

my Christian faith into my teaching. The issue wasn't so much that there wasn't a connection between Christianity and chemistry. Rather, it was that the resources I found assumed that chemistry was either unimportant or only useful as a resource for apologetics. This contrasted sharply with my own perception of chemistry as a rich source of insight into how the world works; a resource that contributes to human welfare in ways that reflect Jesus's teachings about what humans are called to do. Chemists produce medicines, polymers, and biochemical knowledge to heal the sick; fertilizers and other agricultural chemicals to feed the hungry; solar energy and green chemistry technologies to care for the environment; and a myriad of synthetic and semisynthetic materials that are used to clothe, house, and feed the needy. Further, chemists sometimes have to navigate problems such as pollution, toxicity, climate change, and disease in the course of their work, which call for wise Christian discernment.

Arie Leegwater's September 2011 editorial, "A Brief Excursion in Chemistry: 'God-Talk' in Chemistry?," helped enlarge my understanding of science and faith to include more of what chemists do. Building on the work of Hans-Jörg Rheinberger and twentieth-century historians of science, and elucidating factors which shaped science's development, Leegwater suggested that scientists' religious beliefs and commitments (which all scientists possess, whether theistic or not) are evident in what scientists do. In other words, a perspective on science does not just involve questions of ethics and the compatibility of propositional truths, it also takes place through the "problems [scientists choose], how they are formulated, the experimental evidence marshaled, and [how theories are perceived]."

Although Leegwater did not say so directly, his examples suggest that chemists' "God-talk" also includes their scientific efforts to benefit humanity, navigate tradeoffs associated with chemical hazards, and shape the character of their communities. Each of the chemists he discussed was both a scientific pioneer and an activist who sought to align human society with his vision of the good. The physicalist Wilhelm Ostwald led the German Monist League and promoted the renunciation of church membership; the secular humanist Linus Pauling became an antinuclear peace activist; the devoutly Methodist Charles Coulson conscientiously objected to war

research, served as a lay minister, cultivated scientific talent in the developing world, and served as president of the poverty-relief charity Oxfam.

Subsequently, I discovered that Leegwater's point was somewhat foreshadowed by Willem Drees's earlier suggestion that science and religion relate along more dimensions than the propositional, cognitive, and ethical (*Religion, Science, and Naturalism* [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996]). It was also echoed and amplified by Peter Harrison's 2011 Gifford Lectures, in which Harrison demonstrates objective and propositional understandings of "religion" to be a product of the Enlightenment that distorts. To help ensure that our perspectives represent science and Christian faith well, we might take Leegwater's editorial to heart.

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2012, 2019, 2020, 2013

Theme issues: Responsible Technology, PSCF 64, no. 1 (2012); Artificial Intelligence, PSCF 71, no. 2 (2019); Transhumanism PSCF 72, no. 2 (2020); and JAMES K. A. SMITH, "Science and Religion Take Practice: Engaging Science as Culture," PSCF 65, no. 1 (2013): 3-9.

I recall when I first encountered *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* as a young professor. I had observed that integrating faith and technology was not trivial, and that it was sometimes done in a shallow and unconvincing manner. But *PSCF* provided evidence that Christian scholarship in science and technology could be done in a deep and thoughtful way.

Some *PSCF* articles that stand out to me are the ones found in special issues dealing with technology, specifically the issues on Responsible Technology (March 2012), Artificial Intelligence (June 2019), and Transhumanism (June 2020). An example of one such article is by David Winyard titled "Transhumanism: Christian Destiny or Distraction?" I found this article an important corrective to recent voices that seek to place transhumanism within a Christian context. I am grateful that the mission of ASA and *PSCF* includes engaging topics in computer science,

Article

Twenty-Five ASA Fellows and Editors Tell of PSCF Articles That Changed Their Lives

engineering, and technology for those of us working in those disciplines.

Another article that stands out to me is one by my colleague, philosopher Jamie Smith, who wrote an article titled “Science and Religion Take Practice: Engaging Science as Culture” (*PSCF* 65, no. 1 [2013]: 3-9). In this paper, Smith makes the crucial point that science is a human cultural activity with important implications for the dialogue between faith and science.

I do not always agree with the articles I read in *PSCF*. Even so, I appreciate how the very title of the journal captures a form of intellectual humility. It is not *The Perspective on Science and Christian Faith*, but rather *Perspectives* (plural) on Science and Christian Faith. The journal exhibits “faith seeking understanding” and provides a forum for Christian scholars to humbly interact and sharpen each other, as iron sharpens iron (Prov. 27:17).

May *PSCF* continue to serve the ongoing dialogue about faith and science—as well as technology, modelling both intellectual rigor and humility, for many more years to come.

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2013

HEATHER LOOY, “Psychology at the Theological Frontiers,” *PSCF* 65, no. 3 (2013): 147-55.

With increasing frequency, my conversations with colleagues turn to recent studies illuminating the magnitude of the mental health crises facing Americans, especially students. Although my stripes as a psychologist are as a researcher, not a mental health care professional, I engage these conversations within the broader academic discipline of psychology, a field within which promised solutions to these mental health problems lie. Admonitions to improve mental health with self-care or mindfulness abound; moving beyond pop psychology deepens and nuances these admonitions in ways that highlight well-researched pathways toward (and away from) mental wellness. Yet, the question remains: with all

we know about mental health, why can we not seem to do anything to improve it for more people in more places?

Although the cultural and educational landscapes seem different than in 2013 when Heather Looy published “Psychology at the Theological Frontiers,” I find myself bemusing the reality that her argument is fundamental to this question. She critiques psychology’s penchant for *bad reductionism*, an assumption that the answer to a specific empirical question is a complete articulation of all that is important. She underscores the position that knowledge, like the people who generate it, is situated and embedded within contexts and cultures that shape the production, interpretation, and meaning of that knowledge. She asks how we can engage biological mechanisms without reducing individuals to their biology—or even to an overly atomistic view of persons, separated from relationships with others and the world. Importantly, Looy reminds us that serious engagement with these critiques, positions, and questions does not threaten potential contributions of psychological science, but instead invites distinctly Christian reflections in and on psychology.

I thought of this need for Christian reflection throughout psychological science in a recent conversation about student mental health with a colleague who wondered, as Looy did, how we can use our psychological and theological knowledge to find “ways to live well and faithfully in our current context” (p. 154). Psychology has tools to offer individuals and communities who are suffering. But do those tools trace the boundaries within which human flourishing occurs? Said another way, if Christianity is true, then there are particular ways of being and living in the world that align with our creatureliness, and there are ways of being and living in the world that do not. I assume that flourishing is not possible when living outside the boundaries of our creatureliness, that these boundaries trace the range of possibilities for mental wellness and flourishing, and in doing so, also articulate the limits.

As *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* celebrates its 75th year, I reflect on the value of its contribution. *PSCF* empowers and equips Christian thinkers to collaboratively articulate the boundaries of flourishing, boundaries that benefit from empirical, psychological, and theological excavation.