



## The Art of Biblical Christian Scholarly Research: Impacts of Christian Scholars in Shaping the World

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## ABSTRACT

Christian scholarly research is a vital aspect of academic inquiry, seeking to integrate faith and learning to enrich both. However, this endeavour is not without its challenges. Christian scholars must navigate the complexities of academic rigour, theological orthodoxy, and personal faith commitments. Thus, this paper proposes that Christian scholarly research is an art form that requires a unique blend of intellectual curiosity, spiritual discernment, and creative expression. It investigates the ways Christian scholarship has impacted the world. It assesses the contributions made by Christian scholars in the different areas of theology, philosophy, science, art, and social sciences, and how these have contributed to the body of knowledge and understanding. The paper also underscores the need to incorporate faith and learning in scholarly research. Integration of Faith and Learning, or theory and practice, is a pledge that Christian scholars must participate in, remembering that all truth is God's truth. The paper argues and concludes that Christian scholarly research is not merely a technical exercise but an art that requires creativity, discernment, and spiritual sensitivity.

**Keywords:** *art of christian scholarly research, faith and academia, art and science dimensions of biblical Christian scholarly research, theory and practice.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The scope of biblical Christian scholarly research is vast and complex because it traces its roots to the Early Church Fathers. Over the years, many different Christian scholars have contributed to almost every sphere of study, gradually changing the world. The objective of this paper is to examine various details about scholarly work in Christianity, its impact on the world, and how faith influences research work.

To define certain concepts that underpin the primary focus of this paper, some preliminary explanations need to be provided. Mastery of a field includes its study or activity, skill, and level of sophistication. It suggests that an exercise is being carried out with care as opposed to just knowing the techniques. This is different from “the act of,” which captures a behaviour or action that is performed either voluntarily or involuntarily. This means it follows that to appreciate the expression scholarly research as it is utilised in this paper is in itself complicated and needs more explanation. The author has opted for the expression “the art of” rather than “the act of” because it means much more, which is:

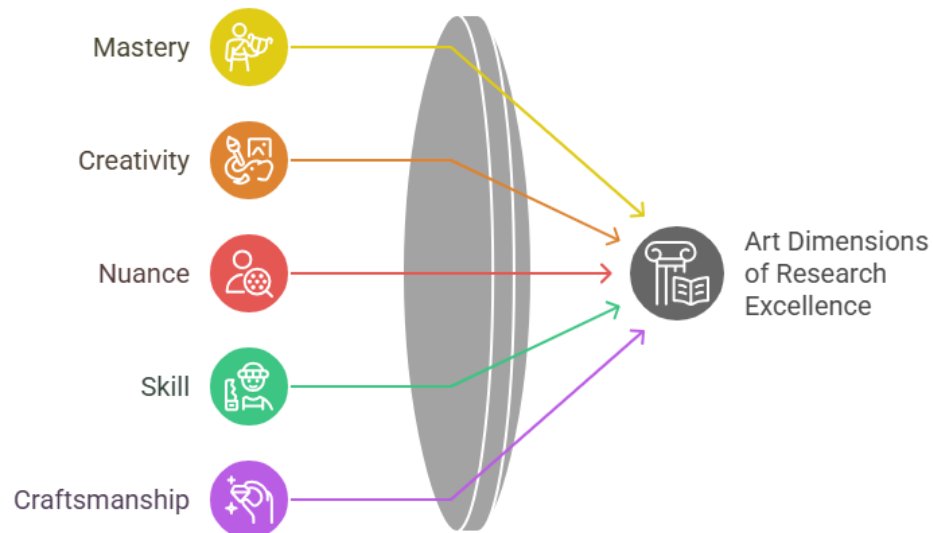
## **2.0 ART AND SCIENCE DIMENSIONS OF BIBLICAL CHRISTIAN SCHOLARLY RESEARCH**

Biblical Christian scholarly research has both art and science dimensions. Each of these dimensions is graphically illustrated here for graphic understanding. It is important to note that both dimensions are useless without the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit’s leading and illumination are essential for a successful research work, especially in biblical Christian scholarly research. Thus, absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit in biblical research is sine qua non.

### **2.1 Art Dimensions of Biblical Christian Scholarly Research**

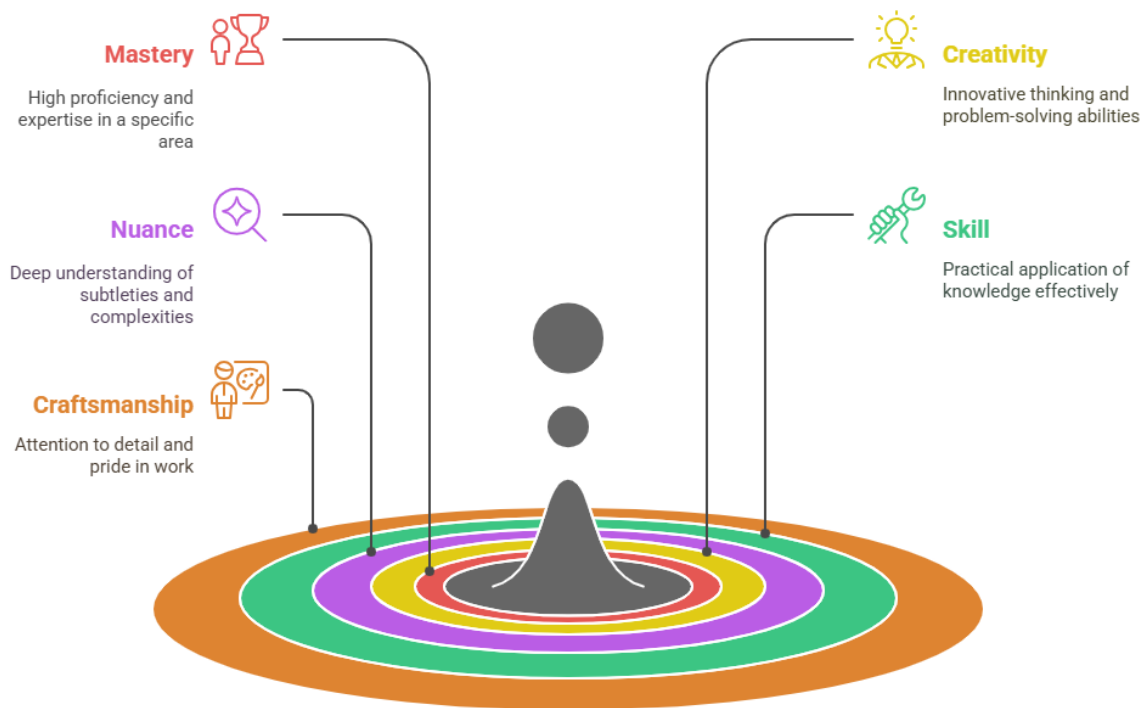
Biblical Christian scholarly research is an art form that requires a range of skills and competencies. It is an art that demand constant or continuous practice. The rule is that, to know how to write scholarly research papers or reports, one must keep on writing and reading. This will also help to upskill oneself as a researcher and be familiar with the current report writing formats in one’s field of study.

## Art Dimensions of Biblical Scholarly Research Excellence



1. *Mastery*: A high degree of proficiency and expertise in a particular sphere of influence.
2. *Creativity*: The ability to think outside the box, critically, innovate, and find new solutions to problems.
3. *Nuance*: A deep understanding of the subtleties and complexities involved in the field or activity.
4. *Skill*: The ability to execute and apply knowledge in a practical and effective way.
5. *Craftsmanship*: A sense of pride, dexterity, and attention to detail in one's work.

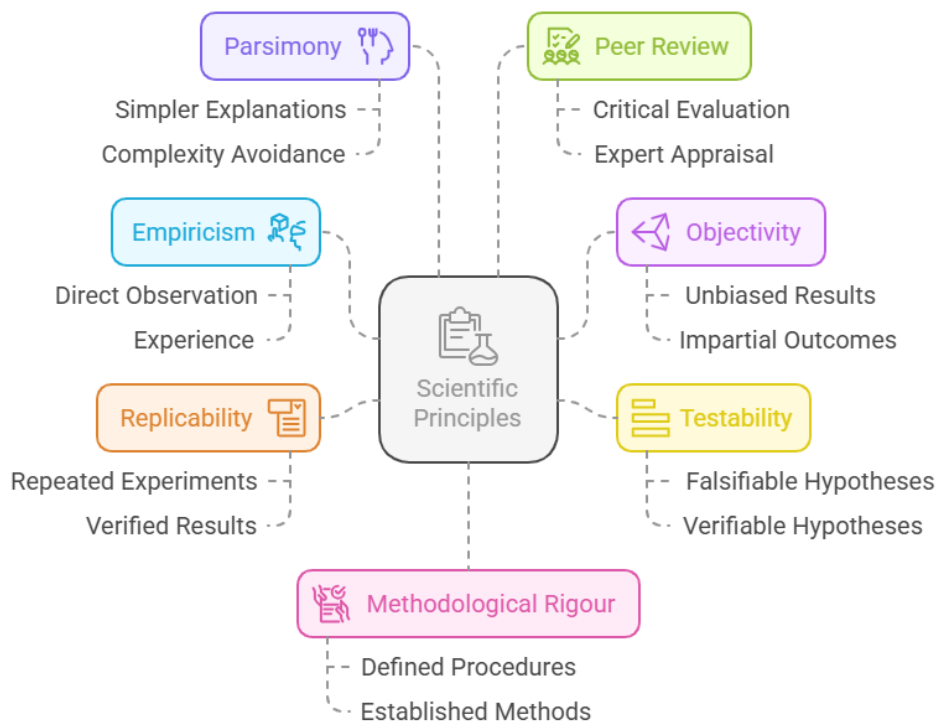
## Art Dimensions of Biblical Christian Scholarly Research



## 2.2 Science Dimensions of Biblical Christian Scholarly Research

Science of Biblical Scholarly Research refers to the organised, systematic, methodical, intensive, and meticulous study of the Bible employing different disciplines and tools to critically examine and interpret biblical languages, texts, histories, and cultures.

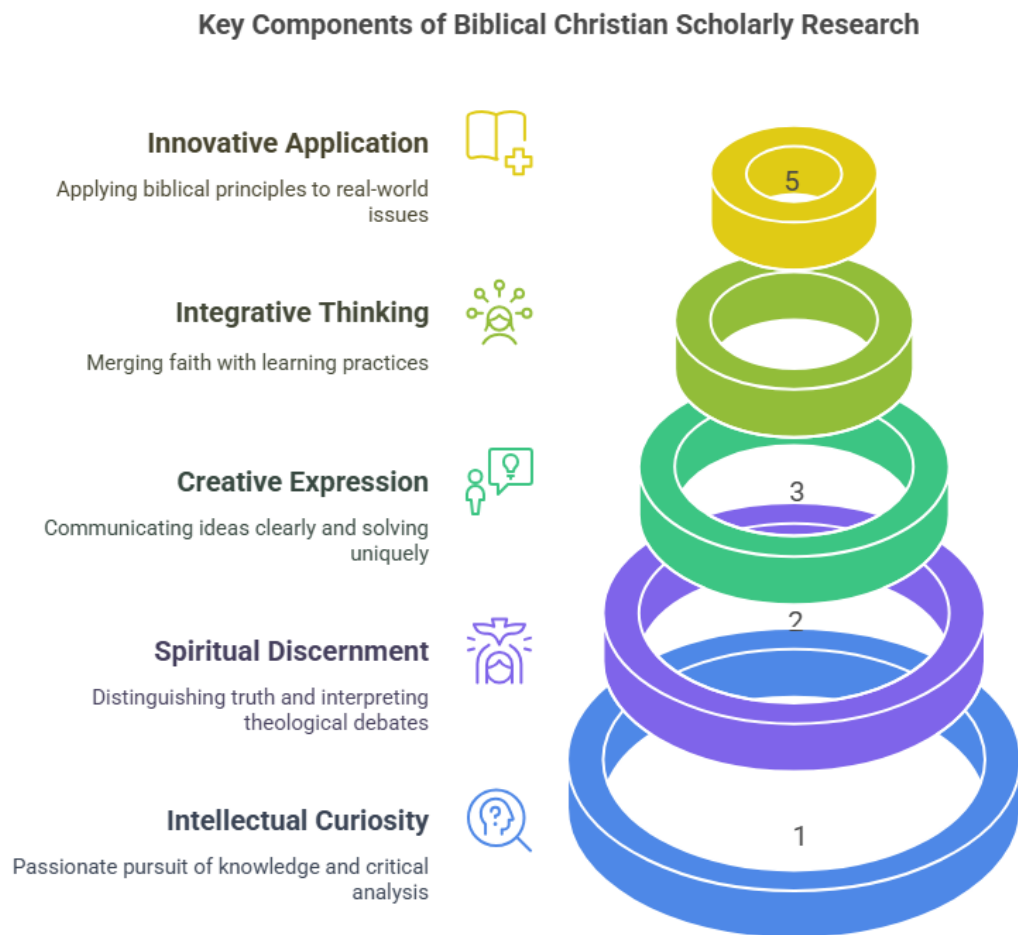
## Scientific Dimensions of Biblical Christian Scholarly Research

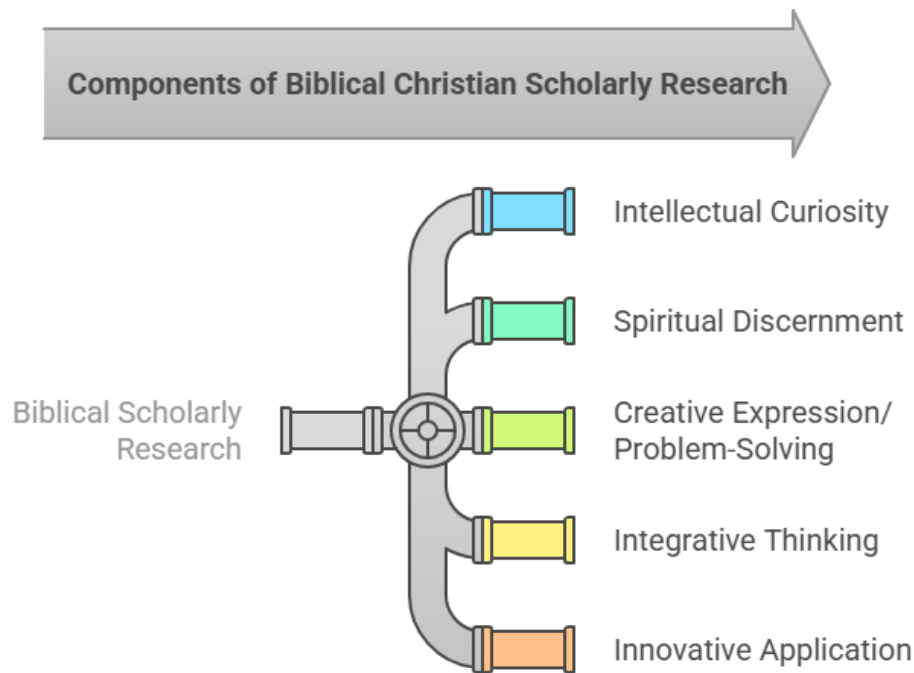


Scientific research involves the following principles:

1. Empiricism: Observing and experiencing things directly.
2. Objectivity: Efforts made towards neutral and unprejudiced outcomes. That is, opt for unbiased and impartial results.
3. Testability: Falsifiable and verifiable hypotheses are made.
4. Replicability: Results can be repeated and verified.
5. Parsimony: Preferring simpler explanations to more complicated ones.
6. Peer Review: Submitting research for scrutiny or critical evaluation or appraisal by relevant authorities or experts.
7. Methodological Rigour: Well established and defined procedures and methods are followed.

## 2.3 Five Major Components Biblical Christian Scholarly Research





The art of Christian scholarly research encapsulates five components:

- **Intellectual curiosity:** the ability to ask questions, explore ideas, and pursue knowledge with passion and rigour, and critical analysis.
- **Spiritual discernment:** the ability to discern the leading of the Holy Spirit, to distinguish between truth and error, to correctly interpret the word of truth, and to navigate the complexities of theological debate.
- **Creative expression/problem-solving:** the ability to communicate complex ideas in a clear, engaging, and compelling manner. Additionally, ability to solve complex research questions from unique angle.
- **Integrative thinking:** combining faith and learning, i.e., by integrating spiritual practices, such as prayer and meditation into research process.
- **Innovative application:** applying biblical principles to real-world problems

## 2.4 Goals of Biblical Christian Scholarly Research

The goal of a biblical Christian researcher is (based on 1 Timothy 2:1-4 cf. Eze 18:23; John 3:16-17; 17:3; 2Tim. 2:25; Titus 2:11; 2Pet. 3:9):



- i. To save the falling world.
- ii. To bring world to the knowledge of the truth.
- iii. To glorify God.
- iv. To contribute to the advancement of God's kingdom through research.
- v. To seek God's will and purpose in all research endeavours.
- vi. To conduct research with integrity, honesty, and excellence.
- vii. To search and research the Scripture as the primary source of our research.
- viii. To use the Bible to evaluate all disciplines.
- ix. To apply biblical principles and values to research methods and findings.
- x. To demonstrate humility, dependence on God, and a willingness to learn to lead unbelievers to God through research
- xi. To live a peaceful and quiet life, and fear God and dignify Him in your search for truth every way.
- xii. To promote unity, harmony, and love among biblical research fellow believers.

Another key word that need clarification is “Scholarly research”. This refers to the systematic and rigorous investigation of a topic or issue, conducted with the goal of advancing knowledge and understanding in a particular field or discipline of human endeavour. A scholarly research is an arduous task that demands our attention as researchers. Hence, the Scripture says “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2Tim 2:15). “Study” in Greek meaning is (μελέτη, meléti) research, or (spoudázō, be diligent). In Hebrew (לִמְדָה, limdá), it means research, investigate, learn, search, explore, and other similar words. In addition to "study" and "meditate", the Greek words σπουδάζω (spoudazō) and μελετάω (meletaō) also means "research" or "investigation".

In the context of biblical research, it means search investigate, explore or examine the Bible to uncover the truth in God’s words. This investigation or research includes biblical language, such as Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic; examination of historical and cultural contexts; analysis of literary structures and genres; comparing scripture with scripture, verses with verses; seeking to understand the author's intended meaning; and the intersections with the contemporary issues.

Thus, biblical “research” or “study” encompasses not only reading and reflection but also rigorous research or investigation.

Addition to our concept clarifications is “Christian scholarly research.” The term “Christian scholarly research” describes the thorough, rigorous, systematic, and scholarly investigation of numerous academic subjects that is guided by a Christian worldview and derived from a biblical frame of reference. By examining how Christianity intersects with fields like theology, philosophy, science, history, arts, social sciences, etc. This kind of scholarship aims to integrate and reconcile faith with education.

### **3.0 THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF SCHOLARLY RESEARCH**

#### **3.1 Types of Research**

Christian scholarly researchers can employ any of the following types of research:

1. Quantitative research: Involves collecting and analysing numerical data.
2. Qualitative research: Involves collecting and analysing non-numerical data.
3. Mixed-methods research: It is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.
4. Theoretical research: It is the process of creating a new theory, concept, or model that helps to explain or interpret phenomena.
5. Applied research: Involves applying the research results in real-world situations.
6. Scriptural or Biblical research: This is majorly based on the word of God, employing biblical texts, data, principles, concepts, and themes. Note that Scriptural research can be:
  - i. Quantitative
  - ii. Qualitative
  - iii. Both quantitative and qualitative (mixed-method) research.
  - iv. Theoretical
  - v. Applied
  - vi. Both theoretical and applied research (pracademic research)

It should be noted that Scriptural research is pneumagogical – Holy Spirit controlled.

### **3.2 Scholarly Research Process**

This involves scholarly research process including:

1. Problem formulation: Refers to the invention of a research question or a problem.
2. Literature review: A review of the past research work that has been done on the subject of interest.
3. Methodology: The development of the research design, methods, and other approaches to be used.
4. Data collection: It is the process of collecting data using different approaches.
5. Data analysis: It presents findings through the examination and interpretation of data.
6. Results: Signifies the presentation of findings.
7. Discussion: The meaning of the results and possible consequences.
8. Conclusion: An outline of significant findings and contributions.

### **3.3 Why Scholarly Research or Importance of Scholarly Research**

1. Expands understanding: Enhances the understanding of new theories, models, concepts and ideas.
2. Supports practice: Offers evidence-based solutions to nearly all problems or issues.
3. Enhances policy making: Supports personal, business and policy decisions with valid analysis and appropriate data.
4. Encourages creativity: Engages the public to critically analyse information and ideas.
5. Supports team work: Enables stakeholders, together with other researchers and practitioners, to come together.

It is important to note that any field of study encompasses areas concerning people, including but not limited to business, science, education, culture, religion, philosophy, ethics, theology, and even chaplaincy can utilise Christian Scholarly Research.

### 3.4 Goals of Christian Scholarly Biblical Research

1. Revelation of the Truth of God's Word: One of the goals lies in exploring deeper messages that could be fetched from scripture in pursuit of deciphering God's intentions, truths, and divine messages.
  - Shed light on profound implications lies within the word of God.
  - Identify what precisely the divine author's message, and the purpose was.
  - Comprehend the applications of teachings and lessons from the bible in real life.
  - Strengthen intimacy with God and faith
  - Use findings to foster spirituality within others to help them grow.
2. Accurate Interpretation: Understanding the facts.

## 4.0 LEARNING AND RESEARCH AS GOD'S COMMAND

Learning and research are commanded by God. Indeed, these two concepts are inseparable companions. They are a full-time spiritual discipline where something of value is produced by the learner and researcher. In this paper, “research learner” will be adopted to mean “learner” and “researcher” and “research learning” to mean “the art of diligent search to know or acquire the truth,” which investigate how people learn research art.

**Biblical Research learning** focuses on how biblical believers acquire knowledge and skills through research. It focusses on investigating how people learn and understand learning processes, theories, and methodologies, and using that knowledge to develop new insights and improve learning outcomes – all to the glory of God and for the benefit of humanity. In other words, this approach seeks to investigate how people learn, studying learning processes and theories from a biblical perspective. The Bible says "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of kings to search out a matter" (Proverbs 25:2). How does a biblical Christian believer search out or find out the revealed hidden truth of God or how this truth can be searched or found out in Scriptures is the concern of every biblical researcher. The goal is to develop research skills and expertise so as to become proficient in conducting research to the glory of God and for the benefit

of humanity, which involves collecting data, analysing data, solving problems, and establishing truth from a biblical frame of reference. Thus, the **Biblical research learner** seeks to acquire knowledge and skills through research from a biblical perspective. It should be noted that both the biblical research learner and the biblical research educator seek for understanding and application of research findings – the truth in God's word. The Bible says "The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall." (Proverbs 10:8).

The following, inter alia, are the biblical frameworks for **biblical research learning**:

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15); "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you..." (Matthew 7:7-8) – these verses encourage seeking knowledge and understanding; "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." (Proverbs 4:7) – this highlights the importance of acquiring wisdom and understanding; "And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John 7:15) – this highlights the importance of learning and education; "Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD." (Isaiah 2:5) – this verse encourages seeking knowledge and understanding; "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:6) – here the emphasis is placed the importance of seeking wisdom and knowledge from God; "Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or turn away from them." (Proverbs 4:5); "The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge" (Proverbs 18:15) – this highlights the importance of seeking and acquiring knowledge; "But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 4:29) – emphasises the importance of diligent seeking and searching for knowledge and understanding; "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Proverbs 1:7) – the importance of seeking knowledge and understanding; "For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it." (Ecclesiastes 7:12) – this places value on knowledge and wisdom; "And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given" (Mark 4:24) – this verse encourages careful consideration and seeking of knowledge; etc. The list is inexhaustible. The Bible is an invaluable and unparalleled theopneustic learning material.

There are other numerous verses that emphasise the importance of learning and seeking knowledge, wisdom, and understanding in the Bible. A few of them are listed here without any particular order of arrangement:

1. Proverbs 1:7 - "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge..."
2. Proverbs 18:15 - "The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge..."
3. Hosea 4:6 - "...my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge."
4. Matthew 22:37-40 - Jesus commands to "love the Lord your God with all your mind..."
5. 1 Peter 3:15 - "Always be prepared to give an answer..."
6. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 - "Teach them [God's commands] to your children..."
7. Psalm 119:66 - "Teach me knowledge and good judgment..."
8. Proverbs 9:10 - "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..."
9. 2 Peter 3:18 - "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord..."
10. Philippians 1:9-11 - "And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge..."
11. Colossians 1:9-10 - "We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will..."
12. 1 Corinthians 1:5 - "For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge—"
13. Psalm 19:7-8 - "The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul..."
14. Proverbs 2:1-6 - "If you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding..."
15. Matthew 7:24-27 - "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like..."
16. Luke 2:52 - "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man."
17. Romans 12:2 - "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind..."
18. 1 Corinthians 2:12-16 - "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God..."

19. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction..."
20. Psalm 119:130 - "The unfolding of your words gives light..."
21. Proverbs 10:14 - "Wise men store up knowledge..."
23. Proverbs 15:2 - "The tongue of the wise commends knowledge..."
24. Proverbs 22:17-21 - "Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise..."
25. Matthew 13:52 - "Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven..."
26. Luke 11:52 - "Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge..."
27. Acts 17:11 - "Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica..."
28. Romans 15:4 - "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction..."
29. 1 Corinthians 1:24 - "But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."
30. 1 Corinthians 12:8 - "For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom..."
31. Ephesians 1:17-18 - "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory..."
32. Philippians 1:9-11 - "And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more..."
33. Colossians 3:10 - "And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge..."
34. 1 Timothy 4:13 - "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture..."
35. 2 Timothy 2:15 - "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved..."
36. Hebrews 5:12-14 - "For though by this time you ought to be teachers..."
37. 1 Peter 3:15 - "But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy..."
18. 2 Peter 1:5-7 - "For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith..."
39. 2 Peter 3:18 - "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
40. Revelation 19:10 - "Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, 'Do not do that; I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.' For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

It is important to note that, though the word “research” is not mentioned in the Bible, it emphasise the importance of seeking knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. Here are some verses that support the idea that research is in line with God's commands. According to Ilesanmi (2024):

Research is a theological inquiry because it is a search after the truth of God (Matt 6:33); it is a biblical inquiry, using Berean model (Act 11:17); (Prov 25:2; Eccl 1:13; 7:27; Matt 6:33; John 5:39; 7:52; 1Pet 1:10; ). It is a spiritual inquiry (Job 11:7; 1Cor 2:10); it is an epistemological inquiry (Prov 2:3-5); it is an inquiry (Matt 7:7).

## **5.0 THE BIBLICAL RESEARCHER AND HIS TOOL: THE ROLE/IMPACT OF CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS IN THE WORLD**

Christian scholars have played a vital role in shaping the world through their contributions to various fields of study, such as biblical studies, theology, science, philosophy, social sciences, and many more – too numerous to mention. Indeed, the impact of Christian scholars on the world are numerous and profound. They have shaped Western civilization, influencing art, literature, music, and culture. They have developed and refined scientific theories, leading to significant advances in technology and medicine. They have informed social policies and practices, shaping education, healthcare, and social welfare. They have also engaged in public debates, shaping public discourse and policy. They have transformed the world through the instrumentality of the Bible. It was said that George Washington, the first President of the United States, remarked that it is impossible to govern the world without God and the Bible.” This profound statement connotes that without a higher power (God) and a shared multidimensional framework (His Word, the Bible), societies may struggle to establish and maintain justice, compassion, and order. The Bible provides a moral foundation and guidance for governance, decision-making, and personal behaviour. It is a multidimensional, multidisciplinary divine document for humanity. No problem in the world that has no solution in the Word. Thus, God has given us a magazine of life – the Bible. This means that the Bible a comprehensive and authoritative guide for living. Just as a magazine provides articles, stories, and insights on various themes, topics, subjects, or issues, the Bible offers wisdom, teachings, and accounts that cover all facets of human life. The Bible is a rich and diverse resource that provides: guidance for daily living; insights into human nature and relationships; wisdom, knowledge and understanding for navigating life's challenges and opportunities; it teaches on faith,



morality, science, philosophy, culture, politics, ethics, and all aspects of life. It has transformative power in shaping our understanding of the world and our place in it. This is the tool the Christian scholars of old have used to shaping the world around them in theology, science, philosophy, etc. As contemporary Christian scholarly researchers, we are not to do otherwise. Hence, biblical research is a sine qua non for all Christian scholars. The only reliable and infallible tool a biblical Christian researcher have is the BIBLE. In it, varied methods can be employed to solve human problems.

### **5.1 The Role/Impact of Christian Scholars in the World**

Biblical Christian research scholars have impacted their world in many different fields. Among many only a few of them are listed here:

#### **Theology**

1. Formulation of Christian belief: Christian theologians from the very Church Fathers to contemporary theologians have contributed to and helped develop Christian theology over the years.
2. Exegesis: Various attempts were made by Christian scholars towards Bible exegesis that directly impacted the perception of the Scriptures and its application in Christianity.
3. Denominationalism: Efforts have been made by Christian scholars to foster unity among different branches of Christianity for mutual understanding and collaboration.

#### **Science**

1. Classical antiquity: Isaac Newton, Galileo Galilei, and Johannes Keipper are a few of many Christian scholars who are known to have discovered most areas of modern science because they are considered to be its founding fathers.
2. New discoveries in medical procedures: The works of Christian scholars have restated and redefined medical researches generating a myriad of inventions and innovations.

3. Conservation: Attention to religion and environmentalism has been given regard by emphasizing the importance of caretakers and defenders of the Earth best suited for Christian scholars.

## **Philosophy**

1. Emergence of modern philosophy: Christian scholars like St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas contributed to Western intellectual history, which was later picked up by other noted philosophers like Rene Descartes and Immanuel Kant.
2. Negative esthetics: Christian scholars sidestepped the heap of immense criticism of the faith and populated Europe by focusing on the knee-jerk reaction These United States are inclined to provide.

## **Art**

1. Artistic originals: Christian intellectuals have been able to achieve notable pieces of art in the world such as Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling or Bach's Mass in B minor.
2. The art of faith: Christian scholars have attempted to understand the faith and religion art intersection penetrating in the theme and messages of their artworks.
3. Conservation of the culture: Christian scholars have been actively involved in conservation and promotion of culture e.g. art, history, architecture, and other cultures
4. Iconic artworks: Christian scholars have created some of the most iconic works of art in history, from Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling to Bach's Mass in B minor.
5. Artistic expression: Christian scholars have explored the relationship between art and faith, using their creative talents to express theological themes and ideas.
6. Preservation of cultural heritage: Christian scholars have worked to preserve and promote cultural heritage, including art, architecture, and historical artifacts.

## **Music**

1. Chant and chorale: Christian scholars have provided some of the most beautiful sacred music, such as Gregorian chant and contemporary worship songs.

2. Christianity in Western music: Christian scholars have made great advancements in Western music through their innovations and creativity in music theory.
3. Sacred songs and services: Christian scholars have defined the Christians' approach to worship, as well as developing liturgical prayers, hymns, and other song-based traditions.
4. Sacred music: Christian scholars have composed some of the most beautiful and enduring sacred music, from Gregorian chant to contemporary worship songs.
5. Music theory: Christian scholars have made significant contributions to music theory, influencing the development of Western music.
6. Worship and liturgy: Christian scholars have shaped the way Christians worship, developing liturgies, hymns, and other forms of musical expression.

## **Technology**

1. Starting with the printing press and beyond: Christian Scholarship has been at the forefront: from the invention of the printing press to the latest developments in computer science, engineering, and technology.
2. Technological advancement responsibility: Christian scholars have dealt with the responsibility of conscience associated with the advancement of technology.
3. Christianity and technology:
4. Innovations in technology: Christian scholars have been at the forefront of technological innovation, from the development of the printing press to modern advances in computing and engineering.
5. Ethical considerations: Christian scholars have grappled with the ethical implications of technological advancements, promoting responsible innovation and use.
6. Digital theology: Christian scholars have explored the intersection of technology and theology, examining the ways in which technology shapes our understanding of God and the world.

## **Culture**

1. Shaping Western culture: Christian scholars have played a significant role in shaping Western culture, influencing literature, art, music, and film.
2. Social justice: Christian scholars have been instrumental in promoting social justice, advocating for the rights of the marginalized and oppressed.
3. Cultural critique: Christian scholars have offered critiques of culture, examining the ways in which cultural norms and values intersect with Christian theology and ethics.

## **Education**

1. Founding of universities: Christian scholars have played a key role in the founding of many universities, including Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard.
2. Development of curriculum: Christian scholars have shaped the curriculum in various fields, promoting a liberal arts education that integrates faith and learning.
3. Mentoring and discipleship: Christian scholars have mentored and disciplined students, promoting spiritual growth and intellectual development.

## **Politics and Society**

1. Influencing public policy: Christian scholars have informed public policy, advocating for justice, compassion, and human rights.
2. Promoting social reform: Christian scholars have been instrumental in promoting social reform, from the abolition of slavery to the civil rights movement.
3. Fostering community engagement: Christian scholars have encouraged community engagement, promoting partnerships between churches, universities, and local organizations.

Here are some notable Christian scholars in various professions:

## **5.2. Notable Christian Scholars and their Contributions to the World**

### **Theology**

1. St. Augustine (354-430 AD): Bishop, theologian, and philosopher who shaped Western Christian theology.
2. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 AD): Dominican friar, philosopher, and theologian who synthesized Aristotelian philosophy with Christian theology.
3. John Calvin (1509-1564 AD): French theologian and pastor who played a key role in the Protestant Reformation.
4. Karl Barth (1886-1968 AD): Swiss theologian who developed a distinctive theological approach known as "neo-orthodoxy."
5. N.T. Wright (1948-present): British theologian and biblical scholar known for his work on the historical Jesus and Pauline theology.

### **Science**

1. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642 AD): Italian physicist, mathematician, and astronomer.
2. Johannes Kepler (1571-1630 AD): German mathematician and astronomer.
3. Isaac Newton (1643-1727 AD): English physicist and mathematician.
4. Gregor Mendel (1822-1884 AD): Austrian monk and botanist.
5. Francis Collins (1950-present): American physician-geneticist and director of the National Institutes of Health.

### **Philosophy**

1. St. Anselm (1033-1109 AD): Italian philosopher and theologian who developed the ontological argument for the existence of God.
2. St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 AD): Dominican friar and scholastic philosopher

3. William of Ockham (1285-1349 AD): English philosopher and theologian who developed the concept of Occam's Razor.
4. René Descartes (1596-1650 AD): French philosopher and mathematician who developed the method of doubt and the concept of mind-body dualism.
5. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804 AD): German philosopher who developed the critical philosophy and the concept of the categorical imperative.
6. Alvin Plantinga (1932-present): American philosopher and theologian who has made significant contributions to the fields of epistemology, metaphysics, and philosophy of religion.
7. Richard Swinburne (1934-present): British philosopher and theologian.
8. Nicholas Wolterstorff (1932-present): American philosopher and theologian
9. William Lane Craig (1949-present): American philosopher and theologian.

## **Art**

1. Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564 AD): Italian artist, sculptor, painter, architect, and poet who created some of the most iconic works of the Renaissance.
2. Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519 AD): Italian polymath and artist who is widely considered one of the greatest painters of all time.
3. Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510 AD): Italian painter who was a prominent figure in the Early Renaissance.
4. Hans Holbein the Younger (1497-1543 AD): German artist and printmaker who was a prominent figure in the Northern Renaissance.
5. Makoto Fujimura (1960-present): Japanese-American artist and writer who is known for his work in the realm of faith and art.

## **Music**

1. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750 AD): German composer and organist who is widely regarded as one of the most important figures in Western classical music.

2. George Frideric Handel (1685-1759 AD): German-British composer who is best known for his oratorios, including "Messiah."
3. Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741 AD): Italian composer and violinist who was a prominent figure in the Baroque period.
4. Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847 AD): German composer and pianist who was a prominent figure in the Romantic period.
5. John Rutter (1945-present): British composer and conductor who is known for his choral music.

## **Education**

1. John Harvard (1607-1638 AD): English clergyman and educator.
2. Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758 AD): American theologian, pastor, and educator.
3. Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920 AD): Dutch theology

## **Technology**

1. Nikola Tesla (1856-1943 AD): Serbian-American inventor and engineer who developed the alternating current (AC) system.
2. Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937 AD): Italian inventor and engineer who developed the first practical wireless telegraph.
3. Alan Turing (1912-1954 AD): British mathematician, computer scientist, and logician who made significant contributions to the development of computer science.
4. Donald Knuth (1938-present): American computer scientist and mathematician who is known for his multi-volume work "The Art of Computer Programming."
5. Tim Berners-Lee (1955-present): British computer scientist and engineer who invented the World Wide Web.

## **Culture & Literature**

1. Dante Alighieri (1265-1321 AD): Italian poet and author of "The Divine Comedy".

2. John Milton (1608-1674 AD): English epic poet and author of "Paradise Lost".
3. George Herbert (1593-1633 AD): Welsh poet and priest.
4. C.S. Lewis (1898-1963 AD): British
5. Flannery O'Connor (1925-1964 AD): American novelist and short story writer.
6. J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973 AD): British author and philologist, best known for "The Lord of the Rings".

## **Film**

1. Terry Gilliam (1940-present): American-born British film director, animator, and screenwriter.
2. Martin Scorsese (1942-present): American film director, producer, and screenwriter.
3. Peter Jackson (1961-present): New Zealand film director, producer, and screenwriter.
4. Walt Disney (1901-1966 AD): American entrepreneur, animator, and filmmaker.
5. Cecil B. DeMille (1881-1959 AD): American film director, producer, and screenwriter.

## **Politics**

1. William Wilberforce (1759-1833 AD): British politician and abolitionist.
2. Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865 AD): American politician and 16th President of the United States.
3. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945 AD): German theologian and politician.
4. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968 AD): American Baptist minister and civil rights activist.
5. Tony Blair (1953-present): British politician and former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

## **Economics**

1. Adam Smith (1723-1790 AD): Scottish philosopher and economist.
2. John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946 AD): British economist.



3. Milton Friedman (1912-2006 AD)
4. Gary Becker (1930-2014): American economist and Nobel laureate.
5. Ronald Nash (1936-2006): American philosopher and economist.
6. Wayne Grudem (1948-present): American theologian and economist.
7. John Schneider (1950-present): American economist and theologian.
8. Jay Richards (1961-present): American philosopher, economist, and theologian.

### **Management and Leadership**

1. Peter Drucker (1909-2005): Austrian-American management consultant, author, and professor.
2. Stephen Covey (1932-2012): American author, educator, and businessman.
3. John Maxwell (1947-present): American author, speaker, and leadership expert.
4. Patrick Lencioni (1965-present): American author, speaker, and management consultant.
5. Ken Blanchard (1939-present): American author, speaker, and management consultant.

### **Sports**

1. Eric Liddell (1902-1945 AD): Scottish athlete and Olympic gold medalist.
2. Branch Rickey (1881-1965 AD): American baseball executive and Hall of Famer.
3. Tony Dungy (1955-present): American football coach and former player.
4. Tim Tebow (1987-present): American football player and former Heisman Trophy winner.
5. Kirk Cameron (1970-present): American actor, filmmaker, and former athlete.

### **Media**

1. C.S. Lewis (1898-1963 AD): British novelist, poet, and Christian apologist.
2. Chuck Colson (1931-2012 AD): American politician, lawyer, and Christian leader.
3. James Dobson (1936-present): American psychologist, author, and Christian leader.

4. Ravi Zacharias (1946-present): Indian-born Canadian-American Christian apologist and author.
5. John Piper (1946-present): American pastor, author, and Christian leader.

### **5.3. Some notable Christian scholars in Africa and their contributions:**

#### **Theology and Biblical Studies**

1. John Mbiti (Kenya, 1931-2019): Renowned theologian and biblical scholar who wrote extensively on African theology and biblical interpretation.
2. Idowu, E.B. is a Nigerian scholar and theologian who wrote the book "Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief" in 1962.
3. Kwame Bediako (Ghana, 1945-2008): Theologian and missiologist who contributed significantly to the development of African theology and missiology.
4. Lamin Sanneh (Gambia, 1942-2019): Theologian and historian who wrote extensively on African Christianity, Islamic studies, and world Christianity.
5. Ilori
6. Dele Alaba Ilesanmi: Pastor, theologian, biblical researcher, and biblical Christian educator who has developed many biblical and educational learning theories, models, and approaches, and has written extensively on theology, African theology, Biblical research, and Biblical Christian education.

#### **Biblical Research**

1. Dele Alaba Ilesanmi: Pastor, theologian, biblical researcher, and biblical Christian educator who has developed many biblical and educational learning theories, models, and approaches, and has written extensively on theology, African theology, Biblical research, and Biblical Christian education.

#### **Philosophy**

1. Anton Wilhelm Amo (Ghana/Ethiopia, 1703-1759): Philosopher and theologian who was the first African to earn a doctorate in philosophy from a European university.

2. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (Kenya, 1938-present): Philosopher, novelist, and playwright who has written extensively on African culture, identity, and decolonization.
3. Peter Bodunrin (Nigeria, 1936-1995) was a Nigerian philosopher and scholar. He was a prominent figure in African philosophy and made significant contributions to the field, particularly in the areas of epistemology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of culture.

## **History**

1. Jacob Ade Ajayi (Nigeria, 1929-2014): Historian and educator who wrote extensively on African history, particularly on the Yoruba people of Nigeria.
2. Bethwell Allan Ogot (Kenya, 1929-2019): Historian and educator who wrote extensively on African history, particularly on the history of Kenya and East Africa.

## **Science and Technology**

1. Philip Emeagwali (Nigeria, 1954-present): Computer scientist and engineer who has made significant contributions to the development of supercomputing and the internet.
2. Makhtar Diop (Senegal, 1955-present): Engineer and economist who has held various leadership positions in international organizations, including the World Bank.
3. Dr. Daniel Hale Williams (South Africa) - Discovery: Performed the world's first successful open-heart surgery in 1893.
4. Dr. Christine Sekaggya Musisi (Uganda) - Discovery: Developed a low-cost, portable device for diagnosing malaria.
5. Dr. Myles Munroe (Bahamas, with African heritage) - Discovery: Developed a new approach to leadership development based on biblical principles.
6. Dr. Wangari Maathai (Kenya) - Discovery: Developed a holistic approach to environmental conservation and sustainable development.
7. Dr. Oladipo Agboluaje - Discovery: Developed a new method for producing ethanol from cassava, a staple crop in Nigeria.

8. Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala - Discovery: Conducted research on the impact of economic policies on poverty reduction in Nigeria.

9. Dr. Oyewale Tomori - Discovery: Conducted research on the epidemiology and control of infectious diseases, including Ebola and Lassa fever.

10. Dr. Felix Okojie - Discovery: Developed a new method for producing biodiesel from Nigerian plants.

11. Dr. Emmanuel Egbogah - Discovery: Conducted research on the geology and petroleum potential of Nigeria.

## **Literature**

1. Chinua Achebe (Nigeria, 1930-2013): Novelist, poet, and critic who is widely regarded as one of the most influential African writers of the 20th century.

2. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (Kenya, 1938-present): Novelist, playwright, and poet who has written extensively on African culture, identity, and decolonization.

## **Education and Biblical Christian Education**

1. James Emmanuel Kwegyir Aggrey (Ghana, 1875-1927): Educator and missionary who played a significant role in the development of education in Ghana and Africa.

2. Julius Nyerere (Tanzania, 1922-1999): Educator and politician who served as the first president of Tanzania and played a significant role in the development of education in Africa.

3. Dele Alaba Ilesanmi: Pastor, theologian, biblical researcher, and biblical Christian educator who has developed many biblical and educational learning theories, models, and approaches, and has written extensively on theology, African theology, Biblical research, and Biblical Christian education.

Note that the list above is not exhaustive.

## 6.0. INTEGRATING FAITH AND LEARNING

Integrating faith and learning is essential for Christian scholarly research. Christian scholars must engage with their subject matter from a distinctly Christian perspective, integrating their faith with their learning. This integration enables Christian scholars to approach their research with a deeper understanding of the world and its complexities, leading to more nuanced and insightful research findings.

Christian scholars operate at the intersection of two distinct educational worlds: the secular academy and the spiritual institution—church. This intersection can be a source of tension, as scholars seek to balance the demands of academic rigour with the commitments of their faith. However, it can also be a source of creative synergy, as scholars draw on the resources of their faith to inform and enrich their research. Furthermore, in biblical or theological education, the seminaries or Bible colleges remain theoretical grounds while the church schools remain the practical platforms on which the theoretical formations become the practical interpretations. Thus, this will help to achieve pracademic education, enriching biblical research and theological and biblical education, making them real to life situations.

Pracademic education is integrating theoretical foundations with practical applications. That is, merging academia—theory—with real-life situations—practice or practical application. In Biblical Pracademic Education, this refers to a comprehensive educational process that merges rigorous biblical scholarship with practical ministry experience to make biblical principles intelligible, relevant, and applicable and establishes truth in God's word. The aphorism “**Theory without practice is empty, and practice without theory is blind**” means that there should always be a balance between learning concepts in theory and applying them in real-life situations; ideally, one should not be without the other. Thus, our academy or scholarship is empty and useless without real-life application. Similarly, our practice, practical ministry experience, business expertise, and technical knowledge are blind without theoretical support. This pracademy (combination or integration of theory and practice) makes biblical research a concrete scholarship; it moves theoretical theology from a theoretical plane to applied theology in spiritual space. Pracademic learning can be applied in any of the fields of human endeavour, such as science, business, **education**, sports, etc.

As theory alone cannot comprehensively explore the word of God, so also the practical application cannot effectively understand it. Both are needed to understand God's principles and intention for humanity. Even though we cannot comprehend God, as men's intention may not be fully

understood, we can apprehend Him through the help of the Holy Spirit, not with human devices. Proverbs 25:2-3 gives us a glimpse of this:

It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter. The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.

Obviously, we are mysteries to ourselves and to others; we cannot fully understand ourselves, not to talk of others (Prov 20:24; Jer 17:9). But God searches and knows all things (Jer 1:10; John 2: 24-25; Heb 4:13). Every word of God is true, pure (Prov 30:5). God is unsearchable. Job 11: 7- 9 confirms this:

<sup>7</sup>Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? <sup>8</sup>It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? <sup>9</sup>The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

Similarly, in Romans 11: 33-36, Paul asks:

<sup>33</sup>O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! <sup>34</sup>For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? <sup>35</sup>Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? <sup>36</sup>For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

We cannot fathom the mysteries of God. Yet, despite God's unsearchability, we can know Him through the Holy Spirit:

<sup>10</sup>But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. <sup>11</sup>For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup>Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Jesus must be involved in understanding God and His word:

<sup>13</sup>Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. <sup>14</sup>He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. <sup>15</sup>All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

To be Christian scholarly researchers, we need God and the Bible to effectively integrate faith with learning and practice with theory. No biblical Christian researcher can successfully get to the heart of God with His word. God gives the Spirit of creativity to a man who loves Him and does His will. Thus, man's creativity is a reflection of divinity.

### **6.1. Christian Scholars as Agents of Development**

If anyone rejects education, he or she becomes blind to the end of his or her life; and if anyone neglects research, he or she becomes deaf to the end of his or her life. The rejection of both education and research makes one walks lame to the end of one's life. Education is an integral part of Christianity, and without it, Christianity is dead. Similarly, Christians without biblical education are like a pastor without a calling. Christians are regarded as the people of the Book, the Scripture. Hence, most of the great minds the world still celebrates today were Christians. Most of these notable Christians have been mentioned above. However, this chapter sheds more light on a few of them for our understanding.

Let us start with Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), the man who laid the foundation of modern astronomy and the scientific revolution, who suggested, on mathematical grounds, that the earth travelled around the sun. He held office in the Polish Church as a Canon of Frauenburg Cathedral. Copernicus described God as "the best and most orderly workman of all." Another Christian scholar is Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), a mathematician, physicist, and astronomer, who was the founder of modern mechanics and experimental Physics. As a devout Catholic, he said, "there are two big books, the book of the nature and the Book of Supernature, the Bible." What about Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), the brilliant early astronomer and mathematician, who was the founder of modern optics and is best known for his discovery of three principles of planetary

motion. He was a devout Lutheran. He said that he was “thinking God’s thoughts after him.” What is more, Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), probably the greatest and most brilliant scientist of his time, is well known for his formation of the Laws of Gravity. He was also an expert in the fields of optics, astronomy, and differential calculus and was responsible for the first correct analysis of white light. Newton believed in the inspiration of the Scriptures and wrote theological books as well as scientific books, but he regarded his scientific book as more important. He believed that no sciences were better attested than the religion of the BIBLE.

In addition, Michael Faraday (1791-1867) was one of the greatest scientists of the nineteenth century. He was the first to produce an electric current from a magnetic field. He invented the first electric motor and dynamo. He combined his theory with practice. It was said that his Christian faith was the single most important influence upon him. The same is true of many other Christian pioneering scientists, such as Robert Boyle, who gave his name to “Boyle’s Law”; Joseph Lister, who pioneered antiseptic surgery; Louis Pasteur, who originated pasteurisation; Gregor Mendel, who formed the basis for the science of genetics; Lord Kelvin, who was a leading light in the foundation of modern physics; James Maxwell, who formulated electromagnetic theory; and many other Christian scholars, too numerous to mention in one fell swoop. In summary and in a profound manner, Professor James Simpson, who paved the way for painless surgery through anaesthetics, was asked this question: “What do you think is the most important discovery of your life?” He replied, “The most important discovery I ever made was when I discovered Jesus Christ.” [1] This implies that until we discover Jesus, our peace is impossible, and our economic development theories, as a nation, are a ruse. Therefore, to achieve greatness and be genuine Christian scholars, it is imperative to integrate faith with education and practice with theory. This intersection is the way to go in biblical Christian scholarly research.

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[1] Echegwisi, Davies M. cited Nicky Gumbel, *Searching Issues*, in his book titled *The Wise Genius*, Life Springs World Network: 2008.



## 7.0. CONCLUSION

This paper has been able to discuss the art of Christian scholarly research, the impacts or roles of Christian research scholars in shaping the world. The study also discussed how faith and academia, and theory and practice, could be integrated to bring a rewarding development in our worlds. Indeed, Christian scholarly research has had a profound impact on the world, shaping Western civilisation, influencing art and culture, and informing social policies and practices. The paper argued that the integration of faith and learning is essential for Christian scholarly research, enabling Christian scholars to approach their research with a deeper understanding of the world and its complexities. Thus, Christian scholarly research is not merely a technical exercise but an art that requires creativity, discernment, and spiritual sensitivity.

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