others-awareness might also even expand to gaining knowledge about the culture of an organization and honing intuition about the setting that encourages us to flourish.

Utilizing the wealth of tools available to gain knowledge of ourselves and others, when we embrace the Habit of Awareness, God will use us for a greater purpose. Elisa Pulliam (2016) explains this need to be aware of who we are in her book *Impact Together: Biblical Mentoring Simplified*:

> We each have a God-given purpose that is tied to our God-given wiring. What do I mean by that? I believe whole-heartedly that the way God designed us individually is meant for a corporate purpose. Our temperaments, talents, experiences, and spiritual gifts all come together within the sovereignty of God's plan to be used by Him in fulfilling His broader purposes. (p. 100)

Cultivating a Habit of Awareness is essential for helping us to flourish and find our God-given space, but developing the other habits is critical as well, and it would be challenging to nourish the Habit of Awareness without understanding the process of engaging in deep work.

Habit #2: The Habit of Deep Work

Today's hustle culture is so fast-paced that we might easily miss the valuable outcomes associated with focused attention and engaging in the deep work of human growth and development–to investing time and effort into the beneficial behaviors that lead to well-being in all the various dimensions. It is Cal Newport (2016), in his work *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World,* that introduces us to the Deep Work Hypothesis, which states:

> The ability to perform deep work is becoming increasingly rare at exactly the same time it is becoming increasingly valuable in our economy. As a consequence, the few who cultivate this skill, and then make it the core of their working life, will [flourish]. (p. 14)

Cultivating a Habit of Deep Work embraces a rhythmic philosophy to living which "argues that the easiest way to consistently start deep work sessions is to transform them into a simple regular habit" (p. 111). Newport continues to emphasize the importance of deep work for us to be able to learn, and learning connects to the other flourishing habits. For us to produce at our peak level, we "need to work for extended periods with full concentration on a single task free from distraction. Put another way, the type of work that optimizes your performance is deep work" (p. 44). So, whether we are engaging in studying a topic or developing muscular strength, we must be able to do the deep work that helps us arrive at our intended destination.

One of the most significant obstacles to the production of deep work is what is known as shallow work, which Newport (2016) defines as "noncognitively demanding, logistical-style tasks, often performed while distracted. These efforts tend to not create much new value in the world and are easy to replicate" (p. 6). To understand this idea of shallow work, just consider how much time in our day is spent answering messages, surfing the web, or watching television. Although many of these shallow-work tasks are necessary, or at least typical for daily living, the problem arises when those tasks become a distraction to deeper work. To address the skill of engaging in deep work, Newport advises:

> Deep work should be a priority in today's business climate. But it's not. [Newport] summarizes various explanations for this paradox. Among them are the realities that deep work is hard and shallow work is easier, that in the absence of clear goals for your job, the visible busyness that surrounds

> shallow work becomes self-preserving, and that our culture has developed a belief that if a behavior relates to the "Internet," then it's good–regardless of its impact on our ability to produce valuable things. These trends are enabled by the difficulty of directly measuring the value of depth or the cost of ignoring it. (p. 70)

Developing a Habit of Deep Work is critical to a flourishing life, not only in the professional realm but also in the personal arena when considering important attributes such as creating relational equity with those around us (horizontal relationships) and a healthy spiritual life (vertical relationship). The hope is that a Habit of Deep Work allows us to "build [a] working life around the experience of flow produced by deep work," which is "a proven path to deep satisfaction" (Newport, 2016, p. 75).

Newport (2016) continues by offering arguments for depth based in neurology, psychology and philosophy, while establishing three rules for deep work: (1) work deeply, (2) embrace boredom, and (3) quit social media. Approaching deep work from the field of neurology, Newport offers Gallagher's grand theory which teaches us that our world is related to what we pay attention to, so we should take a moment to consider the type of mental world we construct when we dedicate significant time to an endeavor. Newport shares, "If you spend enough time in this state, your mind will understand your world as rich in meaning and importance" (2016, p. 79). Finally, the philosophical argument suggests:

> Whether you're a writer, marketer, consultant, or lawyer: Your work is craft, and if you hone your ability and apply it with respect and care, then like the skilled wheelwright you can generate meaning in the daily efforts of your professional life. (p. 90)

Now, consider how developing a Habit of Deep Work connects to the other Habits of Flourishing Life. To produce deep work, we need a Habit of Awareness where we understand which environments nurture ourselves and others. Understanding the time commitment for shallow work allows us to create a Habit of Margin, while learning how to stick with a project develops a Habit of Resilience. Ultimately, the creation of deep, meaningful work allows the Habit of Growth to emerge where we reap and sow the fruits of our labor, leading us down a path to a flourishing life. Now we will consider the importance of developing character that seeks continual growth and development.

Habit #3: The Habit of Growth

A current dream, related to cultivating continual growth and development while nourishing a Habit of Growth, would be to create a mentoring model for aspiring professionals. This model would not only emphasize the need for growth throughout the various seasons of our careers and lifespan, but it would also help us grasp the essential fact that our flourishing and well-being are directly connected to the relationships present in our lives. Tim Elmore (2009) in his book *Lifegiving Mentors: A Guide for Investing Your Life in Others* advises, "Each of us should always be looking to someone who is a step ahead of us in life; someone who helps us examine our habits, our schedules, our thoughts, our feelings, our strengths and our results" (p. 53). When we are seeking to cultivate habits that will assist us in creating a flourishing life, we need to consider consistent growth in our life personally, professionally, and especially spiritually, across all dimensions of wellness.

In addition to relying on wise mentors for counsel, we should also consider developing what Carol Dweck (2006) calls a *growth mindset*. In her book *Wired to Grow: Harness the Power of Brain Science to Master Any Skill*, Britt Andreatta (2016) shares her perspective on Dweck's theory:

> A growth mindset believes that they can always get better, that they can always learn something new, or practice something more, and that studying and effort are the pathways to improvement and even mastery. A person with a growth mindset thinks, I may not be able to do this yet, but I can work hard and get better. In fact, the word "yet" is the hallmark of the growth mindset. (p. 11)

Supporting this growth mindset theory, neuroscience has found "that the brain is incredibly flexible. It can grow and change over our lifetimes, an ability known as neuroplasticity" (2016, p. 11). So, whether one is eight years old or eighty years old, the habit of growth is vital to a flourishing life.

Looking to the wisdom of Henry Cloud about the importance of continual growth over our lifespan, we see that the root of a flourishing life of growth begins with personal and spiritual growth. Cloud (2014) shares in *Never Go Back: 10 Things You'll Never Do Again* that when we place spiritual health and growth first, we are provided with direction, and this direction:

> Helps us prioritize our lives. Spiritual growth becomes a compass, a True North. If we know that the most important

> thing in life is our internal life, then we will choose to devote time and energy to seeking God and our spiritual development before we seek anything else. (p. 184)

It is my hope that the interconnectedness of the habits is emerging as we witness the various dimensions of health arising across all five habits which creates a ripple effect into other areas of our life:

> What if–as a result of growing, getting healthy, and becoming involved and invested–you were able to say things like...I have so many great relationships that I have to figure out how to find the time for all of them! My career is going so well, I have a hard time figuring which of the opportunities to decide upon. There are too many! I have so many things I am burning to do and only one life to do them in! (Cloud, 2014, p. 186)

If we consider Cloud's perspective in cultivating a Habit of Growth, we should arrive at a shared desire for emerging adults and practicing professionals, and that these suggestions "will be one more step in God's journey for you and your life, and that, as you put these truths to work, your seasons of cultivating growth will yield the 'peaceful fruit of righteousness'" (2014, p. 249). Yielding peaceful fruit transitions us into the next habit, as cultivating a Habit of Margin leads us to a more serene, if not flourishing, life.

Habit #4: The Habit of Margin

Again, nourishing the beneficial behaviors that lead to *all* the Habits of a Flourishing Life is important, but cultivating a Habit of Margin may be an essential skill we all need to develop today more than ever. Several years ago, fellow Union University professor Hayward Armstrong recommended a book to me entitled *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* by Richard Swenson (2004) in preparation for a class presentation on nutrition, and it is a resource that provides value time and time again. The encouragement to develop a Habit of Margin in our lives should be evidenced by the number of our acquaintances and friends who seem to have no room in their lives for the investment in things that can potentially lead to a flourishing life. To help us understand the idea of margin, Swenson shares:

> Margin is the space between our load and our limits. It is the amount allowed beyond that which is needed. It is something held in reserve for contingencies or unanticipated situations. Margin is the gap between rest and exhaustion, the space between breathing freely and suffocating. Margin is the opposite of overload. (p. 69)

Flourishing people have margins in our lives which allows us the space to live a listening life, to love our neighbors, and to create relational equity with people around us.

Honestly, everyone would benefit from reading Swenson's book because any attempt to offer a summary on margin will fall short on the wealth of information Swenson provides. One of the interesting aspects related to Swenson's insightful work and developing a Habit of Margin is that his book was published in 2004. Eighteen years later, his perspective on needing margin in our lives is still relevant and possibly even more critical today as we see many researchers expressing concern over technology and how it is diminishing margin in our lives. Technology that was created to save time is now absorbing our time and finding a proper balance is becoming more and more challenging. Swenson emphasizes this time issue: "We have comforts and conveniences other eras could only dream about. Yet somehow, we are not flourishing under the gifts on modernity as one would expect" (2004, p. 15).

In addressing the notion of limits, Swenson (2004) explains that all things have limits whether we are discussing a human or the weight load of a physical structure such as a bridge. If we can stay within our limits, we can still expand and continue to grow but within sustainable margins. However, it is not uncommon for us in today's hustle culture to overstep our boundaries. Swenson shares, "Now that we have exceeded so many of our limits–personal, emotional, relational, physical, financial–we have no margin at all (2004, p. 42). When we approach or exceed our limits, stress pollutes our lives. One of the greatest challenges in creating appropriate boundaries is that each one of us not only has different loads and limits, but the areas where we need to set limits will vary from person to person. Developing a Habit of Margin alongside the other habits, like awareness, allows us to set boundaries for ourselves, and it can also create a mindfulness of the loads and limits of those within our sphere of influence as well.

Swenson's (2004) approach focuses on the four dimensions of wellness previously mentioned: emotional, physical, financial, and time; however, we would be encouraged to examine all areas of our life where we truly desire to flourish and recognize the loads and limits critical to avoiding marginless living. It's

possible to use Swenson's four areas as umbrella categories and then arrange a list of our own areas from the dimensions of wellness. Whatever system works best, use it. It's all about understanding the need to develop a Habit of Margin. And being able to persevere when we flounder in cultivating these beneficial behaviors leads us to our fifth habit.

Habit #5: The Habit of Resilience

Arising from the research on emerging adulthood comes the notion that Americans are trailing in their ability to be resilient, to bounce back after a flounder or failure, and to resist the lessons to be learned from those valuable experiences. The prevalent reason for this gap relates to the protective nature us Gen Xers instilled through well-intentioned safety measures, but the result is the same in that today we need to encourage the cultivation of Habit of Resilience within ourselves and others. It is Angela Duckworth's (2016) creation of the Grit Scale that provides us a foundation for grasping the importance of a Habit of Resilience. In the Grit Scale, Duckworth measures a person's passion and perseverance while emphasizing the relevance of consistency over time. Duckworth outlines that "enthusiasm is common" but "endurance is rare"; therefore, remaining persistent means deliberate practice, specifically over a long period of time (2016, p. 58).

Adding to Duckworth's (2016) perspective of holding to a goal for an extended period of time and the ability to bounce back when things go poorly, Eric Greitens (2016) offers in his book *Resilience: Hard-Won Wisdom for Living a Better Life*:

> If we limit our understanding of resilience to this idea of bouncing back, we miss much of what hardship, pain, and suffering offer us. We also misunderstand our basic human capacity to change and improve. Life's reality is that we cannot bounce back. We cannot bounce back because we cannot go back in time to the people we used to be. (p. 22)

Instead of bouncing back from a floundering or failure, Greitens encourages us to move through: "Fortunately, to be resilient we don't need to go back in time. What happens to us becomes part of us. Resilient people do not bounce back from hard experiences; they find healthy ways to integrate them into their lives" (2016, p. 22).

Learning how to move through these tough experiences is an opportunity for mentors, teachers, and coaches to guide emerging generations through times

of adversity, especially if the building of resiliency was lacking in earlier seasons of development. Tim Elmore and Andrew McPeak (2019) share what they consider to be the essential ingredients necessary for the development of a Habit of Resilience through the acronym IDEA in *Generation Z Unfiltered:*

- **I**nstruction–Adults provide verbal insights and explanations through conversations with Generation Z. This furnishes them with both knowledge and understanding.
- **D**emonstration–Adults find a way to offer an example of what the insight looks like in real life. This furnishes Generation Z with confidence and vision.
- **E**xperience–Adults turn Generation Z loose to practice the insight on their own, to apply the knowledge. This furnishes them with skills and abilities.
- **A**ssessment–Adults take time to debrief and evaluate the learning process with the Gen Z students they lead. This furnishes them with wisdom and perspective. (pp. 78-79)

Navigating the perfect amount of freedom to allow failure, known as controlled floundering, is unique to each of us and our personal situations; however, recognizing that struggle is necessary in order to develop a Habit of Resilience, we are presented with an opportunity to teach ourselves and emerging generations healthy ways to embrace the struggle, appreciating that no one can build resilience for another. Mentors can point emerging generations in a specific direction and give them a map of where to go, but ultimately, they are unable to actually carry emerging generations through the struggle. It's in moments when they are forced to endure that Greitens' (2016) advice becomes so valid:

> To move through pain to wisdom, through fear to courage, through suffering to strength, requires resilience. The benefits…are so precious that if they could be bottled, people would pay dearly for them. But they can't be bottled. And if you want the wisdom, the strength, the clarity, the courage that can come from struggle, the price is clear: you have to endure the struggle first. (p. 8)

Those in the emerging generation who are fortunate to be led by wise leaders should seek the opportunity to learn as much as possible from them. Luckily, as Greitens (2016) continues, "struggles are very much like the struggles of those who went before [emerging generations], and they are very much like the struggles of those who will come after [emerging generations]" and hope-

fully, we are providing "sources of wisdom" all around them (p. 9). For this very reason, we should be encouraging others to cultivate intergenerational mentoring relationships so that all generations flourish.

Application of the Five Habits

Admittedly, the reason for researching the need to cultivate the Five Habits of a Flourishing Life began with a desire to create a mentoring model for aspiring sport professionals; however, as the investigation continues, we can discover applications beyond those outlined for college students, or emerging generations. Research questions continue to materialize as we consider how student-athletes might benefit from establishing healthy habits of well-being, or how faculty and staff, or members of any organization, for that matter, might embrace these habits. Or what about coaches as they navigate their professional career that brings so many ups and downs? I wonder if people who work in industries outside of sports or higher education can relate to how important forming healthy habits are. Coming from the perspective of an educator who relishes understanding health and human performance, I speculate that although most people would admit that they value a life of well-being, how many are willing to take preventative steps, like establishing healthy habits, that would lead them to a flourishing life? For some reason, it seems easier to focus on one dimension of health–the physical–but the other dimensions need attention too, and it is only through purposeful consideration of the habits in our life that we will gain the necessary foundation to truly live a purposeful and flourishing life.

This journey is a meandering one that appears to take the scenic route all the time; however, we should look forward to what might be on the path ahead. Perhaps opportunities will open to utilize existing tools such as the life or work satisfaction scales, the flourishing, grit, and vitality scales, or other assessments, which will allow us to make progress on this pilgrimage to a flourishing life. We are all guaranteed to have obstacles thrown in the path of our plans, but those who have finished, or are in the process of finishing well, hold wise advice for those of us still on the road, and we can learn from numerous resources the ways to make that happen in our own lives. The opportunities are endless for the routes a researcher might take in future exploration of what it means to flourish at life, so let us continue to initiate these conversations in numerous places and from various perspectives that allow our family, friends, organizations, and communities to thrive.

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Cultivating Creation Care

Beth Madison

> "O Lord, our Lord, How majestic and glorious and excellent is Your name in all the earth! You have displayed Your splendor above the heavens" (*Amplified Bible*, Psalm 8.1).[1]
>
> "By the sweat of your brow, you will produce food to eat until you return to the ground, because you were taken from it. You are dust, and you will return to dust" (*GOD'S WORD Translation*, Genesis 3.19).

One of my very favorite gifts ever came from one of my very favorite students ever. This gift has been in its place of honor in my office for some years now and isn't going anywhere anytime soon. This gift is one that always makes me smile, not just in thinking of that student, but in the love, empathy, and creativity wrapped up in the gift.

By now, you're probably asking, "what's the gift?" Well, let me tell you–it's a small jar of soil my student collected from her family farm. She gave the jar to me with these words: "Dr. Madison, I wanted to give you something extra special, and I couldn't think of anything that you might like more than soil I took from my family's farm just for you." She was so right in knowing this soil scientist's heart because, to me, that's love in a jar with the lid screwed on tight!

As a farm girl, my student knew the principle of placement better than most do at that age. She and I used to talk about how we felt most like ourselves when we were on our family farms. We shared in the deep satisfaction of being able to point to a specific place of *adamah* (fertile earth) and thus to know the implicit beauty contained in the idea of from dust to dust alluded to in Genesis 3:19.

1 For all translations not noted, please reference the *New International Version*.

Dust to dust isn't reserved for funerals or failures. Dust to dust is pieces of Eden that stick under fingernails and to pants while seeping into the soil of the souls working with it. Dust to dust is an irreplaceable part of every day for one who knows the vitality of working with the land and its inhabitants, be they microbes or mountain ranges or all of us kept in between. Dust to dust points to the material that is of and from us and leads us closer to the One who made it and us.

With these ideas in mind, could God have intended for the principle of dust to dust for Adam and for us to be another reminder of His placement of us, His purpose for us, and His permanence towards us?

His placement of us–God's choice is for good for each of us in this place and in this position, wherever He has put us. I may not see the good in the dust of the here and now, but I can trust Him. He is Good and the giver of good gifts (see Genesis 50:20 and Matthew 7:11). Therefore, whether or not I see this dust of me and around me as good, it is good because it is from God.

His purpose for us–God had purpose for Adam in and after Eden. He has purpose for each and for all of us here living from dust to dust. As the first Adam's offspring, we have inherited Adam's obligation as caretakers of creation. As the second Adam's co-heirs, we have received redemption and renewal so that we might fulfill this responsibility of caretaking our Good God's creation in and around us (see 1 Corinthians 15:45 and Romans 8:17).

His permanence towards us–This God is the same God Who has always been and always will be (see Psalm 15:4 and Hebrews 13:8). The same God Who formed Adam from dust and does the same for each of us, before we are known by any other (see Genesis 2:7 and Psalm 139:13-16). The same God mighty in power, rich in love, and steadfast in keeping all of His promises (see Deuteronomy 3:24, Exodus 34:6, and Joshua 21:45). And oh so much more beyond understanding or imagination (see Ephesians 3:20-21)!

Not all of us are called to be environmental scientists, but all of us are commissioned to be creation's caretakers. We have been given access to and authority over everything from soil to stars as stewards of the Most High God (see Genesis 1:28). None of this is ours in ownership but all of this is ours in answerability for our actions toward it.

Here is where you probably expect me to bring out terrifying statistics such as the following: over 99% of our world's freshwater supply is contaminated; estimates of thousands of species of plants, animals, insects, reptiles, and fish have already gone extinct; or that most of our landfills are full and leakage from them is not only seeping into our soils but also our groundwater supplies. Trust me, I could go on and on to fill up far more than just one book with much more nightmarish data than this collected from every part of our planet.

Yet one foundational truth resounds strongly through and in all of this seemingly hopeless chaos in our seemingly out-of-control world. God (repeatedly) called His creation good when He made it and hasn't said otherwise (see Genesis chapter 1). And He reinforced this idea of good about the created throughout Scripture with the words and work of kings and kinsmen; prophets, priests, and psalmists; and scholars, shepherds, and the Savior Himself, just to name a few (and this scientist likes that kind of data with every piece and particle of her being).

Even the strongest of us sometimes cannot help but be blown to and fro as dust in the winds of change and uncertainty. But as Christ-followers, we know nothing can begin to move our God. And nothing can stand before our God, including the dust of today which tries to choke us in materialism, arrogance, apathy, and discontent (see Deuteronomy 7:24, 2 Chronicles 20:17, and Ephesians 6:11). All or any of these sins can easily erode faith into fear. And when we hold fast to fear instead of trusting God with everything at all times, we become cowards of creation rather than caretakers of it (see Proverbs 3:5-6). For example, if I am focusing on the data telling me that all is already lost with the world's resources, I am limiting God to what I can measure, understand, or control. Similarly, if I am reckless or selfish, without concern as to resource availability and wise usage, I usurp God in believing the lie that I am owner and not steward of creation. And I begin to deceive myself that I am not living from dust to dust but only for me, myself, and I.

Please hear me–I am not pointing a finger at anyone except myself in any of this. I know far too well the sins I have committed as an apathetic, arrogant, and discontented rejecter of my assigned role as a submissive steward of creation. More importantly, I know our Good God to be loving, patient, and kind in extending powerful grace and mercy that transforms once and for all and once forever (see Hebrews 7:27). Only He can restore hearts and homes, lives and landscapes all scarred with sin's ravages. Nothing and no one is beyond His reach and redemption for now or the not-yet (see Psalm 139:7-12). He created and called it good in Genesis. He sustains and calls it His own today. Just as He gave Adam the opportunity to do good in Eden, He does the same for me here. And He alone can give the strength to choose fear over faith (see Joshua 1:9).

Fearing the dust to dust of creation requires that I keep a chokehold of dominion over it. Faith in the One Who made dust to dust releases me to find the beauty in creation and to care for it with hope, joy, and courage. Fear demands understanding and control. Faith delivers freedom to run in the path of obedience, even and especially when I don't understand everything that is seemingly out of control in or around me (see Psalm 119:32). Only faith speaks louder than data to this scientist. For example, fear of the future will cause me to orient my daily choices around that which I can control in resource availability–providing for me and my own here and now, no matter the cost to others living now or in the future. In contrast, faith opens my eyes to see that God has purpose and plan for those now and those to come in their resource needs. Thus, I can joyfully make good choices for resource conservation because I know that He can, does, and will provide what is needed (see Psalm 104:28 and 145:16).

Every day I can make good choices for resource conservation: adjusting my thermostat, carpooling or combining errands, cold wash and air dry laundry, running full dishwasher and laundry loads, eating local produce or vegetarian, buying stock in green technology research and development companies, and so many others. These choices may not make significant impacts on resource availability, but the doing of them can draw me closer to my God in obedience. The repeated small surrenders of my will for His glory and the good of His people can reorient my days into deeper worship of Him through a growing awareness of the dust to dust of His creation. And there in worship is where this dusty woman needs to stay each and every day.

At the risk of sounding too earthy or spiritualistic, even the physical act of walking the fields or woods at my family farm is like reaching back to Adam and forward to those yet to come. The names and memories of those I knew and loved are more vivid there than even in picture frames or photo albums. The legacy of all of Adam's children of dust swirls up around my heart and mind like the fog of early morning in creek bottomland and reminds me that my Good God remembers that I am dust too (see Psalm 103:14).

And that reminder fills the desolate spaces of the wasteland mentality of "me against the world" and pushes back against the lie of "I will never be enough" because that legacy is evidence of our relentless and persistently Good God Who loves without change or end and gives mercies made new every morning (see John 3:16, 1 John 3:1, and Lamentations 3:22-23).

To sum up, a good walk in those woods or fields resets me to return to my Creator in these ways:

> 1. A joining in work, worship, and witness with my neighbors of what God spoke into being at creation and has sustained every day since then (see Genesis 1 and Deuteronomy 11:11-12).
>
> 2. A symphony of praise, petition, and humble position with all the living and non-living neighbors in creation groaning in expectation of the revealing of the last days (see Romans 8:19-22).
>
> 3. A holy act of recognition that God has purpose in and for all of the created in the dust of today (see Ephesians 2:10).
>
> 4. A confession of my forgetting of the need for a right perspective of my place here between pre-fall Eden and coming new heaven and earth and a renewing of hope that today is one piece of eternity then and to come (see Genesis 1 and Revelation 21).

And then and there the soil of my soul is finally ready to call back to my God with a deeper cry for *shalom* for all of us living here from dust to dust (see Isaiah 26:3). *Shalom* is far more than just peace; it is wholeness in all ways in a life.

Shalom isn't just the absence of war; it's the fullness of a peace that reaches down from God to and through me and out to my neighbors. My neighbors include people to plants, microbes to marsupials, and the soil to the stars. God created all of us to live together in *shalom* with Him in the perfection of Eden and the dust of today. *Shalom* might be an unachievable ideal globally, but personal obedience isn't. I am responsible for cultivating *shalom* through caretaking creation in whatever ways God puts in front of me. Big or small, caretaking choices require deliberate and diligent surrender of my desires, just like any and all other choices to take up my cross and follow my Christ (see Matthew 16:24). Or as God Himself said, love your neighbor as yourself and do to others as you would have them do to you (see Leviticus 19:18 ESV and Luke 6:31).

The best way for me to know how to love my neighbor(s) is to better know my God Who made all of us and calls us to live with Him in *shalom*. Only He can give the courage, hope, wisdom, discernment, and resolve to keep finding

the strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow necessary for joyously living from dust to dust (see hymn lyrics for "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" and Ephesians 1:18-20).

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What Are We Becoming?

David A. Ward

I am officially old. My master's degree required only reading, thinking, hand-written scribbling, and typing on a high-tech typewriter (it plugged into the wall!). Then (in the mid-1980s), I used computing tools and coding in my Ph.D. research. But computers were not in homes, and they were regarded as expensive tools solely for academics, large businesses, engineering firms, etc. I typed my dissertation on a typewriter. I submitted my first professional papers after typing them on a typewriter (it had a daisy wheel!) and sent them to the publisher in a manila envelope. This was superb technology. Regarding technology, allow me to make two observations, ask a question, and then make a confession. I know these observations are not new and neither is the question, but they are worth pondering.

Observation: Computer-based Technology Is, in Many Ways, a Blessing.

I can text my wife and kids directly at any time of day. My doctor can image my lungs and immediately see the results on his laptop; he can even give me a tour of the cross-sectional area of my respiratory system. My dental x-ray pops up on a screen immediately. My car warns me if a tire is low on pressure. Amazing! Emailing an entire class of students is possible in just a few clicks. A committee meeting can be via Zoom or even email. Classes can be taught online during a pandemic. My job is made easier and more efficient because of technology. This evening during dinner, I can hop onto YouTube and watch a physics lecture from MIT. Amazing! Fabulous! Inspiring! *The computer revolution is–without a doubt–a great blessing*. Students today don't even notice this blessing; they take it for granted–immersed in computer-driven technology since birth.

Observation: Computer-based Technology Is, in Some Ways, a Curse.

I could rant about the useless emails that pour into my inbox or the spam calls on my phone. But let's focus on other issues. Upon entering the classroom, the ten students already present are on their phones. There's little conversation.

Some are texting, some are playing games, and some are checking the status of their Amazon order. Do they *need* to know that Eratosthenes estimated Earth's size nearly 250 years BC? Do they even care? I suggest that for most students the answer is no–and if they ever even have interest in such things, it can be had at a few clicks. Who needs to know such things when you can click for it? (The search for Eratosthenes took all of 0.67 seconds on Google just now.) The web is an extension of myself–it is part of my brain.

A student, majoring in a discipline that I will not name, avoids buying textbooks. He told me that everything he needs to know is online, his GPA is fine, and he's on his way to graduation in a little over a year. I'm glad to avoid textbooks as much as possible–they are expensive and/or either kill more trees or burn more coal. Textbooks in any form should be minimal–no more than one per class (in my opinion).

A colleague whom I appreciate very much was quite kind to send me instructions for Microsoft OneDrive and another "app" to do lofty magic for me. He told me to click this, then that, then the other thing. Then copy this and paste that. Then everything will work for me and the angels will sing. Easy, no? It didn't work. Ugh. I just spent an hour trying to see why my clicking was so inferior. I had to give up and email another colleague asking about this.

But I am old. I also admit that I haven't evolved to the High App Realm. I haven't climbed the mountain to reach the HAL-9000 on the uppermost peak! Why did I spend over an hour (which flew by) clicking my way about in various apps and make zero progress? Is this a blessing? Was the task I was attempting even worth it? (Not really, though sweet, well-meaning colleagues that I love have told me that it is). So, the curse side…our computer-based world is distancing us from one another; it is fueling the attitude that knowledge is obtainable quickly and cheaply. Also, our app-driven culture is filling our days with click after click as the hours drain away…is this good?

Question: Should We, as Educators, Minimize the Computer Tools Used in the Classroom?

We must use computer-based tools. These tools make us more efficient, save money, and allow us to deliver simulations and videos that our students need. We have a terrific support staff to help us with these tools, and they have helped this old fellow many times. But how much is too much on Canvas? Are the whiteboard and chalkboard useless and destined for the museum? Should colleges become devoid of students and be solely online? To the last question I say "No!" and I am sure that you agree. Face-to-face learning shows greater gains than online learning–and not just in learning material but in socialization. The pandemic proved (in my opinion) that solely online learning is

largely a disaster. Canvas is, fundamentally, a useful repository wherein we can give some of our time and resources away. We can post notes or a video for a student who was ill and missed class. We can post a PDF of information for students to access. These are good things. But what are we losing? How do we minimize the curses and maximize the blessings?

Confession: One of My Favorite Films Is *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

What a film! I attended this film in a one-screen theater when I was (almost) 13. My mom dropped me off at the theater with a few coins to go see the movie. It blew me away. I wasn't raised in church and knew essentially zero about Genesis or Jesus. I had no questions about the ape-like creatures; I knew they were early versions of me. In those days I was immersed in the writings of people like Asimov, Clarke, and Silverberg, and *2001* simply mesmerized me. I remember sitting in that theater to this day. Remember those ape-like creatures gazing at the dark monolith? Remember the mysterious, perhaps even angelic, singing? The hairy beasts approached the monolith tentatively at first. After a few moments, someone was bold enough to touch it and even gently *stroke* it. Does that film come to mind as you hold up the dark face of your iPhone and begin to stroke your fingers across it?

A Cusser

Lee Benson

I used to cuss. By high school, I was good at it. By the time I came out of the Navy, I could cuss like a sailor. I haven't cussed since 1986 when I was lying on a bed in a hospital hallway, looking up at the fluorescent light, and waiting to be rolled into my fourteenth surgery to save my life. But I am reminiscing instead of writing, so I'll begin to write. I remember the first time I said a cuss word. This may seem odd to be so memorable. I assure you it was a great crossing-over event for me, much like my first kiss, my first drag on a cigarette, or the first time I physically hurt another human.

You see, I was raised in the South by two great parents. One was a pastor and the other a pastor's wife. They were the real thing–the real "Jesus People." Both were only children from the most dysfunctional of homes; both struggled at a young age when their parents divorced (and divorce was unpardonable). Both had alcoholic fathers. One of them was a murderer. The other was a bootlegger. Both of my parents were raised in single-parent families; the single ranged from moms, aunts, grandparents, or whoever else pitied them enough to take them in. But most importantly, both found the love and acceptance of Jesus.

Christ had a profound effect on them; both committed to doing good wherever they were. This goodness of Christ was how they lived and was the foundation of our home life. I was the middle child, the loner, the peacemaker. I have only known my parents' goodness. They always made me feel like I was somebody, somebody of whom they were proud to be parents, somebody who was meaningful.

Cussing was the next step into what would eventually undo all my parents had done for me. I was twelve and playing little league football. Many of my friends already cussed, but I had never said the first one. Cussing was on the verge of "damnation," which is not a cuss word but a religious one. Although I had never heard Dad preach on it, I had been in church long enough to hear

quite a few others use it and many times in reference to the souls of those who cussed. I had worked it out in my 12-year-old self-righteousness that using the first part of the word wouldn't be too bad. After all, it was just leaving off the "nation." Many of my teammates had already made their decision and their taunts and bragging were always filled with cussing emphasis. No one can cuss more sincerely than a sixth grader.

The day had come. The practice was on. I was just waiting to have the right opportunity. Cussing requires opportunity. You or someone else must do something great or stupid. I was a wide receiver, and the opportunity came in the second quarter on a wideout, sideline pass. I didn't know it was going to be *the* opportunity. I thought I was going to get my hands on the ball, but, as such, things happen, and it just slipped up on me.

Our quarterback, who was a spoiled-rotten doctor's kid, threw the pass far behind me, causing me to miss the catch. That's when it hit me. It set me back. This was it, a bad pass, and something stupid enough to cuss over. I was scared as I turned to run back to the huddle. What would happen to me if I did it? I had often heard the stories in the Bible of people sinning and God just taking them out; Peter's friends, Ana-something and his wife Sasapra-something, came to mind. Would Dad ever find out? Would I look different when I got home and Mom would know and ask in the kind way she did when she knew I had done something wrong, "Did you say a cuss word today, Lee?" Oh, she might really know. It might really show. CUSSER written on my forehead like those marks people would get when they were going to hell. But I was a man now and men cuss–at least the ones that Dad always visited. My dad never cussed though, and he never allowed anyone to do it around Mom.

There was this one time, however, when Cluck at the gas station said a cuss word. His nickname was Cluck for the sound he made as he stuttered. Dad had pulled into the station to get gas. Back then they always checked your oil to boot. After Cluck had checked the oil, he slammed the hood on his thumb and let out a loud, single, cuss word. Dad got out of the car and quietly said something to him, and he immediately came around to Mom's side of the car. He pulled off his greasy hat and began to click his tongue, trying to get his words out. "Cluck, cluck, Mrssss. Benson Mammammam, cluck, cluck, I'ms sorry, I'ms so cluck, cluck sorry. Please fergive meme. I meant cluck, cluck no dispect mam. Fergive me." He stood there looking sorrowful and holding his hat in those greasy hands. Mom got out of the car and in her nice clean dress hugged Cluck. "Oh, Mr. Jesse. I love you and so does Jesus," Mom said as she

quit hugging him. She still held his hands while looking into his blurry eyes. "Yes mammamam," he said.

So, I decided! In that short run to the huddle, I cast my lot with cussing. I could do it even if Mom did find out because she would just hug me and tell me that she and Jesus loved me. It was do or die as I came back to the huddle. I looked at the quarterback and said, "Hayes, you can't throw worth a damn!" Something inside of me broke, like a good thing, like breaking the model airplane you had spent so much time building. It broke. It hurt. I felt dirty. I knew sin like I had never known it before. I had crossed a line I could never cross back. Even if Jesus and Mom still loved me, I was now *A Cusser*.

I remained a cusser for years; the words I'd spoken would require an accounting. My redemption 15 years later, on November 10th, 1986, came in the same way. I got on my knees alone in our apartment and surrendered to Christ. I was battle scarred, most self-inflicted, humbled, and weary. As I got up off my knees, I heard no angels singing, no stirring movement in my soul, no ecstasy of salvation. I had only one thought: "I guess I ought to read the Bible." That was it. I was saved and the first command was to read The Word. I began life as a Word reader. The great crossing over had begun in reverse. I had come to my senses, and I was going home–a non-cusser. My redemption included the daily reading of The Word, and (as now seems a cleansing) a redemption of all those lesser words that had proceeded out of my mouth. A washing of each word left only the miracle that words exist, each now lying buried under better words at the foot of His throne–words of a redeemed cusser.

Music as Trinitarian *Perichoresis*:

The Elemental Dance in the Canarios Form and Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Free Bird"

Joshua Veltman

On March 7, 1944, at a little past 10:30 in the evening, C. S. Lewis offered a memorable description of the Trinity as part of his series of war-time broadcast talks, which are chronicled by Justin Taylor in *The Gospel Coalition* article "75 Years Ago: C. S. Lewis Speaks to Britain about Christianity on the BBC–A Chronology" (Taylor). These talks were eventually collected together and published in the beloved volume *Mere Christianity*. Lewis said, "[I]n Christianity God is not…a static thing…but a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama. Almost, if you will not think me irreverent, a kind of dance" (175). He returned to the same imagery a few moments later, saying:

> The whole dance, or drama, or pattern of this three-Personal life is to be played out in each one of us: or (putting it the other way round) each one of us has got to enter that pattern, take his place in that dance…If you want joy, power, peace, eternal life, you must get close to, or even into, the thing that has them. They are not a sort of prize which God could, if He chose, just hand out to anyone. They are a great fountain of energy and beauty spurting up at the very centre of reality. (176)

Without using the word itself, Lewis was articulating the concept of *perichoresis*. This is a Greek term that literally means "to dance or flow around." In his book *Engaging God's World,* Cornelius Plantinga describes *perichoresis* as follows:

> The Father…Son…and Holy Spirit glorify each other… . At the center of the universe, self-giving love is the dynamic currency of the Trinitarian life of God. The persons within God exalt, commune with, and defer to one another… . When early Greek Christians spoke of *perichoresis* in God they meant that each divine person harbors the others at the center of his being. In constant movement of overture and acceptance each person envelops and encircles the others. (20-21)

The term *perichoresis* can be traced back many centuries. According to Ioanna Sahinidou in "Christological Perichoresis," the earliest Christians to use the term adapted it from Stoic philosophers (553-554). In "The Term *Perichoresis* from Cappadocian Fathers to Maximus Confessor," Eirini Artemi relates that some patristic writers, such as Gregory of Nazianzus and Pseudo-Cyril, used the word explicitly in their writings, while others, such as Basilius of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa, described the concept without actually using the term (22-23). For present purposes, the most helpful of these early descriptions comes from Hilary of Poitiers, a fourth-century church father. Book III of Hilary's treatise *De Trinitate* (On the Trinity) contains an explication of Christ's words in John 14:11, where Christ said that "I am in the Father and the Father is in me" (*The Bible: New International Version*). Concerning the Persons of the Trinity, Hilary wrote that "these Beings can reciprocally contain One Another, so that One should permanently envelop and also be permanently enveloped by the Other, whom yet He envelops" (St. Hilary of Poitiers, 243). While the term *perichoresis* contains a number of nuances in terms of its meaning and usage over time (see Artemi and Sahinidou), for present purposes it shall be summarized as follows: *perichoresis* is the dance-like dynamism arising from the paradox that the Persons of the Trinity are the same, being all God, yet at the same time different, having separate identities. It is this simultaneous similarity and difference that lies at the heart of the new mode of musical analysis being proposed here.

What is the basis for thinking that human-created music might manifest the same perichoretic qualities that characterize the Trinity? Romans 1:20a reads, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities–his eternal power and divine nature–have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made" (*The Bible: New International Version*). In other words, nature bears the imprint of the Creator. The laws of nature apply everywhere at all times, as far as scientists can tell, yet these universal laws give rise to a practically infinite variety of phenomena. The universe manifests both

necessity and contingency: matter necessarily follows laws, but matter also exhibits a certain randomness. At the cosmic scale, any large region of space will have the same texture–the same average amount and distribution of matter–as any other similarly-sized region of space. At the same time, no two regions of space will be identical in the precise details of what it contains and where. At the other extreme of scale, the microscopic scale, tiny particles suspended in a liquid or gas will move around in a random, unpredictable walk called Brownian motion, yet the aggregate behavior of a large number of such particles is completely predictable. Finally, at the human scale, all people share the same fundamental human nature, yet no two people are precisely alike.

The fundamental nature of humans is, of course, that humans bear the image of God, albeit corrupted by the Fall. To be made in God's image is to share in God's communicable attributes to a limited extent. God is a Creator, and humans "image" this in their irrepressible instinct to imagine and make and shape. Human creations are sub-creations within the Divine order; as such, they are conditioned by the nature of the cosmos itself. Therefore one might expect humanity's created things, such as music, to manifest some of the same qualities as God's created things, which in turn reflect the nature of God himself.

The perichoretic quality of the Trinity that is echoed both in nature and in man-made music can be summarized as the dynamic and generative tension between overall sameness and individual difference. In all three phenomena–the Trinity, nature, and music–unity somehow arises out of variety.

In light of all this, it is not surprising that one of the fundamental operations of human cognition is the judgment of similarity and difference among incoming perceptions. People's discernment of beauty seems to be rooted in part in their ability both to identify certain things as being the same and to tell things apart. Augustine offered some helpful thoughts along these lines. He never articulated a systematic theory of beauty, but he did scatter some musings on beauty throughout various writings. In his treatise *On True Religion,* Augustine asserted that "everything is beautiful that is in due order" (qtd. in Spicher). That of course begs the question of what he meant by due order. Elsewhere, in *The City of God,* Augustine said, "Order is the distribution which allots things equal and unequal, each to its own place" (qtd. in Spicher). This seemingly dry account points toward the perichoretic interplay of elements that lies at the heart of musical beauty.

Music that people want to listen to exhibits a dynamic tension between two competing goods, namely repetition, or equalities of musical elements across time, and novelty, or inequalities of musical elements across time. One can understand the desirability of repetition in music with the help of the well-established principle of human psychology called the Mere Exposure Effect (Falkenbach et al). Simply put, repeated exposure to a stimulus leads to liking it more. People prefer things that are already familiar. They attach a positive affect to familiar things because repeated exposure increases perceptual fluency–that is, they process the stimulus more easily the next time it comes around, and they like it better when things are easy rather than hard. The Mere Exposure Effect holds true for both simple and complex stimuli, in both the visual and aural domains.

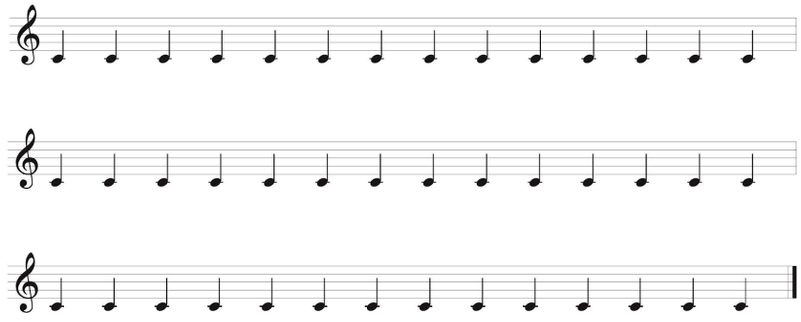
There is a limit to the likability of repeated exposures, however. With an abundance of repetition, each subsequent exposure becomes less affective and stimulating than the last, that is, it becomes less emotionally salient and less physiologically arousing (Mutschler et al. 2534). This process is called habituation.

Good music therefore must strike a balance between repetition and novelty. Composers intuitively deploy repetition in order to take advantage of the Mere Exposure Effect, but they also avoid habituation by introducing judicious doses of novelty. Repetition in music is good, but too much repetition leads to boredom and tuning out. Another way to say this is that good music dances along the boundary between explored and unexplored territory. The path of listening takes one through familiar and therefore safe territory, but in order to maintain engagement, the path also periodically ventures into territory that is new and interesting.

This dance along the boundary occurs simultaneously at multiple levels of structure and across multiple elements of music such as rhythm, melody, and harmony. The need to walk the line between unity and variety might seem like a burdensome constraint on the creativity of music, but the multiple elements of music and the multiple levels of structure at which they operate lead to a combinatorial explosion of possibilities that, even within these constraints, are practically infinite.

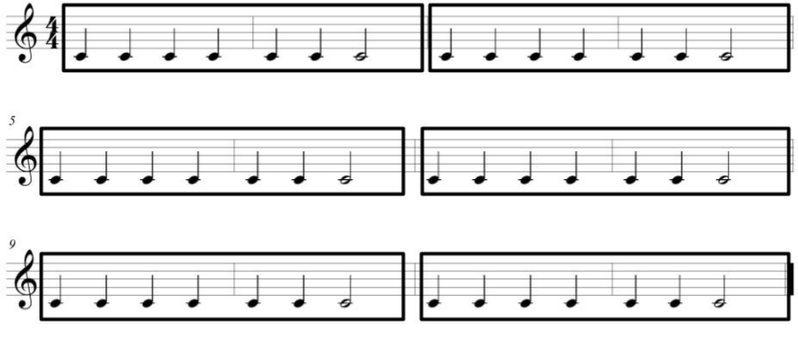
Tracking the unity and variety among the elements at various structural levels in a given piece of music amounts to what may be called a perichoretic mode of analysis. The best way to understand this mode of analysis will be to see it in action. Consider the music shown in example 1. It features a long string of

identical notes. It has all unity and no variety, and is therefore very predictable and very boring.



Example 1: A long string of identical notes.

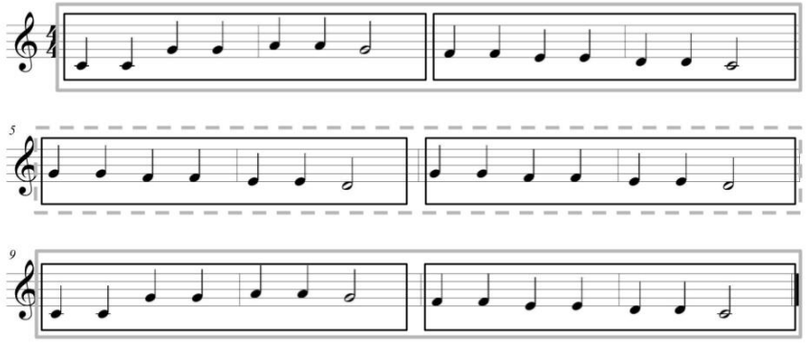
However, what happens when one bit of variety is introduced into the durations? In example 2, every seventh note has been made twice as long as the others. Now, instead of just a string of notes, there are also six repeated groups (indicated by the black outlines). At a higher structural level, a new unity emerges out of variety in the level below. In other words, variety at one level creates unity at the next higher level.



Example 2: The same string of notes, with every seventh note doubled in duration, creating six identical groupings.

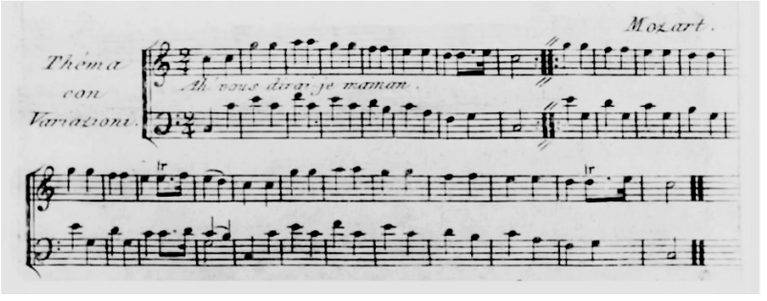
Even so, the music is still rather unappealing. Introducing another element of variety, this time in the pitch domain, transforms the string of notes into a familiar tune, namely “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” (see example 3). The six repeated rhythmic segments, outlined in black, still remain, but another

structure emerges as well at an even higher level of organization: the top line is repeated in the bottom line, indicated by the gray outlines, while the middle line, enclosed by the dotted gray outline, is something different. This creates an A B A structure–home, away, home–a very popular structure in music of all sorts. A structure manifesting its own configuration of unity and variety has arisen out of the unity and variety present at a lower structural level. This reciprocal containment of similarity and difference seems to echo the same-yet-different Persons of the Trinity.



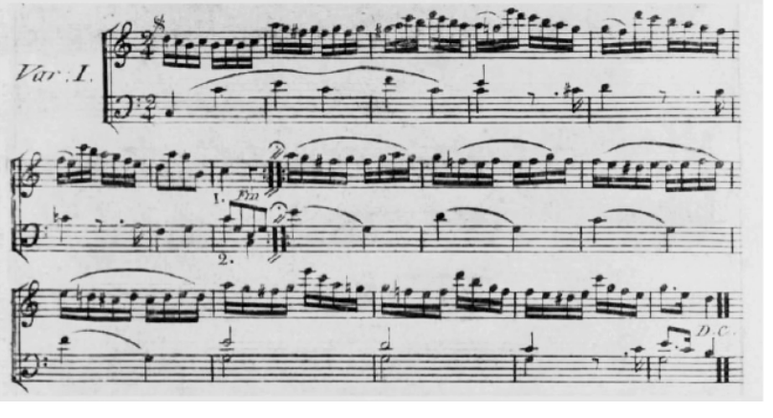
Example 3: When variety is introduced in the pitch domain, the familiar tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" emerges, having an A B A structure at the highest level of organization so far.

As memorable and pleasing as this tune is (as evidenced by its popularity), a masterful composer can do yet more with it through the skillful deployment of additional repetition and novelty. In a compositional tour de force, a 22-year-old Mozart took this simple tune and composed an elaborate set of 12 variations upon it for piano, probably when he was visiting Paris in 1778 (for a recommended recording, see Haebler). In France, this folk song has a different text called “Ah, vous dirai-je Maman.” At the beginning, Mozart presents a straightforward rendition of the main tune, or theme (see example 4). He adds repeats to both main sections and a *da capo* or “back to the top” to the second section, creating a classic rounded binary form. The resulting form diagram is A A B A B A. This tried-and-true musical form is a veritable clinic in balancing repetition and novelty: first state an idea, immediately repeat it, then move on to something different, go back to the familiar first idea, then repeat the second idea, which is now more familiar than it was, and finally round it out with the first idea again.



Example 4: The theme from Mozart’s 12 Variations in C Major on “Ah, vous dirai-je Maman.” Source: “Ah! vous dirai-je Maman: Varié pour L’Etude du Piano-Forte Par le Célèbre Mozart.” Porro, n.d.

Young Mozart is just getting started, however. What follows the theme is a series of twelve variations upon it. Example 5 shows the first of them. Every variation maintains the same pattern of sectional repetitions established in the theme section, but the composer plays with new melodic configurations and rhythms and even alternative harmonies in some places. From the rather humble material of the folk song, Mozart builds up a lengthy yet engaging composition. There is always something new and interesting to listen to, but the original theme is never far away, always lurking in the background. As the composition progresses, it feels somehow inexorable yet fresh.



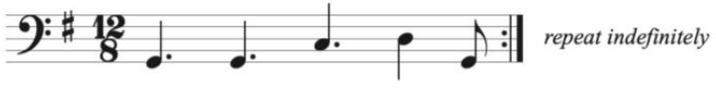
Example 5: Variation 1 from Mozart’s 12 Variations in C Major on “Ah, vous dirai-je Maman.” Source: “Ah! vous dirai-je Maman: Varié pour L’Etude du Piano-Forte Par le Célèbre Mozart.” Porro, n.d.

The success and longevity of many cherished compositional techniques and forms can be attributed at least in part to their perichoretic quality. A convincing demonstration could be made of the unity-in-variety quality of isorhythm in fourteenth-century motets, imitation in Renaissance vocal pieces, Baroque fugue form, melodic sequencing in a Bach concerto, Classical sonata form, motivic and cyclic unity in Romantic symphonies, thematic transformation in symphonic poems, the *Leitmotif* in Wagnerian music dramas, and even the hypnotic patterning of twentieth-century Minimalism. All that lies beyond the scope of this essay, however. A representative case study will be offered instead, one that gestures toward the potential of perichoretic analysis. Specifically, the parallels between a certain late-Renaissance improvisational form–canarios–and an iconic 70's rock song–"Free Bird"–will be examined. The analysis will help to explain the strong appeal and popularity enjoyed by both, and will reveal that they have a great deal in common, despite their historical distance and stylistic divergence.

During the later Renaissance, a number of forms arose that featured improvisation over a basso ostinato, that is, a repeating bass line. Each of these bass lines came with their own distinctive pattern of repeated harmonies or chord changes, above which musicians would improvise a stream of varied figures. The forms had delicious names like ciaccona, passacaglia, passamezzo, romanesca, ruggiero, folia, and canarios.

The famous extended guitar solo section at the end of "Free Bird," written in 1973, bears a noteworthy similarity to the aforementioned improvisational forms (see Skynyrd for recording). The kinship with the canarios form seems the closest of all. The fact that both refer to birds is surely just a happy coincidence. Canarios music accompanies the canary dance, so named for the Canary Islands, a Spanish possession off the west coast of Africa. The form spread from the islands to mainland Spain and on to the rest of Europe.

Example 6 shows the repeating bass line and associated harmonies that are characteristic of the canarios form.

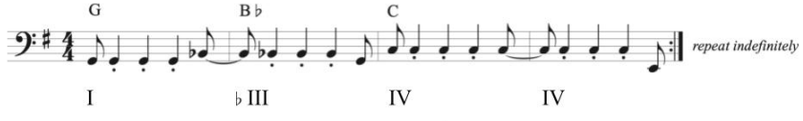


Example 6: The characteristic *basso ostinato* of the canarios form.

The pattern is short, consisting of a single measure repeated indefinitely, with two beats of 'I' harmony followed by a beat of 'IV' and a beat of 'V,' ending

with an eighth-note anticipation of 'I.' To hear this, play the cited recording (Hespèrion XXI and Savall) from 0:06 to 0:12. The bowed string instrument part that enters at 0:20 is an improvisation on the soprano viola da gamba by the Spanish early music specialist Jordi Savall. The listening experience is a highly engaging one, for reasons that become evident in light of *perichoresis,* the exposure effect, and habituation. The music is strongly unified on account of the insistent basso ostinato and repetitive harmonies, but at the same time the music offers up constant novelty on account of the capricious solo improvisation.

The legendary guitar solo section of "Free Bird" (4:43 onward in the cited recording) is also constructed on a basso ostinato with an associated set of chord changes. Example 7 shows the author's transcription of the "Free Bird" basso ostinato.



Example 7: Transcription of the *basso ostinato* in the guitar solo section of "Free Bird." The notation here is a close approximation; it is subject to a certain degree of variation in actual performance.

This bass line is broadly similar to the canarios bass line in that it consists of three main pitches, though each is extended over the course of one or two full measures rather than a single beat. Both feature a leap up from the tonic–G to C in canarios and G to B♭ in "Free Bird"–followed by a single step up to the last pitch (discounting the eighth-note anticipations)–C to D and B♭ to C, respectively. The "Free Bird" chord progression is I ♭III IV IV. The extended chord in canarios happens at the beginning on the 'I' chord, whereas the extended chord in "Free Bird" happens at the end on the 'IV' chord. This creates the effect of delaying the return to "home base" by a full measure, and the listener experiences a strong pull in the last measure of every set of 4 measures. In a performance of "Free Bird" by the Lynyrd Skynyrd band, the basso ostinato is played on the bass guitar, while the variable parts are taken by the unusual ensemble of three electric guitars, which is a distinctive feature of this particular band. The three guitars sometimes play in unison and sometimes play independent but complementary phrases. These parts sound improvisatory, just like Jordi Savall's viola da gamba part, but they

are actually quite consistent from one concert to the next; it is best to think of them as improvisations that have more or less congealed into a final form.

"Free Bird" provides such a compelling listening experience because it too presents a strongly unifying element in the basso ostinato while at the same time presenting a constantly variable element in the electric guitar trio. This would seem to be an important part of the explanation for the song's passionate fans and legendary status in the world of popular music. To be clear, the claim is not that Lynyrd Skynyrd consciously imitated a centuries-old basso ostinato form. Rather, it seems that the band members intuitively converged upon a similar solution to their creative counterparts in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. It is perhaps not surprising that the natural environment for musical evolution, namely, the reactions and preferences of human listeners, should have a shaping effect on musical materials such that similar forms arose more than once in very different times and places.

Humans both make and respond favorably to music with perichoretic qualities, that is, to music manifesting unity in variety, because they are made in the image of a Deity who is both three Persons and yet one God.

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Biographies

Haelim Allen

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Haelim Choi Allen immigrated to the United States with her parents and two younger sisters. She grew up in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. and is a three-time alumna of the University of Maryland at College Park, where she received her M.F.A. in painting and sculpture. She is married to her husband Henry, and they have a son, Matthew. Her body of work represents very broad answers to complex questions of identity.

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Lee Benson is the chair of the Department of Art and University Professor of Art; he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a B.S. in Art Education before earning his Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture from the University of Tennessee. He says the art he creates must glorify God without having to be explained, and it should be made simple enough to understand but complex enough to be labeled art. Benson, who has been with Union for 25 years, is a sculptor and co-heads Benson Sculpture LLC with his wife. Together, they produce large-scale public works. He writes a daily blog called *Art and Faith* in which he discusses the intersection between visual arts and the Bible.

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Patricia L. Hamilton earned her Ph.D. from the University of Georgia. Her teaching specialties include Restoration and 18th-century British literature, contemporary American ethnic writers, advanced composition, and creative writing. She has twice won Union's Newell Innovative Teaching Award. In both 2015 and 2017, she won the Rash Award in Poetry from *Broad River Review* and has received three Pushcart nominations for poetry. Her first collection, *The Distance to Nightfall*, was published in 2014 by Main Street Rag Publishing.

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Ted Kluck is the author of over twenty books on topics ranging from professional indoor football to the evangelical church. He is a syndicated columnist for *The Jackson Sun* (Tennessee) and *USA Today*, and his journalism has appeared in *ESPN The Magazine* and *Christianity Today*. Kluck has ghostwritten for a Pro Football Hall of Famer, a filmmaker, and a missionary. He is screenwriter and co-producer on the forthcoming feature film *Silverdome* and co-hosts *The Happy Rant Podcast* (www.happyrantpodcast.com). He coaches football at Lane College (in Tennessee) and lives in Humboldt with his wife, Kristin, and sons, Tristan and Maxim.

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Julie A. Powell is Professor of Sport Management and Assistant Athletic Director for Student-Athlete Advancement. A double alumna from Union, Powell received both her undergraduate degree and Master of Education from Union. She went on to get her Ed.D. from Northcentral University. Powell has published multiple articles in her field of study, including the most recent "Barn Raising, Not Battle in the Christian College Classroom," published in September of 2022.

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Joshua Veltman serves as Professor of Music History and Literature at Union University. He earned a B.A. in Music History at Calvin College and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Musicology at Ohio State University. His primary professional calling is to love the Lord through loving music well and to lead students in doing the same. Toward that end, he applies a diverse toolkit from the fields of history, theory, theology, psychology, computer programming, and media technology. Dr. Veltman has written and presented on a variety of topics including Renaissance music, Navajo music, music and fractals, theological aesthetics, and popular music.

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David A. Ward attended the University of South Florida in Tampa, where he received his B.S. and M.A. in physics. He earned a Ph.D. in Physics at North Carolina State University. He and his wife Ginny have two children: David, 35, and Katherine, 25. He attends Poplar Heights Baptist Church and teaches an adult Sunday School class there. He has completed 25 years of teaching at Union University and is serving his 26th year. Physics/Physics Education is a great love of his, as physics reveals that humans don't really comprehend the fundamental nature of the universe they live in.